

# ABMS Maintenance of Certification

## One Specialist's Story

### Kim L. Isaacs, MD, PhD Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine

*“Maintenance of Certification to me, is more than a test. I think of it as ongoing continuing medical education.”*

When she renewed her Gastroenterology certification through the American Board of Internal Medicine's Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program, Dr. Kim Isaacs gave herself ample time to prepare. “I spread things out so as to not get overwhelmed and I studied in spurts,” said Dr. Isaacs. “I found the secure exam very reasonable. The case-based questions were challenging, but reflected things we might see in practice.”

Dr. Isaacs opted to complete the colonoscopy Practice Improvement Module (PIM) for self-evaluation of practice performance credit. She found the chart review techniques very useful. “One of the areas the PIM helped me to identify for improvement was the turnaround time for pathology follow-up. Because we check our own pathology reports, I wrote the patient follow-up letters myself and had to tell patients it could take up to three weeks for them to hear from me.” As she examined this practice, she realized that by creating a series of letter templates for commonly-found pathologies, she could reduce the time it took to prepare the letters. Now all of her letters go out to patients within seven days. “As a result, my practice is now a bit more efficient and patients are able to get the answers they need in a more timely fashion,” she added.

Dr. Isaacs cites ABIM's medical knowledge modules as a great way to identify weaknesses. “For example, while I'm very familiar with inflammatory bowel disease, I haven't worked with liver diseases in quite a while. These modules helped me to identify further areas of study so I could then go into the literature to ‘bone up’. I now feel more secure in the knowledge I share when teaching Fellows.”

*Dr. Isaacs holds general board certification in Internal Medicine and subspecialty certification in Gastroenterology from the American Board of Internal Medicine. Her clinical interests include Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Dr. Isaacs earned her medical and graduate degrees from the State University of New York at Stony Brook Health Science Center School of Medicine.*



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