

ABMS Maintenance of Certification

One Specialist's Story



Neri Cohen, MD, PhD Diplomate, American Board of Thoracic Surgery

“Knowing that board certification is a living, ongoing process, and not a one-time exercise, will reassure patients that the quality oversight process is timely and continuous.”

Being one of the first diplomates to participate in recertification as part of the new Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program for the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, Dr. Neri Cohen says that the experience is giving him the opportunity to reflect on many of the activities in his practice and it is also helping him to update his medical knowledge and ability.

Dr. Cohen has completed a number of the MOC requirements during his first year of the ten-year MOC cycle, including the necessary continuing medical education (CME) credits, a comprehensive exam that tests fundamental and practice-related knowledge, the submission of his case list of the last 100 cases for peer review and submission of his entire practice and outcomes to the Society of Thoracic Surgeons National Database for tracking of clinical outcomes.

“Hearing about the solutions to practice-related problems that others have engineered at national meetings (part of CME) forces me to challenge my practice and implement processes to manage change and improve how I take care of patients on a regular basis,” explained Dr. Cohen. “Contributing to the Society of Thoracic Surgeons National Database is probably the single most important continuous quality measure I do. Getting feedback on patient outcomes in reference to national benchmarks on a regular basis keeps me vigilant about how I am performing.”

Dr. Cohen believes the MOC process is an integral part of what all physicians ought to do and is no different than regular renewal of a driver's license. “Our field moves forward so fast that testing someone's progress every ten years is way behind the curve,” he said. “Participating in CME, in lifelong learning, in continuous submission of the quality of my work in national databases, I think that's a good thing.”

Dr. Cohen holds board certification in Thoracic Surgery from the American Board of Thoracic Surgery. He has been in practice for 11 years and specializes in General Thoracic Surgery. Dr. Cohen is currently Chief, Division of Thoracic Surgery at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center and Lead Investigator there for the American College of Surgeons Oncology Group. Dr. Cohen earned his medical and graduate degrees from the University of Maryland School of Medicine.



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