

Overview of the ABP Testing Program Summary Report

Presenter: Linda Althouse, PhD
Vice President of Psychometrics and Testing Services
American Board of Pediatrics

Dr. Linda Althouse opened with the first presentation by giving a short overview of the ABP Testing Program to set the stage for the conference and the keynote address that followed. She described the mission and values of the Board as they relate to its testing program.

- Assurance to the public
- Continuous improvement
- Fairness to the candidates/diplomates
- Innovation
- Transparency

Dr. Althouse noted that a goal for the conference and its participants is to consider how proposed changes relate to the above mission and values.

Although some of the participants were familiar with the ABP, there were educational measurement experts in attendance who were not. As such, Dr. Althouse provided a brief history of the ABP, noting that the ABP is accountable to the public, not the diplomate. The ABP's sole mission is to assure the public that physicians have specialized training in pediatrics and meet the standards needed to provide quality care. Dr. Althouse noted that certified pediatricians are not members of the ABP. Rather, the ABP is an independent certifying organization, not a membership organization such as the American Academy of Pediatrics that advocates for pediatricians. The ABP is just one of 24 specialty boards recognized by American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

Dr. Althouse also provided an overview of the examinations that the ABP administers. Although the ABP offers 20 certificates, she focused on the examinations the ABP develops and administers in general pediatrics and the following 14 subspecialties:

- Adolescent Medicine
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Child Abuse Pediatrics
- Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
- Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics
- Pediatric Emergency Medicine
- Pediatric Endocrinology
- Pediatric Gastroenterology
- Pediatric Hematology and Oncology
- Pediatric Infectious Diseases
- Neonatal Perinatal Medicine
- Pediatric Nephrology
- Pediatric Pulmonology
- Pediatric Rheumatology

Dr. Althouse also explained the current four-part MOC model and its purpose:

- *Part 1: Professional Standing*
Ensures physician is licensed and in good standing
- *Part 2: Lifelong Learning*
Requires participation in high quality, unbiased learning and self-assessment activities
- *Part 3: Cognitive Expertise*
Incorporates an external, objective assessment of the diplomate to provide assurance to the public that the diplomate has maintained the necessary commitment to lifelong learning and seeks to remain current in the core subject matter of the specialty
- *Part 4: Performance in Practice (Improvement in Practice)*
Focuses on ongoing assessment and improvement in the quality of care

Dr. Althouse ended by reviewing the format of the conference. She also provided instructions on the polling software that was to be used throughout the conference as a way to submit questions and vote on topics.