



**American Board  
of Medical Specialties**

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

American Board of Medical Specialties  
353 North Clark Street, Suite 1400  
Chicago, IL 60654  
T: (312) 436-2600  
F: (312) 436-2700

[www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org)

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**ABMS Media Contact:** Rich Waters  
(312) 436-2626  
[rwaters@abms.org](mailto:rwaters@abms.org)

### **ABMS Names the University of Missouri School of Medicine as this Year's Recipient of its Quality Improvement Award**

***Annual award honors outstanding achievement in patient care quality, safety, outcomes,  
and experiences***

CHICAGO – September 24, 2019 – The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the leading not-for-profit organization overseeing physician certification in the United States, has awarded the University of Missouri School of Medicine (MU SOM) as this year's ABMS Portfolio Program™ (Portfolio Program) Outstanding Achievement in Quality Improvement Award recipient.

The award, announced at ABMS Conference 2019, was established in 2018 to recognize the exemplary efforts and activities of Portfolio Program Sponsors that are working to improve patient care quality, safety, outcomes, and experiences. The organizations recognized will have demonstrated leadership and innovation in quality improvement (QI) planning, implementation, and the ability to spread and sustain QI initiatives and outcomes in their organization.

The MU SOM Multi-Specialty Portfolio Program was selected based on the QI excellence it demonstrated in its implementation of the Asthma Ready® Communities (ARC)-sponsored Asthma Care Accelerator (ACA) Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO®) QI project, an inner-city initiative seeking to decrease the rate of uncontrolled asthma. Based on a community needs assessment of stakeholder and family focus groups, the project launched in 2018 with an in-depth understanding of contributing factors involved as well as an array of effective interventions. Interdisciplinary and inter-professional in its structure and framework, the project created a learning collaborative to implement asthma practice changes in alignment with national guidelines. Activities included the use of objective measures for assessing airflow and coaching patients for optimal inhalation technique, educational program for school nurses, standardized asthma self-management education across settings, verification of dispensing rates, and electronic run charts to track practice changes. The ACA initial pilot resulted in increased use of inhaled corticosteroids with improved disease control and decreased risks. ACA is now available across the entire state of Missouri.

“It is our privilege to recognize the outstanding work of the University of Missouri School of Medicine by honoring them as the recipient of the second ABMS Portfolio Program Outstanding Achievement in Quality Improvement Award,” stated ABMS President and Chief Executive Officer Richard E. Hawkins, MD. “Working with organizations such as MU SOM illustrates how ABMS and its Member Boards, in

partnership with a wide range of health care organizations, can impact patient safety and practice improvement. Through our collaboration with Portfolio Program Sponsors, we are helping to make practice and system changes that improve the care of patients, families, and the communities we serve.”

“Our ARC team is honored to accept this prestigious award and equally grateful for the amazing contributions and tremendous commitment of frontline asthma champions throughout Missouri who skillfully participated in the ACA ECHO QI project in Kansas City, and online via the ECHO collaborative. The dedication of health care professionals to tackle local workflow challenges needed to promote population health and build resilient partnerships throughout Missouri with school nurses, community health workers, and home environmental assessors has collectively been a key driver in the success of the ACA ECHO QI program,” stated Ben Francisco, PhD, PNP, AE-C, Professor, Pulmonary Medicine & Allergy, University of Missouri School of Medicine, Department of Child Health, and Director, ARC. “Furthermore, it is important to recognize the steadfast leadership and supporting contributions of MU SOM, MU SOM Child Health, Missouri Telehealth Network Show-Me ECHO®, ECHO® Institute, Health Forward Foundation (<https://healthforward.org/>), MU Center for Health Policy, MO HealthNet (Missouri Medicaid), Missouri Asthma Prevention and Control Program, Black Health Care Coalition, MU Extension, and the MU SOM Center for Continuing Medical Education & Physician Lifelong Learning, along with a variety of very special learning health systems throughout Kansas City and beyond.”

“This year’s submissions were all wonderful examples of how this program can help exact meaningful practice improvement, engaging team members across the continuum of care all for the benefit of their patients,” Dr. Hawkins noted.

To date, the ABMS Portfolio Program has helped engage physicians in QI/practice improvement initiatives at hospitals and health systems across the country, with many showing improvement in care outcomes. Since its inception, more than 3,400 improvement efforts have been completed by 18,000 individual Portfolio Program participants. For more information about participation in the Portfolio Program, visit the program website at [mocportfolioprogram.org](http://mocportfolioprogram.org).

###

#### **About ABMS**

Established in 1933, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) is the leading not-for-profit organization overseeing physician certification in the United States. ABMS establishes the standards its 24 Member Boards use to develop and implement educational and professional evaluation, assessment, and certification of physician specialists. More than 900,000 physicians are certified in one or more of the approved 40 specialties and 87 subspecialties offered by the [ABMS Member Boards](#). For more information about ABMS, visit [abms.org](http://abms.org) or call (312) 436-2600.

#### **About the University of Missouri School of Medicine**

The MU School of Medicine has improved health, education and research in Missouri and beyond for more than 170 years. MU physicians treat patients from every county in the state, and more Missouri physicians received their medical degrees from MU than from any other university. For more information, visit <http://medicine.missouri.edu/>