

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 305  
(A-19)

Introduced by: Illinois  
Subject: Lack of Support for Maintenance of Certification  
Referred to: Reference Committee C  
(Nicole Riddle, MD, Chair)

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1 Whereas, The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has responded to a groundswell  
2 of criticism focused on the requirements for maintenance of certification (MOC) by creating an  
3 independent “Vision Commission” designed to “reimagine a system of continuing certification”;  
4 and  
5  
6 Whereas, The Vision Commission released its draft report December 11, 2018, with a public  
7 comment period that ended January 15, 2019; and  
8  
9 Whereas, The draft report was divided into “Findings” and “Recommendations,” and some of the  
10 highlights include results of a survey conducted by the Vision Commission which showed that  
11 only 12% of 34,616 physicians surveyed valued the program; and  
12  
13 Whereas, Robust evidence does not exist correlating physicians’ grades on secure, pass/fail  
14 MOC exams with patient outcomes; and  
15  
16 Whereas, Secure exam questions and assessments that rely exclusively on knowledge recall  
17 are not aligned with how diplomates practice and provide patient care; and  
18  
19 Whereas, The Vision Commission has documented significant harmful consequences of MOC,  
20 stating “The Commission heard compelling testimony from all stakeholders that loss of  
21 certification can lead to loss of employment or certain employment opportunities for diplomates  
22 or loss of reimbursement from insurance carriers”; and  
23  
24 Whereas, One of the promises in the Hippocratic Oath we take as physicians is “First, do no  
25 Harm” or “primum non nocere”; therefore be it  
26  
27 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association urge all American Board of Medical  
28 Specialties (ABMS) Boards to phase out the use of mandated, periodic, pass/fail, point-in-time  
29 examinations, and Quality Improvement/Practice Improvement components of the Maintenance  
30 of Certification process, and replace them with more longitudinal and formative assessment  
31 strategies that provide feedback for continuous learning and improvement and support a  
32 physician’s commitment to ongoing professional development (Directive to Take Action); and be  
33 it further

1 RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage all ABMS Boards to adopt and immediately begin the  
2 process of implementing the following recommendation from the Continuing Board Certification  
3 Vision For the Future Commission Final Report: "Continuing certification must change to  
4 incorporate longitudinal and other innovative formative assessment strategies that support  
5 learning, identify knowledge and skills gaps, and help diplomates stay current. The ABMS  
6 Boards must offer an alternative to burdensome highly-secure, point-in-time examinations of  
7 knowledge." (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

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