

Press Clips

ABMS

“In the News”

December 2009



American Board
of Medical Specialties

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Press Clips, Media & Releases

December 2009

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 2009.

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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Relevant Media

- 1) "The Agenda for Continuing Medical Education – Limiting Industry's Influence" *New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)* – December 17, 2009
- 2) "Primary Care and Accountable Care – Two Essential Elements of Delivery-System Reform" – *New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)* – December 10, 2009
- 3) "Measuring Physicians' Quality and Performance" – *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* – December 9, 2009
- 4) "Effectiveness of Public Report Cards for Improving the Quality of Cardiac Care" - *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* – December 2, 2009

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Press Releases

- 1) "ABMS Annual Report and Certificate Statistics Booklet Now Available" – December 9, 2009
- 2) "The American Board of Medical Specialties And Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Announce New Collaboration To Improve Healthcare Quality And Patient Safety" – December 7, 2009

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Press Clips



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ABMS Monthly Media Report December, 2009

Following is a summary of media coverage identified during the month 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.

ABMS Mentions

Story #1

The following media picked up information from the ABMS press release, distributed last week, about convening its first Board Congress to encourage alignment of healthcare quality improvement efforts (list organized by date, then alphabetically):

Chicago 10
Nov. 30, 2009

<http://chicago10.cityspur.com/2009/11/30/abms-convenes-healthcare-stakeholders-to-align-quality-improvement-goals/>

Story #2

Chicago Tribune

“Child Abuse: Pediatricians Can Now Be Certified to Handle Cases of Abuse and Neglect”

Ofelia Casillas

Dec. 4, 2009

This article is about the creation of a new child abuse sub-specialty that will allow pediatricians across the country to develop an expertise in child abuse and neglect. Kendall Marlowe, spokesman for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, said he expects the new expertise will help protect children from harm and spare parents from being wrongly accused.

ABMS and Specialty Member Board Mentions: “Three years ago, the **American Board of Medical Specialties** approved the new child abuse sub-specialty. The **American Board of Pediatrics** offered the first certification exams in November.”

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/chi-child-abuse-specialty-dec04,0,2249213.story>

Story #3

CNN

“What Really Killed the Beauty Queen?”

Elizabeth Cohen

Dec. 10, 2009

This report is about the dangers of plastic surgery, highlighted by the death of Argentine beauty queen Solange Magnano, who recently died, reportedly of a pulmonary embolism after receiving a silicone injection. While plastic surgery will never be risk-free, the report states, asking questions about board certification, facility accreditation, hospital privileges, and emergency procedures, can help decrease the chances of a deadly complication.

ABMS and Specialty Member Board Mentions: “You want a doctor who’s certified by the **American Board of Plastic Surgery**. You can find one by going to the Web site of the **American Board of Medical Specialties**.”

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/12/10/plastic.surgery.problems/>



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ABMS Convenes Healthcare Stakeholders to Align Quality Improvement Goals

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CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Brought together by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to encourage alignment of healthcare quality improvement efforts, key stakeholders spoke at the first ABMS Board Congress: "MOC That Matters," to discuss the evolving and envisioned role of the ABMS Maintenance of Certification (ABMS MOC) program. Speakers emphasized that the continual evaluation of physician competency that is at the heart of ABMS MOC is crucial and that initia

Originally posted here:

[ABMS Convenes Healthcare Stakeholders to Align Quality Improvement Goals](#)



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What really killed the beauty queen?

By **Elizabeth Cohen**, CNN Senior Medical Correspondent

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Former beauty queen reportedly died of a pulmonary embolism after silicone injections

FDA: For every 100,000 liposuction surgeries, there are between three and 100 deaths

To stay safe: Do not take plastic surgery lightly; be your own investigator; ask five questions

(CNN) – When Argentine beauty queen Solange Magnano approached Dr. Guillermo Blugerman in 2004 about helping her achieve a flatter stomach, the plastic surgeon says, he obliged with liposuction. But when she returned five years later requesting silicone injections for a higher, firmer rear end, he turned her away.

"I said this was not allowed to be done in Argentina," Blugerman said on the telephone from his Buenos Aires office.

Blugerman, the president of the Argentina Association of Medicine and Cosmetic Surgery said he believes Magnano then went in search of someone who would give her the injections she wanted.

"She found someone else to do this with this forbidden material," he said.

The former Miss Argentina died November 29, reportedly of a pulmonary embolism, a blood clot that blocks blood supply to the lungs. Embolisms are known complications of silicone injections though they can occur – rarely – after any surgery. It's still not clear Miss Argentina was given a silicone injection, which is not an approved procedure for "butt lifts" in Argentina or the United States.

Read more about Solange Magnano's death

If silicone injections caused Magnano's death, the lesson learned is an obvious one – seek out unapproved medical procedures at your own peril – but there are many other, more subtle tips for staying safe during plastic surgery.

The first rule is not to take plastic surgery lightly.

"Some people think of cosmetic surgery as not real surgery. They get the impression they're going to a spa," said Dr. Angelo Cuzalina, president-elect of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery. "It's still surgery. You get cut. You bleed."

While complications of plastic surgery are rare, they do happen. For example, for every 100,000 liposuction procedures in the United States, there are between three and 100 deaths, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

The second rule is to be your own investigator.

"It's my impression from being a surgeon that people don't ask enough questions," said Dr. Phil Haeck, president-elect of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

Colleen Fledderman learned that lesson the hard way.

When her 18-year-old daughter, Amy, wanted liposuction in her chin and stomach, she said the surgeon told them that Amy was "zero risk."

"I asked him if there was anything we needed to worry about, like blood clots to the brain, or anything like that, and he said absolutely not," Fledderman said.

The procedure was performed in 2001 in the King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, office of Dr. Richard Glunk. Later that day, Amy was transferred to the hospital, where she died two days later. Her autopsy listed complications of a fat embolism due to liposuction as the cause of death. Her parents filed a wrongful death lawsuit and won \$20.5 million in damages against Glunk and a nurse anesthetist involved in the surgery. The case is on appeal to the Superior Court of Pennsylvania, where it's scheduled to be argued in January.

Glunk said he never told Amy that she was "zero risk" and that Amy was aware of the risks inherent in surgery, including the possibility of death. He said a fat embolism like the one that led to Amy's death is "a tragic, unpredictable, unpreventable event that has no treatment" other than supportive care.


"The informed consent was at all times with Amy. It was her understanding," Glunk said. "The instant that Amy had any problems, 911 was called."

Glunk said there's no doubt in his mind that the verdict against him will be reversed on appeal.

"Even though everything is going to get reversed in the courts, and it will technically be proclaimed that I did nothing wrong, I've had 8½ years of damage that will never be undone," he said. "Any time anyone has a severe complication with surgery it's a horrible tragedy, but the existence of a complication does not mean that a doctor did anything wrong."

While plastic surgery will never be risk-free, asking these five questions can help decrease the chances of a deadly complication.

1. "Doctor, are you board certified?"

You want a doctor who's certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. You can find one by going to the Web site of the American Board of Medical Specialties. 

2. "Doctor, is your office accredited for performing this procedure?"

Most cosmetic procedures are not done in hospitals, but rather in outpatient clinics, according to Cuzalina of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery.

He recommends going to a clinic that's been accredited by a group such as the Joint Commission or the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care. These groups inspect facilities and make sure they're set up to safely perform surgical procedures.

"You're better off going to someone who cared enough to get the proper accreditation," Cuzalina said.

3. Doctor, what's your prevention plan for deep vein thrombosis?

One of the more common complications of plastic surgery is a DVT, where a blood clot forms in a deep vein, usually in the leg. The clot can then break loose and travel to the lungs, causing a pulmonary embolism.

Haeck of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons said doctors should have a plan to prevent DVTs, which may include wearing special stockings during surgery, walking as soon possible after surgery, and looking out for early warning signs of complications, such as leg pain or shortness of breath.

4. Doctor, do you have privileges at a hospital to perform this procedure?

Even though you likely won't be in the hospital, you want to know if a hospital has deemed your doctor skilled enough to perform the procedure in their facility.

"The hospital is the judge of the physician's abilities," Haeck said. "If a surgeon says he doesn't have privileges at a local hospital to do the procedure, that should be a red flag."

If the surgeon says he does have privileges, call the hospital and double-check.

5. Doctor, how many of these procedures have you done?

"Good surgeons expect you to research them and won't be afraid to answer personal or tough questions," Haeck said.

When you find out how many times a doctor has performed a procedure, go to other plastic surgeons and compare.

In addition to asking these five questions, here are two more tips. Beware of trying to do too much at once. Lumping together several procedures can increase the chances you're going to have a problem.

"With any major surgery, the longer the surgery and the more invasive the surgery, the higher your chances of developing a blood clot," Cuzalina said.

Also, make sure you talk to your doctor about whether you need to go off certain medications before surgery. For example, birth control pills and estrogen supplements increase your chance of getting a blood clot, and doctors often recommend stopping them several weeks before surgery.

Doctors also sometimes want patients to stop taking herbs such as ginkgo and concentrated garlic, which can lead to excessive bleeding.

CNN's John Bonifield and Sabriya Rice contributed to this report.

Links referenced within this article



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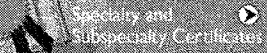


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- Seek Out Credentials Before Choosing A Physician
- Standards for ABMS MOC® (PARTS 1-4) Program - Approved March 16, 2009
- ABMS National Policy Forum Values MOC



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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The American Board Of Medical Specialties And Blue Cross And Blue Shield Association Announce New Collaboration To Improve Healthcare Quality And Patient Safety

CHICAGO—Dec. 7, 2009 – The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) announced today that they have created a formal collaboration to work together toward mutual goals of improving healthcare quality, patient safety and affordability. The unique collaboration between ABMS and BCBSA will explore strategies to improve healthcare delivery, optimize professional development and enhance consumer understanding of the value of this healthcare information.

ABMS is a medical organization made up of 24 Member Boards that oversee physician certification in the U.S. It assists the Member Boards in their efforts to develop and implement educational and professional standards for the evaluation and certification of physician specialists with the public's interest as their primary concern.

Initially, the focus of the relationship between ABMS and BCBSA will be promoting the value of both board certification and Maintenance of Certification, a process designed to document that physician specialists, certified by ABMS Member Boards, maintain the necessary competencies to provide quality patient care. Over time, the collaboration will expand to include other ways of ensuring patient safety.

"I am confident that this collaboration will help us bring greater value to doctors who are involved in ABMS Maintenance of Certification® as well as value to patients and the public at large," said Kevin B. Weiss, MD, president and CEO of ABMS. "This supports ABMS' efforts to continue to create alignments with the major stakeholders and influencers on healthcare, such as BCBSA, whose 39 independent licensees cover more than 100 million lives."

BCBSA will explore ways to support ABMS in communicating the value of certification to the public and educate consumers and key stakeholders of ABMS' commitment to career-long professional development and quality within the physician community. Concurrently, ABMS will also lead an effort to increase public knowledge and understanding of board certification, Maintenance of Certification and how it differs from state licensing requirements, and to make its certification process more transparent.

"We look forward to working with ABMS, a national leader in physician certification, on this unique opportunity to enhance the value of board certification and effectively communicate to physicians and patients the importance of professional development and how it can lead to increased healthcare quality," said Allan Korn, MD, senior vice president and chief medical officer, BCBSA. "This relationship emphasizes Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies' commitment to delivering quality, affordable healthcare to all Americans."

About American Board of Medical Specialties

For over 75 years, American Board of Medical Specialties is the 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 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 or call 312.436.2600.

The 24 Member Boards that make up the ABMS Board Enterprise, cover over 145 medical specialties and subspecialties, and 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.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 39 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for more than 100 million members – one-in-three Americans. For more information on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and its member companies, please visit www.BCBS.com.

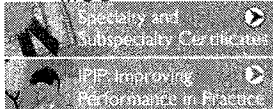


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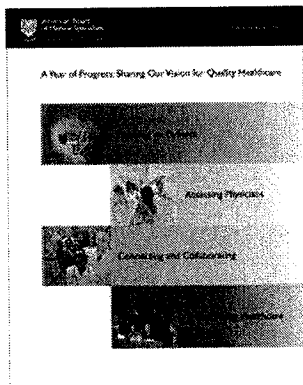
News Release

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ABMS Annual Report and Certificate Statistics Booklet Now Available

CHICAGO, Ill. – Dec. 9, 2009 - Find out how the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) is helping to improve the quality of healthcare in the United States and access statistics pertaining to board certification by viewing the newly released 2009 Annual Review and Certification Statistics publications now available at http://www.abms.org/Products_and_Publications/.



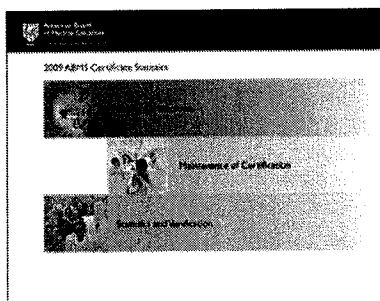
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The Annual Review, "A Year of Progress: Sharing Our Vision for Quality Healthcare" highlights the key projects, programs and collaborations for the benefit the public trust. It outlines how these efforts and accomplishments align with the historic national effort to enact major healthcare reform by:

- Offering clear, accessible information about board certification and board certified physicians;
- Creating lifelong learning activities to assure that physicians keep current on the latest practices and treatments;
- Working with healthcare industry leaders to analyze the relationship between physician standards and improving healthcare quality; and
- Educating legislators on the importance of board certification in a quality-driven world.

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The Certificate Statistics booklet has been revised to include four new tables: Relationship of ABMS with Other Organizations, ABMS Member Board Requirements for Subspecialty Certification, Administering Board for Subspecialty Certificates Offered by Multiple Boards and ABMS Member Board Requirements for Maintenance of Certification. The tables have been grouped into categories with introductory text relating to board certification, becoming board certified, statistics and verification information and ABMS Maintenance of Certification® (MOC). Some general certificate statistics include:



- In 2008, a total of 25,307 general certificates were issued to physicians by the 24 ABMS Member Boards. Since 1999, these boards have issued a total of 242,658 general certificates.
- The following boards issued the greatest number of general certificates in 2008:
 - American Board of Internal Medicine – 6,916
 - American Board of Family Medicine – 2,759
 - American Board of Pediatrics – 2,862
 - American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology – 2,276

A total of 766,445 U.S. physicians hold general certificates from ABMS Member Boards (according to current July 2009 data). The states reporting the greatest number of board certified physicians are:

- California (85,536)
- Florida (39,281)
- New York (60,762)
- Texas (43,837)
- Pennsylvania (34,313)

Read the ABMS Annual Review online at www.abms.org or order a free copy. The Certification Statistics publication may be ordered at a cost of \$6. Other publications are also available online.

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