



**American Board
of Medical Specialties**

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NEWS RELEASE

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American Board of Medical Specialties Announces New, Focused Practice Designation

Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine is the first designation approved

CHICAGO – March 14, 2017 -The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) approved the establishment of a new Focused Practice designation at its March 2017 Board of Directors meeting. Focused Practice recognizes areas of practice that either evolve as physicians and specialists progress throughout their professional careers or emerge as medicine changes due to advances in medical knowledge. In 2010, the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) and the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) began offering a Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine pilot, which subsequently became the first Focused Practice designation approved by the ABMS Board of Directors.

Focused Practice is not intended to be a form of initial certification, since it defines or recognizes areas of additional experience or focus within recognized specialties or subspecialties. This designation will recognize an evolution of practice that occurs following initial certification and is relevant to continuing certification. Proposed areas of Focused Practice will go through an approval process that is similar to the one used for a new specialty or subspecialty. Approved areas of Focused Practice will be offered by ABMS Member Boards to diplomates who are already Board Certified in an established, approved specialty or subspecialty and who have met specific criteria including the length of time they have focused in the particular area, as well as the number of patients they have treated or procedures they have performed.

“ABMS and its Member Boards understand that over time, many physicians develop extensive experience in a focused area of their actual specialty or subspecialty,” stated ABMS President and Chief Executive Officer Lois Margaret Nora, MD, JD, MBA. “Focused Practice will enable Member Boards to recognize areas of specific expertise of their diplomates and allow those physicians to concentrate their continuing certification efforts in the very area on which much of their professional practice is based.”

The ABIM/ABFM Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine pilot was conducted over a seven-year period and involved more than 2,500 physicians Board Certified in either Internal Medicine or Family Medicine whose practices were focused in Hospital Medicine. Nearly 800 more diplomates have expressed interest in earning the designation.

“In addition to the newly established Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine designation, the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology is piloting Focused Practice in Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology,” stated Mira Irons, MD, ABMS Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs. “As physician practice patterns continue to evolve and in some cases further narrow in focus, we anticipate that many of our 24 Member Boards will begin establishing areas of Focused Practice that are relevant to their diplomates. And for patients and their families, this designation will serve as additional evidence that their physician is offering quality care not only in their specialty or subspecialty, but a specific practice area that will address their health care needs.”

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About ABMS

Established in 1933, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) continues to be 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 860,000 physicians are certified in one or more of the approved 37 specialties and 86 subspecialties offered by the [ABMS Member Boards](#). For more information about ABMS, visit abms.org or call (312) 436-2600.

The 24 Member Boards that comprise the ABMS Boards Community include the 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 and Genomics, 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.