

ABMS continuing certification helps physicians focus their learning and stay up to date with current developments in their specialty

Why does this matter? Increased years in practice is associated with¹:

Skill and knowledge retention decline

More experienced physicians are generally believed to have accumulated knowledge and skills during years in practice and therefore to deliver high-quality care. In fact, the opposite can be true.

- Studies have reported decreasing performance with increasing years in practice.
- Studies that assessed physician knowledge found that physician knowledge declines with years in practice.

Lower adherence to evidence-based standards of care

Evidence suggests that experience is not enough to guarantee high quality medical care. In fact, physicians who have been in practice longer can be at risk for providing lower quality care.

- Each year since graduation from medical school is associated with a 0.5% increase in patient mortality.
- Each decade since graduation from medical school is associated with a 4.5% increase in patient mortality.

Worse patient outcomes

Evidence suggests that physicians in practice longer are less likely to embrace new standards of care and adopt newer and more effective treatment.

- Physicians' knowledge and habits are formed during training and may not adapt to new evidence about standards of care.
- Physicians may have difficulty adopting innovations that involve theoretical shifts, such as invasive surgery for early-stage breast cancer.

Physicians under 40 are:

More likely to believe in proven therapies

Less likely to believe in therapies that have been disproven

Physicians in practice longer are:

Less likely to follow current standards of care for diagnostic and screening tests

Less likely to follow standards of care

¹Choudry NK, Fletcher RH, Soumerai SB. Systematic Review: The relationship between clinical experience and quality of health care. *Ann Intern Med.* 2005;142(4):260-73.



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advocacy.abms.org

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