



A TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FAMILY MEDICINE 1969-2020

| Date | Event |
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| Feb. 15, 1969 | Date of incorporation of the American Board of Family Practice (ABFP; now the American Board of Family Medicine) |
| Feb. 23, 1969 | First official meeting of ABFP at the National Board of Medical Examiners offices in Philadelphia; John G. Walsh, MD, elected the first President of ABFP |
| March, 1969 | Nicholas Pisacano, MD, appointed the first Executive Director of the ABFP |
| 1969 | ABFP established two routes to certification: Residency Eligible Candidates (REC) and Practice Eligible Candidates (PEC). In addition, the ABFP mandated recertification examinations every 7 years, becoming the first certification board in American medicine to require recertification. |
| Feb. 28-March 1, 1970 | First certification examinations administered. Approximately 4,000 applicants applied to take the exam, but only 2,000 were accepted. |
| Jan. 1974 | On the eve of its 5 th anniversary, the ABFP announced that a total of 5,809 family physicians were board certified and of this number, 1,240 had become ABFP diplomates after taking the fourth and most recent certification examination the previous October. |
| July, 1975 | The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) President and Director Robert Chase praised the ABFP for its progress to date, noting that the reliability of its Family Practice certification exams were “as good or better than other Board examinations.” |
| 1976 | First recertification examination given. There were four components required to successfully recertify: 1) Continuing Medical Education (CME, a minimum of 300 hours over the previous 6 years were required); 2) Professional character; 3) Cognitive examination; and 4) Office Record Review. A total of 1,472 diplomates were approved to take the exam. |
| 1979 | The ABFP established an In-Training Examination as part of a tripartite assessment process for family medicine residents in training. The 3-fold process was developed under the Conjoint Committee on In-Training Assessment (CONCHITA), consisting of members of the ABFP, AAFP, and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM). |
| Dec. 31, 1980 | Practice eligible certification route to board certification ended. |

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| 1982 | The ABFP and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) finalized a reciprocity agreement in which both organizations recognized their respective certifications. This was the first in a series of international reciprocity agreements the ABFP would sign with other organizations, including the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) of the United Kingdom in 1989, and the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZGP) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) in 1993. |
| Fall 1982 | First issue of the ABFP's new newsletter for diplomates, <i>The Phoenix</i> , published. |
| 1986 | The ABFP admitted into the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) as an Associate Member. |
| Jan., 1988 | First issue of <i>The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice (JABFP</i> ; now <i>JABFM</i>) published; Paul R. Young, MD, served as first editor. With this publication, the ABFP became the first specialty board to publish its own journal. |
| Apr. 20, 1988 | First examination for Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in Geriatric Medicine given (established jointly by ABFP and the American Board of Internal Medicine, or ABIM). |
| Aug. 1988 | The National Library of Medicine (NLM) included <i>JABFP</i> in <i>Index Medicus</i> , then the nation's premier comprehensive bibliographic index of scientific journal articles focusing on medical science fields--a major move which enhanced the journal's visibility within the academic medical community. |
| Oct. 12-13, 1989 | ABFP celebrated its 20 th Anniversary with a special symposium featuring nationally recognized speakers on medical education at ABFP Headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky. Several hundred participants from the U.S., Canada, and from around the world attended the symposium, the results of which were later published in the April- June edition of <i>JAFPM</i> entitled "Medical Education: Time for Change". |
| Oct. 1989 | The ABFP Board of Directors passed a resolution asking each diplomate to donate at least 4 hours per month "of hands on medical care to medically indigent persons." |
| Jan. 1, 1990 | Nicholas Pisacano, MD, retired as Executive Director of ABFP, but continued as ABFP Secretary and Executive Editor of <i>JABFP</i> ; he was succeeded by Paul R. Young, MD, as the 2 nd Executive Director of ABFP. |
| March 11, 1990 | Death of Dr. Nicholas Pisacano. The ABFP subsequently established the Nicholas J. Pisacano, MD, Endowed Chair in Family Practice at the University of Kentucky in his honor. |
| January 1991 | ABFP established The Nicholas J. Pisacano, MD, Memorial Foundation (NIPMF). Now known as the Pisacano Leadership Foundation (PLF), the non-profit organization serves to provide educational programs, leadership training, and funding for outstanding fourth-year medical students committed to the specialty of Family Medicine through its mission "to enhance the specialty of family medicine by identifying and promoting the development of the future leaders in the most comprehensive primary care field." |
| Apr., 1991 | The ABFP Board of Directors moved to "proceed with the development of an |

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| | international examination for the English speaking countries” in Family Practice. |
| 1991 | John P. Geyman, MD, assumed the editorship of the <i>JABFP</i> . |
| Sept. 30, 1993 | First examination for Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in Sports Medicine administered in conjunction with the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM), the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM), and the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) . |
| 1997 | The ABFP Board created a new subsidiary, Assessment Technologies, Inc., to develop state-of-the-art computer-based certification and recertification examinations for the ABFP, as well as to develop and support computer-based testing administration systems. |
| 1998 | Paul R. Young, MD, retired as Executive Director of ABFP, but remained with the Board as Senior Executive of the ABFP; he was succeeded by Robert Avant, MD, as the 3 rd Executive Director of ABFP. |
| 2000 | The non-profit ABFM Foundation was incorporated as a supporting organization of ABFM for the purpose of “fostering of education and scholarly analysis or research in Family Medicine.” |
| June 1, 2000 | The ABFP launched FamilyPractice.com, a new website devoted to assisting and supporting family physicians in their practices. The site consisted of four major sections: a Practice Management Center, Interactive Learning Center, Family Practice News Center, and User Help. |
| Nov. 12, 2001 | First examination for a new CAQ in Adolescent Medicine was offered in conjunction with the ABP and ABIM. |
| June 30, 2002 | Former ABFP Executive Director Paul R. Young, MD, retired as Senior Executive of the ABFP, after more than 20 years of service and was subsequently named as Executive Director Emeritus. |
| Jan., 2003 | <p>Robert Avant, MD, retired as ABFP Executive Director but remains with the Board as Senior Executive of the ABFP; he was succeeded by James C. Puffer, MD, as the 4th Executive Director of ABFP. (Dr. Avant was subsequently named as Executive Director Emeritus.)</p> <p>Also later that year, John P. Geyman, MD, retired as editor of <i>JABFP</i> and was succeeded by Marjorie A. Bowman, MD, MPA.</p> |
| Jan. 1, 2004 | ABFP begins Maintenance of Certification for Family Physicians (MC-FP). MC-FP is the means by which the ABFM continually assesses Diplomates and was established in response to a recommendation from The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) that ABMS specialists within every discipline should be required to meet the highest standards of accountability. MC-FP consists of four components: professionalism (Part I); self-assessment and lifelong learning (Part II); cognitive expertise (Part III); and performance in practice (Part IV). ABFM was the first board to mandate participation of all its Diplomates in its MOC program. |
| 2004 | ABFP Executive Director James C. Puffer, MD, named as President and Chief |

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| | <p>Executive Officer of ABFP.</p> <p>Also during this year, Self-Assessment Modules (SAMs) were instituted as part of MOC requirements and were administered via computer testing. Six SAMs per certification cycle were required. Performance of Practice Modules (PPMs) were also instituted as part of MOC requirements to assess Quality Improvement (QI), which replaced the Office Record Review as the chief QI instrument.</p> |
| Jan. 1, 2005 | ABFP officially changed its name to the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) after approval by ABMS. |
| 2005 | ABFM Certification, Recertification, and Sports Medicine Examinations administered exclusively on computer for the first time. |
| Jan., 2006 | <i>The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice</i> officially changed its name to <i>The Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine (JABFM)</i> to maintain consistency with the new ABFM Board name. |
| July 1, 2006 | New guidelines took effect for a new 5-year combined training program for residents to provide graduates the opportunity to seek certification in both Emergency Medicine (EM) and Family Medicine, as part of a joint agreement between ABEM and ABFM. |
| 2006 | The option to extend the life of board certification from 7 to 10 years was offered under MC-FP. |
| July, 2007 | Preparing the Personal Physician for Practice, a pilot to foster innovation in residency training sponsored by the ABFM and AFMRD, begins. Fourteen residency training programs are selected to participate in the 6-year project. |
| Nov., 2007 | The first examination of a new CAQ in Sleep Medicine was administered by ABFM, in co-sponsorship with the ABMS Boards of Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Neurology, and Otolaryngology. |
| 2008 | First examination offered by ABFM for CAQ in Hospice and Palliative Medicine “in providing quality care in assessing and managing the physical, psychological, and spiritual suffering faced by patients with life-limiting illnesses and their families.” The examination was offered as part of a collaboration between ABFM and nine other ABMS member medical specialty boards. |
| Aug., 2008 | The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved ABFM’s Performance in Practice Registry as 1 of 32 qualified registries permitted to submit Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) data to CMS on behalf of its diplomates. |
| Oct., 2009 | ABFM announced a partnership program with ABIM to establish a pilot program for Recognition of Focused Practice (RFP) in Hospital Medicine. The program used the maintenance of certification (MOC) framework and was the first customized MOC pathway to draw heavily on practice-based learning as its foundation. |
| Jan. 27, 2010 | The ABFM, ABIM, and ABP jointly announced that all three boards had approved the Mayo Clinic as a Portfolio Sponsor of MOC activities, making the clinic the first organization to be formally recognized in the Multispecialty Portfolio Approval Project, which was created by all three boards to recognize institutional quality improvement activities. |

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| March-Apr., 2010 | In celebration of ABFM's 40 th anniversary, <i>JABFM</i> issued a special 40 th anniversary issue entitled "Reconsidering Family Medicine Practice, Training, and Certification". |
| 2011 | ABFM announced the launch of a new iPhone application, "ABFM Examination Prep," to assist family physicians with preparations for the ABFM MOC examination. |
| Apr. 15, 2011 | The ABFM and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) announced the establishment of the James C. Puffer, MD/American Board of Family Medicine Fellowship to advance the careers of future leaders in Family Medicine. |
| Jan. 1, 2012 | ABFM begins its ten-year transition to continuous MOC Diplomates who certified or maintained certification in 2011. They are issued certificates without end dates for the first time in ABFM history. Validity of the certificate is dependent upon the Diplomate continuously meeting all requirements of MOC. |
| July 1, 2013 | The six-year Length of Training Pilot, supported by the ACGME and the ABFM, begins. The ABFM Foundation commits 2 million dollars to the formal evaluation of the project. |
| February 6, 2015 | The Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research (AHRQ) and the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) are funding and collaborating on TRADEMaRQ, a national study to make MOC activities more efficient and more closely tied to clinical quality. |
| October 20, 2017 | ABFM changes certification requirements, which will now allow osteopathic family physicians who have completed three years of accredited family medicine residency training in either AOA programs or AOA programs that have received ACGME preaccreditation or initial accreditation to apply for certification with the ABFM. |
| October 9, 2018 | ABFM announces a pilot program to begin in January 2019 that will assess the value and feasibility of a longitudinal assessment option to the 10-year secure examination. |
| February 15, 2019 | ABFM celebrates its 50 th anniversary. |

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