



American Board of Family Medicine Creates Examination Alternative Option for 2019

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) is pleased to announce a pilot program to begin in January 2019 that will assess the value and feasibility of a longitudinal assessment option to the 10-year secure examination. Jerry Kruse, MD, Chair of the ABFM Board of Directors, announced this news today to family physicians attending the 2018 American Academy of Family Physicians Congress of Delegates in New Orleans. Physicians who are current with continuous certification and are due to take the examination in 2019 would be eligible to participate in the pilot. Dr. Kruse stated, "based on the popular Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment (CKSA) platform, the longitudinal assessment pathway will deliver 25 questions online each quarter to those Diplomates who choose this new option. This approach is more aligned with the ongoing changes in medicine and draws upon adult learning principles, combined with modern technology, to promote learning, retention and transfer of information. Over time, we will be able to assess the core clinical knowledge of board-certified family physicians and recognize the vast majority who work to keep up to date to take care of their patients."

A combination of physician experience with the CKSA platform, feedback from Diplomates over time, the independent survey, and information gleaned from the experience of other ABMS boards, all contributed to ABFM's design of the new online, longitudinal assessment process that will serve as the exam option for this pilot.

The ABFM has two years of Diplomate experience with the CKSA platform. Feedback from the more than 24,000 family physicians who have participated in CKSA has consistently shown that this model provides continuous, systematic learning and identification of knowledge gaps, and is highly rated as a useful and convenient platform.

"We believe that longitudinal assessment can meet many of the needs and desires we have heard voiced by family physicians," said Dr. Warren Newton, incoming President and CEO of ABFM. "It will provide questions on a regular, longitudinal basis, in a format that is much more convenient—a few questions at a time, in the place and time of your choice. You may use clinical references during the assessment, much like you do in practice. You will not need to travel to a test center, nor spend additional time and money on preparatory courses. And, we believe that longitudinal assessment will support your desire for continued learning and practice improvement."

The pilot program was approved by the ABFM Board of Directors earlier this month. In November, it will be presented for approval to the American Board of Medical Specialties' (ABMS) Committee on Continuing Certification. More details will be forthcoming after this final approval step from ABMS. Throughout the pilot, regular feedback will be sought from participants, which will be used to inform program modifications for the future.

The VAFP will also continue to update our membership on the changes at the ABFM. If you have questions, please call the VAFP at 804-968-5200 or the ABFM at 888-995-5700.