

# ABMS

## “In the News”

December 2008





## Press Clips, Media & Releases

December 2008

Part of ABMS' strategic mission is to communicate to appropriate external stakeholders that board certification is known as a major marker of quality for physician practice performance and that ABMS is recognized as the organization that establishes standards and criteria.

Shown in this book are the numerous mentions that ABMS has received in the press and media from December 2008.

If you have any questions or come across other mentions of ABMS in the media, press or on the Internet, please direct all copies to Lori Boukas, Director of Marketing and Communications so this information can be published back to the boards.

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American Board  
of Medical Specialties  
*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# Press Clips

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**American Board  
of Medical Specialties**

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

## **ABMS Monthly Media Report December, 2008**

Following is a summary of media coverage identified during the months of December related to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). A brief description of each story, along with an excerpt is provided as well as available links for complete articles. For other articles contact [lboukas@abms.org](mailto:lboukas@abms.org).

### **ABMS Mentions**

#### **Story #1**

The ABMS press release on results from its consumer survey that found TV's Dr. House is America's most loved/hated TV doctor and the qualities people value most in a physician are communications skills and board certification, was picked up by the following media outlet:

Today@Preston (Preston Medical Library)

Dec. 1, 2008

<http://prestonmedicallibrary.blogspot.com/2008/12/american-board-of-medical-specialties.html>

#### **Story #2**

ABMS distributed a press release on Business Wire on Dec. 1, 2008, announcing the appointment of Margaret S. Jung as its new chief operating officer. The following media outlets, listed alphabetically, picked up the press release:

*Bio-Medicine*

Dec. 1, 2008

<http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-news-1/-ABMS-Appoints-Margaret-Jung-As-New-COO-30899-1/>

eMediaWire.com

Dec. 1, 2008

[http://www.emediawire.com/releases/american\\_board/member\\_boards/prweb1690124.htm](http://www.emediawire.com/releases/american_board/member_boards/prweb1690124.htm)

Enhanced Online News (EON)

Dec. 1, 2008

[http://eon.businesswire.com/portal/site/eon/permalink/?ndmViewId=news\\_view&newsId=20081201005868&newsLang=en](http://eon.businesswire.com/portal/site/eon/permalink/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20081201005868&newsLang=en)

PRWeb.com

Dec. 1, 2008

[http://www.prweb.com/releases/american\\_board/member\\_boards/prweb1690124.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/american_board/member_boards/prweb1690124.htm)

Lead411.com

Dec. 3, 2008

[http://www.lead411.com/company.taf?\\_function=detail&Company\\_uid1=368227](http://www.lead411.com/company.taf?_function=detail&Company_uid1=368227)

### Story #3

*News-Leader* (Springfield, Mo.)

“How to Find a Doctor Who’s Right for You”

Nov. 30, 2008

This article is about choosing a qualified physician and offers tips from Dr. Michael Collison, chief medical officer for St. John's Health Plans. Dr. Collison suggests consumers choose three or four doctors with the credentials needed for your treatment and to verify the doctors’ credentials to make sure he or she is well-qualified.

ABMS Mentions: “You can learn about a doctor’s credentials by asking the doctor directly or by checking any of the following resources: The **Official American Board of Medical Specialties Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists** lists only board-certified physicians), by calling the **Certification Verification Line at 866-ASK-ABMS**, or by going to **abms.org**; or consult the American Medical Directory of the American Medical Association.”

<http://www.news-leader.com/article/20081130/NEWS01/811300321>

### Story #4

*Killeen Daily Herald* (Killeen, Texas)

“Things to Consider When Choosing Between Seeing a Primary Care Physician or a Specialist”

Hayley Kappes

Dec. 1, 2008

This article is about when to see a primary care physician versus a specialist. According to the article, that choice is largely dictated by health insurance plans. Dr. Kristy Anderson says going through a general practitioner should be the first step for non-emergency medical problems. “You have more immediate access with a primary care doctor,” said Anderson. “If I feel like their care needs further evaluation with a specialist, a second opinion or a more specialized procedure than what I can do in the office, I will refer them to another doctor,” Anderson said.

ABMS Mentions: “Anderson said a general practitioner used to not be required to complete a three-year residency like specialist doctors. Now more are moving toward that endeavor after medical school and becoming certified by the **American Board of Medical Specialties.**”

<http://www.kdhnews.com/news/story.aspx?s=29654>

#### Story #5

SeymourHerald.com (Seymour, Tenn.)

“How to check-up on your doctors”

Dec. 5, 2008

This article is part of the “Dear Savvy Senior” column. It is in response to a question about how to find and research a new doctor.

ABMS Mention: To check into your doctor’s board certification status, for example, visit the **American Board of Medical Specialties** [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call 866-275-2267.

<http://seymourherald.com/news/2008/dec/05/how-to-check-up-on-your-doctor/>

#### Story #6

ABMS distributed a news release on PR Newswire announcing the appointment of Richard Hawkins, M.D., FACP, as new senior vice president for professional and scientific affairs. The following media outlets, listed alphabetically, picked up the news release:

Bio-Medicine

Dec. 12, 2008

<http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-news-1/-ABMS-Appoints-Richard-Hawkins--MD--FACP-as-New-Senior-Vice-President-for-Professional-and-Scientific-Affairs--32068-1/>

eMediaWire.com

Dec. 12, 2008

[http://www.emediawire.com/releases/american\\_board/member\\_boards/prweb1744294.htm](http://www.emediawire.com/releases/american_board/member_boards/prweb1744294.htm)

Enhanced Online News.com

Dec. 12, 2008

[http://eon.businesswire.com/portal/site/eon/permalink/?ndmViewId=news\\_view&newsId=20081212005463&newsLang=en](http://eon.businesswire.com/portal/site/eon/permalink/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20081212005463&newsLang=en)

PRWeb.com

Dec. 12, 2008

[http://www.prweb.com/releases/american\\_board/member\\_boards/prweb1744294.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/american_board/member_boards/prweb1744294.htm)

**Story #7**

*The Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.)

“Local Physician Receives Honor”

Jack Dew

Dec. 14, 2008

This article is about Dr. Rebecca Johnson being elected president of the American Board of Pathology. According to the article, doctors must meet the board’s standards in order to be certified and must maintain those standards throughout their career. “It is really a lifelong process that a physician engages in,” said Johnson.

ABMS and Specialty Member Board Mention: The **American Board of Pathology** is one of 24 medical specialty boards that make up the **American Board of Medical Specialties.**”

[http://www.berkshireeagle.com/ci\\_11229604](http://www.berkshireeagle.com/ci_11229604)

**Story #8**

TheBizPress.com

“Ready for face-to-face interview? Maybe after a Botox treatment”

Brook Flagg

Dec. 23, 2008

This article is about the rise in plastic surgery for men, which has risen 9 percent since 2000, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons in Arlington Heights, Ill. Even more popular for guys are minimally invasive treatments, such as Botox, which has risen among males by 40 percent in the past eight years.

At the practice of Dr. Stewart Wang, a board-certified plastic surgeon, men make up roughly 10 percent of his clientele. Men often employ their wives or girlfriends to help them research their options. Wang’s patient, whose wife accompanied him to the consultation, said that a surgeon’s board certification was a top priority.

ABMS Mention: “Experts typically recommend checking with the **American Board of Medical Specialties** to verify a surgeon’s certification in the plastic-surgery specialty.”

[http://www.thebizpress.com/news/stories/BP\\_News\\_Local\\_S\\_bp\\_1222\\_plasticsurgery.2a2cb5d.html](http://www.thebizpress.com/news/stories/BP_News_Local_S_bp_1222_plasticsurgery.2a2cb5d.html)

**Story #9**

McClatchy Newspapers/*Columbia Tribune* (Mo.)

“How To: Pick A Doctor”

Dec. 28, 2008

This article is about a book written by Cyndy King, a nursing professor at Queens University of

Charlotte, and her father, retired-physician John King, titled "100 Questions & Answers About Communicating With Your Healthcare Provider." The Kings' advice includes information on how to pick a primary-care doctor and how to "fire" a doctor who doesn't listen.

ABMS Mention: "To find a primary-care provider, ask friends or the local medical society, consult your insurance company's in-network list, or use Web sites such as AMA Physician Select ([webapps.amaassn.org/doctorfinder/home.html](http://webapps.amaassn.org/doctorfinder/home.html)), the **American Board of Medical Specialties ([www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org))** or the Best Hospital Finder from U.S. News and World Report ([health.usnews.com/sections/health/best-hospitals](http://health.usnews.com/sections/health/best-hospitals))."

<http://www.columbiatribune.com/2008/Dec/20081228Puls006.asp>

### Story #10

*Fayetteville Observer* (N.C.)

"Live Wire Blog Q&A"

Catherine Pritchard

Dec. 26, 2008

Catherine Pritchard answers a reader's question about how to find out if a doctor is board certified. She says consumers should ask the doctor if he or she is board certified in their specialty and then contact that board to confirm the information.

ABMS Mentions: "Or, if you're talking certification by one of the 24 boards that belong to the **American Board of Medical Specialties**, you can search online at <http://www.abms.org> or call (866) 275-2267 and ask. The ABMS is the premier standard-setting organizations for physicians...There are dozens of other medical boards out there. The ABMS says some of those boards have applied for membership in its group and have not met the criteria; others have never applied for approval...ABMS says nearly 85 percent of all licensed physicians are certified by one or more of its boards."

<http://www.fayobserver.com/article?id=314116>

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## About the Library

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Monday, December 1, 2008

## American Board of Medical Specialties Website and Favorite TV Doctors Survey

What does "Board Certified" mean?

When choosing a physician, you may see the term "board certified" and wonder what that means! Although all physicians have completed rigorous training and exams in order to be able to diagnose and treat patients, board certified physicians have additional training and have taken board examinations in one or more specialty or sub specialties. There are 145 specialties and subspecialties listed on the American Board of Medical Specialties web site!

Some examples of medical specialties are:

Anesthesiology  
Emergency Medicine  
Family Medicine  
Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Pediatrics  
Psychiatry and Neurology  
Radiology

[A complete listing](#) is available at the [ABMS website](#).

What is the ABMS?

The ABMS is the not-for-profit organization, established in 1933, that helps to coordinate and oversee the education, standards and certification process of the specialty board member organizations. There is a consumer section on their web site where you can look up your physician to see if he or she is "board certified". Just click on the link "Find a Board Certified Specialist Here" on the [ABMS consumer website](#) and register. There is no cost.

Favorite TV Doctor survey:

While you are there, check out the [survey](#) they recently did of which TV doctors that people would most like to have as their own doctor. Gregory House (from the FOX program "House") is America's most loved and most hated TV doctor and the medical professional most would want as their own doctor. Check out the [other results of the survey](#).

Posted by Preston Medical Library at 11:30 AM

Labels: ABMS, board-certified, survey, tv doctors

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**ABMS Appoints Margaret Jung As New COO**

*American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the pre-eminent entity overseeing the certification of physician specialists in the United States, has appointed Margaret S. Jung, MBA, as the organization's new chief operating officer. Her tenure begins today.*

EVANSTON, Ill. (Business Wire EON) December 1, 2008 -- Jung has more than 20 years of experience working in various industries including nonprofit, consulting and financial services. Most recently, Jung was vice president and CFO for the global real estate function of American Express. Earlier in her career, Jung held various financial and management roles at National Futures Association, the self-regulatory organization of the commodities industry, Bostrom Corporation and the Chicago Stock Exchange.

"We are delighted that Margaret has joined our organization," said Kevin B. Weiss, MD, president and CEO of ABMS. Weiss noted that it is an exciting time in ABMS history, with the organization now advancing several new initiatives in conjunction with its 75th anniversary as a trusted public and professional resource. "Margaret's experience, management and leadership skills will be a valuable asset as ABMS and its 24 Member Boards work together to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans."

Jung received her MBA from Northwestern University's J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management and her bachelor's degree in finance and economics from Elmhurst College. She is a resident of Glenview.

**About ABMS**

Now in its 75th year, American Board of Medical Specialties is the pre-eminent medical organization overseeing physician certification in the United States. It assists its 24 Member Boards in their efforts to develop and implement educational and professional standards for the evaluation and certification of physician specialists. ABMS Member Boards provide physician certification information to ABMS for its certification verification service programs. ABMS is recognized by the key healthcare credentialing accreditation entities as a primary equivalent source of board certification data for medical specialists. Patients can visit [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call toll-free 1-866-ASK-ABMS to see if their physician is board certified by an ABMS Member Board. For more information about ABMS visit [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call (847) 491-9091.

The 24 Member Boards that make up the ABMS Board Enterprise covers over 145 medical specialties and subspecialties include: American Board of Allergy and Immunology, American Board of Anesthesiology, American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, American Board of Dermatology, American Board of Emergency Medicine, American Board of Family Medicine, American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Medical Genetics, American Board of Neurological Surgery, American Board of Nuclear Medicine, American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, American Board of Ophthalmology, American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery, American Board of Otolaryngology, American Board of Pathology, American Board of Pediatrics, American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, American Board of Plastic Surgery, American Board of Preventive Medicine, American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, American Board of Radiology, American Board of Surgery, American Board of Thoracic Surgery, and American Board of Urology.

**Contact Information**

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November 30, 2008

## How to find a doctor who's right for you

Here are some tips from Dr. Michael Collison, chief medical officer for St. John's Health Plans, on choosing a qualified physician who is right for you. Some consumers choose a doctor based solely on a friend's recommendation, but experts recommend you do additional homework.

- Choose three or four doctors with the credentials you need for your treatment.
- Verify the doctors' credentials to make sure he or she is well-qualified.

## Find out

- Where the doctor was trained.
- How many years of experience the doctor has in treating your type of condition.
- If he or she is board certified. Specialists are doctors who have had four years of medical school and at least three years of supervised training in their specialty. Doctors receiving this training must pass a rigorous examination and meet specific standards to become certified by one of the organizations recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties and the American Medical Association. X

You can learn about a doctor's credentials by asking the doctor directly or by checking any of the following resources: The Official American Board of Medical Specialties Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists (which lists only board-certified physicians), by calling the Certification Verification Line at 866-ASK-ABMS, or by going to [abms.org](http://abms.org); or consult the American Medical Directory of the American Medical Association. The state or Greene County Medical Society (887-1017) also has information on doctors.

- Other considerations: What hospital is he associated with? What is the reputation of that hospital? Is the doctor's office and the associated hospital close to your home?
- Schedule appointments with those doctors whose credentials checked out and assess the doctors and their staff.

## Ask yourself

- When scheduling the appointment, is the receptionist friendly, prompt and professional? Does she take the time to answer your questions? Were you left on hold for too long? Did she seem knowledgeable about the workings of the office?
- When arriving for your appointment, were you greeted promptly? Was the reception area clean and comfortable? Was the staff friendly and willing to answer your questions?
- When in the exam room, did you have to wait long to see the doctor? Was the exam room orderly and clean? Was there a chair for a family member to sit in?
- When the doctor entered the exam room, did he introduce himself with a smile? Did he seem rushed or tired? Did he wash his hands before examining you? Did his conversation with you seem as

though he looked at your file before greeting you? Did you get a good first impression? Did you feel comfortable talking with him and telling him personal information?

- During the exam, did nurses pop in and out? Did the doctor have to leave the room during your exam? Did the doctor seem caring and compassionate, and sympathetic to your condition? Did the doctor rush through the exam? Did he seem relaxed? Did you feel as though you were the only patient he had to see that day?

- After the exam, did the doctor talk to you about your concerns and ask you if you have questions? Did he seem knowledgeable about your illness, tests, current treatment options and medications? Did he discuss all of your treatment options with you? Did he immediately discredit any treatment options? Did he ask you if you were currently taking any medications?

- When discussing testing and treatment options, was the doctor condescending when you asked for clarification of the information he was giving you? Did he discuss any of his philosophies about treatment? Are they unusual or against the norm? Did he ask for your opinions about treatment and treat you like a partner? If he disagreed with you, how did he address your disagreement?

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## Things to consider when choosing between seeing a primary care physician or a specialist

Posted on: Monday, December 01, 2008, 6:15 AM

By Hayley Kappes  
Killeen Daily Herald

Knowing when to see a primary care physician versus a specialist can be a daunting task, and it is largely dictated by health insurance plans.

If one has an earache, for instance, one can see a general practitioner or schedule an appointment with an otolaryngologist, more commonly known as an ear, nose and throat specialist, to treat the problem.

For some, it's not so easy to book an appointment with a specialist.

Under a Health Maintenance Organization plan (HMO), insurance companies usually will not cover specialist visits without a referral from a primary care physician.

A Preferred Provider Organization plan (PPO) will generally cover appointments scheduled with specialists without a referral.

"As long as someone with a PPO sees a specialist in their network, they're not going to pay an outrageous amount of money," said Ross McClaren, media relations manager with Humana. "If they choose to go directly to a specialist, but don't have a PPO, they'll pay a higher cost for the visit."

Humana calls it an increased share on the member's behalf if they have an HMO, or visiting a doctor out of their network.

McClaren said it's always best to see primary care physicians first. They will provide a referral if the need is there.

Kristy Anderson, M.D., runs a general practice in Copperas Cove. She handles a wide diversity of patients, from infants to senior citizens, and gets to know families personally. She said going through a general practitioner should be the first step for non-emergency medical problems.

"You have more immediate access with a primary care doctor," Anderson said. "If I feel like their care needs further elevation with a specialist, a second opinion or a more specialized procedure than what I can do in the office, I will refer them to another doctor."

Anderson said a general practitioner used to not be required to complete a three-year residency like specialist doctors. Now more are moving toward that endeavor after medical school and becoming certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties. X

The number of primary care doctors dropped 6 percent in the United States from 2001 to 2005, according to the Center for Studying Health System Change.

The Medical Group Management Association released a study showing that specialists saw a near 7 percent increase in the amount they were paid in 2006 over general practitioners.

A problem patients may run into if they bypass seeing a primary care physician is figuring out what kind of specialist will properly diagnose their problem.

"Patients don't always know who to schedule appointments with," said Dr. Rory Lewis, who runs an orthopedic clinic in Killeen. "If a patient has a nasal fracture, they may try to get an appointment with me, but I wouldn't be the right doctor for that type of injury."

There's also an issue of availability.

Generally it's easier to book a more immediate appointment with a primary care physician as opposed to a specialist.

Lewis said he has encountered cases of specialists who are booked out four or five months.

Lewis also has dealt with patients who will jump the gun and book an appointment with a specialist before considering other options.

"For instance, they'll come in with a shoulder pain they've had for two days when they could have tried an anti-inflammatory medication or a general practitioner first," he said. "There was no need to see a specialist as of yet."

Angie Coplin, southwest regional director of communication for Aetna, said it's crucial for patients to be fully aware of what their health insurance plan will and will not provide for them prior to scheduling doctor's appointments.

Become familiar with how to search which doctors are in the network, what the co-pay is and if a referral is needed to affordably see a specialist.

"The health insurance industry is so large and there are so many different plans. It really gets complicated," Coplin said. "When the first of the

year rolls around, it will be prudent for people to know what their benefits are, especially since the economy has taken a downturn."

Contact Hayley Kappes at [hayleyk@kdhnews.com](mailto:hayleyk@kdhnews.com) or (254) 501-7559.

<http://seymourherald.com/news/2008/dec/05/how-to-check-up-on-your-doctor/>

## how to check-up on your doctors

published: December 05 2008 11:40 AM updated:: December 09 2008 04:23 PM *Dear Savvy Senior,*  
*What resources are available that can help me research some doctors in my area? I'm looking for a new primary care doctor for my mother and an orthopedic doctor for me, but I could use some help.*  
*Hunting for Doc's*

### Dear Hunting

Over the years, most people looking for a new doctor have turned to friends, family members, coworkers or doctors they already know for a recommendation. Or many simply pick a physician from their health plan who happens to be nearby, and hope for the best. But today, a growing number of resources are available that can help patients find the best medical care possible. Here's what you should know.

### Finding Dr. Right

The Internet has become the single greatest source for locating and evaluating physicians. Whether you're researching a new doctor or looking to learn more about your current doctor(s) there's a number of online resources that provide basic data on just about every licensed doctor in the U.S. Here are some good ones to help you get started:

- Vitals.com: A free Web resource ([www.vitals.com](http://www.vitals.com)) that will help you locate, evaluate and choose a doctor based on their training, expertise, consumer ratings and recommendations from other doctors. You can also rate doctors and leave comments for others to see. Other sites to check that offer similar services include [www.ratemds.com](http://www.ratemds.com), [www.findadoc.com](http://www.findadoc.com), [www.careseek.com](http://www.careseek.com), [www.thehealthcarescoop.com](http://www.thehealthcarescoop.com) and [www.drscore.com](http://www.drscore.com).
- American Medical Association: Offers a DoctorFinder service (<http://webapps.ama-assn.org/doctorfinder>) that provides free information on virtually every licensed physician in the U.S., including their educational history, medical specialties and hospital admitting privileges.

### Doctor's Check-Up ✕

After you find a few doctors you're interested in, here are some additional sources that can help you dig a little deeper. To check into your doctor's board certification status, for example, visit the American Board of Medical Specialties [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call 866-275-2267. And to learn about any disciplinary actions taken against doctors, your state medical licensing board is your best resource. The Federation of State Medical Boards Web site has direct links to every state board at [www.fsmb.org/directory\\_smb.html](http://www.fsmb.org/directory_smb.html) where you can search for free. Or you can go to [www.docinfo.org](http://www.docinfo.org) and request a physician profile (for \$10) that includes license and disciplinary status.

If you're looking for more information, there are several fee-based services that can help including Health Grades ([www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com)), which provides reports (\$29.95 each) that cover education and training, board certification, professional misconduct or disciplinary action, and satisfaction scores from patients. Consumers' Checkbook ([www.checkbook.org](http://www.checkbook.org)) is another neat service that can help you search for top-rated doctors that have actually been recommended by other doctors. Their database lists 20,000 physicians, in 30 different fields of specialty, in 50 metro areas. They charge \$24.95 for a two-year subscription.

### What to Know

Once you have found a few names of doctors you might want to try, here are some additional things you need to find out, which you can easily do by calling their office:

- Are they accepting new patients?
- Do they accept your specific health insurance plan? You can also find this out by visiting your health plan's Web site. To search for doctors that accept Medicare go to [www.medicare.gov/physician](http://www.medicare.gov/physician), or call 800-633-4227.

- Where is their clinic or office located? Is it easy for you to get to?
- What are the office hours?
- How long does it take to get an appointment?
- Does the doctor have a relationship with the hospital you prefer?
- Is the doctor available after hours or on weekends?
- Does the doctor (or a nurse or physician assistant) give advice over the phone or via e-mail for common medical problems?
- If the doctor is of foreign decent does he/she speak clear, understandable English?



**ABMS Appoints Richard Hawkins, MD, FACP as New Senior Vice President for Professional and Scientific Affairs**

*American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the organization overseeing the certification of physician specialists in the United States, has appointed Richard E. Hawkins, MD, FACP, senior vice president for professional and scientific affairs. Hawkins will assume his new duties Feb. 1, 2009. Along with his other responsibilities, Hawkins will provide leadership to ABMS and its various committees to help promote the science of ABMS Maintenance of Certification® and certification in context of advancing physician assessment programs.*

EVANSTON, Ill. (Business Wire EON) December 12, 2008 -- For more than 20 years, Hawkins has been involved in various initiatives to assess and evaluate physician quality and competency. Currently, Hawkins is the vice president for assessment programs at the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) in Philadelphia - one of nine ABMS Associate Member Boards that partner with ABMS because they, too, focus on improving the quality of medical education and the physician accreditation process. In addition, Hawkins serves on the ABMS Committee on Oversight and Monitoring of Maintenance of Certification (COMMOC), which is responsible for receiving and reviewing reports from ABMS Member Boards about its MOC programs and confirms compliance with the MOC guidelines. The committee also provides recommendations and guidance to the Member Boards regarding program development and implementation.

"We are so pleased that Richard has joined our organization," said Kevin B. Weiss, MD, president and CEO of ABMS. "This is an exciting time at ABMS as we advance several new initiatives designed to improve the quality of U.S. healthcare. Through his work with NBME and serving on the ABMS COMMOC committee, Richard thoroughly understands the board certification landscape, MOC, and the ABMS mission," Weiss said.

Hawkins received his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and completed his residency and internship at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Va. He is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in internal medicine with a subspecialty in infectious disease.

**About ABMS**

Now in its 75th year, American Board of Medical Specialties is the pre-eminent medical organization overseeing physician certification in the United States. It assists its 24 Member Boards in their efforts to develop and implement educational and professional standards for the evaluation and certification of physician specialists. ABMS Member Boards provide physician certification information to ABMS for its certification verification service programs. ABMS is recognized by the key healthcare credentialing accreditation entities as a primary equivalent source of board certification data for medical specialists. Patients can visit [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call toll-free 1-866-ASK-ABMS to see if their physician is board certified by an ABMS Member Board. For more information about ABMS visit [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org) or call (847) 491-9091.

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## **The Berkshire Eagle (Pittsfield, Mass.)**

### **Local Physician Receives Honor**

[http://www.berkshireeagle.com/ci\\_11229604](http://www.berkshireeagle.com/ci_11229604)

By Jack Dew, Berkshire Eagle Staff, Dec. 14, 2008

PITTSFIELD — If pathologists are often called the doctor's doctor, the person to whom physicians turn when they need a diagnosis, Dr. Rebecca Johnson is now a pathologist's pathologist.

Johnson, 56, has been elected president of the American Board of Pathology, the organization that sets the criteria for pathology residency programs, provides certification for pathologists and defines the criteria for competency. It is an honor often handed to doctors at prestigious teaching hospitals and is seldom bestowed on physicians at community hospitals like Berkshire Medical Center.

"I love pathology," Johnson said in an interview. "It is really the foundation of all of medicine ... in that physicians look to us for answers. So whether we provide those answers through lab tests or through examining tissues and cells under the microscope, we are the people who make the diagnosis. The surgeon might be the one who takes the tissue, but it is the pathologist who says whether it is cancer or not."

Johnson, 56, graduated from the Southern Illinois School of Medicine in 1978 and served her residency at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield and Hartford Hospital in Hartford, Conn. She is based at Berkshire Medical Center and is the medical director of Berkshire Health Systems' Department of Pathology and Clinical Laboratories. She is also a clinical professor of pathology at the University of Massachusetts and directs

the pathology training program at BMC.

David Phelps, president of Berkshire Health Systems, said Johnson is "an extraordinary physician, and this latest achievement is further recognition of her national prominence in pathology."

Johnson will serve a one-year term, during which she expects to maintain a full work schedule in Pittsfield and will continue to teach. When her term is completed, she will return as a member of the board.

Doctors must meet the board's standards in order to be certified and must maintain those standards throughout their career. "It is really a lifelong process that a physician engages in," Johnson said, "to show that they have kept current in the field. It is a process of continuing improvement"

Johnson said pathology's lure was strong, even in medical school. "It's always been worth it. I never have had any regrets for my choice of specialty. It is the foundation of medicine. As a pathologist, we maintain such a broad knowledge of all of medicine because we have to know cardiology, immunology; we just reach into every other specialty in medicine."

She also keeps fresh through her teaching, working with residents as they make the transition from medical school to medical doctor.

"It is so much fun," Johnson said. "You bring these people in, they are right out of med school, and over four years of training you have the opportunity to see them blossom and go from being a student to being a colleague. It is very rewarding and probably the best teaching job you can get."

The American Board of Pathology is one of 24 medical specialty boards that make up the **American Board of Medical Specialties.** X



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# HOW TO: PICK A DOCTOR

## McClatchy Newspapers

*Published Sunday, December 28, 2008*

As a child, Cyndy King tagged along with her physician father and watched the way he calmly and tenderly talked with patients.

That model served King well when she became a nurse practitioner and knew the importance of taking time to understand the physical and emotional needs of patients.

But as a patient herself, King has been stung by frustrating encounters with some doctors and nurses.

With those experiences in mind, she readily agreed when a publisher of medical books asked her to write one on how patients can communicate better with their health-care providers and become better advocates for their own health.

King, a nursing professor at Queens University of Charlotte since August, wrote "100 Questions & Answers About Communicating With Your Healthcare Provider" with her now-retired father, John King.

The Kings' advice ranges from how to pick a primary-care doctor to what questions to ask about medicines, test results and diagnoses. The book includes charts to track medicines and pain symptoms, a list of normal values for common laboratory tests and an appendix with helpful Web sites and phone numbers.

First, the Kings describe various health-care providers. They're not just doctors and nurses anymore. Physician assistants and nurse practitioners can diagnose, treat and write prescriptions under supervision of physicians. And they often spend more time with patients than doctors can.

King feels no guilt about "firing" a doctor who doesn't listen.

"Be sure the health-care provider you have is the correct one for your personality and needs - and if not, switch," King said. "Be assertive, not aggressive. ... Another way to put it is to be an active participant in your care."

Five suggestions from King:

- Assess your health-care provider's communications skills by observing written, verbal and nonverbal cues. Look for someone who will treat "the

Caroline Dohack



- Exclamation Points
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Judy Knudson



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whole you" rather than just physical symptoms, take time to talk and explain treatment plans, be willing to let you ask questions and give thorough answers and be available by telephone.

- Keep a notebook organized in three sections - questions before appointments, notes during the appointments and questions, notes and symptoms when you are home.
- Don't use leading questions that indicate the answer you are hoping for, such as "Have you done a significant number of these operations?" More effective: "How many of these operations have you done in the last 12 months?"
- Many doctors' offices now have electronic medical records, and it might save time for them to type your symptoms and comments while you are talking. If this makes you uncomfortable, ask them whether they can type the information after you have left.
- To find a primary-care provider, ask friends or the local medical society, consult your insurance company's in-network list, or use Web sites such as AMA Physician Select ([webapps.amaassn.org/doctorfinder/home.html](http://webapps.amaassn.org/doctorfinder/home.html)), the American Board of Medical Specialties ([www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org)), or the Best Hospital Finder from U.S. News and World Report ([health.usnews.com/sections/health/best-hospitals](http://health.usnews.com/sections/health/best-hospitals)).



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1	3	6						7
2	2	5	8		6	1		
				1	2			
2			1	5				
		1	2	5	5	3		
	6	3						1
	4	8						
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8				6		4	2	

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Published on Friday, December 26, 2008

## E-mail sweepstakes winnings too good to be true

Catherine Pritchard

**Q:** I received an e-mail that said I'd won 1 million euros in an e-mail sweepstakes. It said it was a confirmation e-mail and it had a reference number. Is it legitimate? — O.M., Fayetteville

**A:** What a coincidence.

Just this month, we've also won an e-mail sweepstakes — and actually not just one such sweepstakes, but three! Our winnings total 2.7 million euros — so far. We're not ruling out winning another international e-mail sweepstakes — or two — before the end of the month.

But if we don't, who cares? We can always fall back on the \$19.5 million promised us this month in out-of-the-blue e-mails from strangers in Ivory Coast, Hong Kong and Congo. Can you believe our luck? Or yours?

The answer, of course and unfortunately, is: No.

Your e-mail and ours are from scammers, who want us to respond so they can try to steal our money, not give us theirs. Zillions of these things go out each day. You're best off deleting them as soon as you get them. Don't waste time reading them or wondering what if this time the e-mail's for real. It's not.

The same is generally true of the prize notifications that many people receive in the regular mail. If you don't recall ever entering the contest or if the letter says you have to pay taxes before you can collect your prize, don't believe it — even if the letter includes a check to cover those costs. Those checks are generally realistic-looking fakes. Talk to your bank if you're not sure.

**Q:** How do you find out if a doctor is board certified? — J.J., Fayetteville

**A:** Ask the doctor if he (or she) is certified by a board representing his medical specialty.

If he says he is, you can then contact that board to confirm the information.

Or, if you're talking certification by one of the 24 boards that belong to the American Board of Medical Specialties, you can search online at <http://www.abms.org> or call (866) 275-2267 and ask. X

The ABMS is the premier standard-setting organization for physicians. To become certified by one or more of its boards, a physician must complete three to seven years of extra training in an accredited residency program, then pass oral and written examinations. (That's on top of medical school).

The certification indicates that the physician has completed an approved educational training program and shown that he or she has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to provide quality patient care in that specialty.

There are dozens of other medical boards out there. The ABMS says some of those boards have applied for membership in its group and have not met the criteria; others have never applied for approval.

And there's no law that says a physician must be certified by any board in order to practice. He only needs a license.

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### CATHERINE'S BLOG

**Live  
Wire**



But most physicians are board certified. In fact, ABMS says nearly 85 percent of all licensed physicians are certified by one or more of its boards.

*Live Wire seeks to answer questions of general interest and consumer topics within two weeks. Initials are used to identify questioners when names are given. Contact Live Wire at [livewire@fayobserver.com](mailto:livewire@fayobserver.com), <http://blogs.fayobserver.com/livewire> or 486-3516.*

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**News Release**

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**ABMS Media Contact: Lori Boukas**  
**(847) 563-4531**  
**[lboukas@abms.org](mailto:lboukas@abms.org)**

**ABMS Appoints Margaret Jung As New COO**

**EVANSTON, Ill. — Dec. 1, 2008** — American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the pre-eminent entity overseeing the certification of physician specialists in the United States, has appointed Margaret S. Jung, MBA, as the organization's new chief operating officer. Her tenure begins today.

Jung has more than 20 years of experience working in various industries including nonprofit, consulting and financial services. Most recently, Jung was vice president and CFO for the global real estate function of American Express. Earlier in her career, Jung held various financial and management roles at National Futures Association, the self-regulatory organization of the commodities industry, Bostrom Corporation and the Chicago Stock Exchange.

"We are delighted that Margaret has joined our organization," said Kevin B. Weiss, MD, president and CEO of ABMS. Weiss noted that it is an exciting time in ABMS history, with the organization now advancing several new initiatives in conjunction with its 75th anniversary as a trusted public and professional resource. "Margaret's experience, management and leadership skills will be a valuable asset as ABMS and its 24 Member Boards work together to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans."

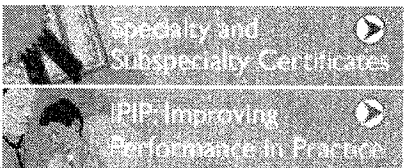
Jung received her MBA from Northwestern University's J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management and her bachelor's degree in finance and economics from Elmhurst College. She is a resident of Glenview.

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- ABMS Appoints Margaret Jung As New COO
- Consumers Weigh in on Which TV Doc They Would Want As Their Own
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- IPIP Asthma Initiative Selected by Alliance for Pediatric Quality
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- Online Physician Ratings: Proceed with Caution
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ABMS Media Contact: Lori Boukas**

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### ABMS Appoints Richard Hawkins, MD, FACP as New Senior Vice President for Professional and Scientific Affairs

**EVANSTON, Ill. — Dec. 10, 2008** — American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the organization overseeing the certification of physician specialists in the United States, has appointed Richard E. Hawkins, MD, FACP, senior vice president for professional and scientific affairs. Hawkins will assume his new duties Feb. 1, 2009. Along with his other responsibilities, Hawkins will provide leadership to ABMS and its various committees to help promote the science of ABMS Maintenance of Certification® and certification in context of advancing physician assessment programs.

For more than 20 years, Hawkins has been involved in various initiatives to assess and evaluate physician quality and competency. Currently, Hawkins is the vice president for assessment programs at the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) in Philadelphia - one of nine ABMS Associate Member Boards that partner with ABMS because they, too, focus on improving the quality of medical education and the physician accreditation process. In addition, Hawkins serves on the ABMS Committee on Oversight and Monitoring of Maintenance of Certification (COMMOC), which is responsible for receiving and reviewing reports from ABMS Member Boards about its MOC programs and confirms compliance with the MOC guidelines. The committee also provides recommendations and guidance to the Member Boards regarding program development and implementation.

"We are so pleased that Richard has joined our organization," said Kevin B. Weiss, MD, president and CEO of ABMS. "This is an exciting time at ABMS as we advance several new initiatives designed to improve the quality of U.S. healthcare. Through his work with NBME and serving on the ABMS COMMOC committee, Richard thoroughly understands the board certification landscape, MOC, and the ABMS mission," Weiss said.

Hawkins received his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and completed his residency and internship at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Va. He is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in internal medicine

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with a subspecialty in infectious disease.

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