



ABMS Maintenance of Certification

One Specialist's Story

Eric A. Brandser, MD Diplomate, American Board of Radiology

"The Maintenance of Certification process acknowledges that I keep looking and I keep striving to learn more and do better so that each year I'm a better radiologist than I was the year before."

Dr. Brandser made a personal commitment to join Maintenance of Certification (MOC) for the American Board of Radiology in December 2008. Since then, he has convinced the 32 colleagues of his partnership practice to follow suit. Like Dr. Brandser, many are also lifetime certificate holders. Together, they intend to lead by example, with solid plans for measuring, analyzing, modifying, re-measuring and assessing change within their practice.

Since there is no national data for benchmarking applications available to refer to, one of the first things Dr. Brandser's group did was to build a data collection-quality improvement software system which integrates with the way the group's practitioners read x-rays. Each year, Brandser says the group interprets 600,000 exams and the hope is to have a three percent review rate across the practice. By year's end, Dr. Brandser anticipates 20,000 entries into the database. As the database grows, they will be able to mine data on an individual physician level, giving feedback on any discrepant reports.

Dr. Brandser explained that the biggest change in practice for him will be to continue to collect quality improvement data on himself, which is now easier with their new software system. Participating in MOC encourages him to look at all areas of Radiology by seeking out continuing education that he might not ordinarily look at. "It already has had an immediate effect. I have re-learned things that I remembered from ten years ago and can see how it has changed, that's pretty cool!"

Although, getting the first one percent of people involved may be difficult, especially for the lifetime certifiers, Dr. Brandser believes in ten years, this will be a moot point as time-limited certificates and participation in MOC becomes the norm. "Once you get a couple of people involved to personally say 'I learned something and I am going to do better for a patient because of the stuff I learned' then more people will get on board."

Dr. Brandser holds general certification in Diagnostic Radiology from the American Board of Radiology. He has been in practice for 16 years and specializes in Musculoskeletal Radiology. Dr. Brandser is a partner practitioner of the Radiology Associates of Northern Kentucky. He earned his medical degree from the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.



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