

ABMS Maintenance of Certification

One Specialist's Story



Mira B. Irons, MD

Diplomate, American Board of Medical Genetics and American Board of Pediatrics

“Participating in MOC has become a valuable part of my professional life.”

When Dr. Mira Irons first heard about maintenance of certification years ago, she couldn't have imagined the resounding effect it would come to have on her professional life.

“It all started when the American Board of Medical Genetics (ABMG) and the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) asked for my help in developing activities for ABMG diplomates to satisfy the new ABMS Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program guidelines,” Dr. Irons remembers. “I shared what I learned about maintenance of certification while representing ACMG at the Council of Medical Specialty Societies discussions. I then became co-chair of an ACMG committee which ultimately created eight practice performance assessments for MOC.”

Since Dr. Irons holds lifetime certification in both Medical Genetics and Pediatrics, participation in MOC was essentially optional for her. However, that idea wasn't quite satisfying. “I simply did not want my credentials to show that I was a non-participant in MOC. It is important to me that I model the professional behavior I expect from the residents I mentor, encourage from the colleagues in my peer group and live by for the patients I care for.” But the thought of completing MOC requirements for two certificates seemed overwhelming. The decision became much easier when the American Board of Pediatrics agreed to apply the learning and practice performance activities completed for ABMG toward maintaining her Pediatrics certificate. “It was full steam ahead then!” exclaimed Dr. Irons.

Dr. Irons has since completed the first computerized examination she ever took and passed the Pediatrics examination. “The learning and improvement activities help me immediately bring knowledge of a new test, therapy or procedures to my patients. The work I've done has made such a difference in my efficiency and in my patient care. My patients are also very appreciative that I've been bringing fresh thinking to their care.”

Dr. Irons holds general board certification in Clinical Biochemical Genetics and Clinical Genetics from the American Board of Medical Genetics and in Pediatrics from the American Board of Pediatrics. She has been in practice for 24 years. Her research interests include neurofibromatosis and disorders of sterol metabolism. Dr. Irons is currently the Park Gerald Chair in Genetics and Associate Chief, Division of Genetics at Children's Hospital Boston. She is also Associate Professor of Pediatrics and training program director for the Genetics training programs at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Irons earned her medical degree from Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago, IL.



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