

Nicole M. Johnson, MD
17621 Schenely Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44119
nicolemj@outlook.com

Health Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Proponent Testimony
October 11, 2017

Testimony in Support of Ohio HB 273

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the House Health Committee:

I am an Ohio physician certified by the American Board of Pediatrics in General Pediatrics and Pediatric Critical Care Medicine. I fully support Ohio HB 273. Across the country, bills are appearing in state House and Senate chambers regarding Maintenance of Certification (MOC®). MOC® is a trademarked product owned by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). The ABMS is predominantly a team of non-physicians and non-practicing physicians who represent the insurance companies and hospital systems (aka, lobbyists). The ABMS has touted this program as the only system of physician education that assures physician competency and high quality of care for patients.

Here is what the ABMS and other medical organizations don't tell you. Continuous MOC® is a business. It was initially implemented without any evidence that it would benefit physicians or patients. It has since grown into a major industry that only benefits hospital executives, insurance companies, and the executives of the ABMS and its 24 member boards. It costs physicians nearly **\$1 billion annually (over \$23,000 and 32.7 million physician-hours of time per doctor every 10 years)**^{1 2}. It also forces physicians to choose from a preset list of educational modules, much of the material being irrelevant to the daily practice of physicians. It has never shown any benefit to patient care or to physician quality of care.³ There is no evidence that physician competency (at any age) is improved by MOC® and MOC® replicates the Continuous Medical Education (CME) we already are required to do in order to maintain our license to practice medicine in each state. Thus, the ABMS is forcing physicians to comply with an unnecessary, mostly irrelevant, financially and time-costly, and repetitive mandated computer-testing exercise. This is the equivalent to mandating commercial airline pilots to take time away from flying to take flight simulation training classes in military helicopters every 10 years in order to maintain their ability to fly commercial.

The ABMS, member boards, and other medical organizations also won't tell you that the MOC® product was designed to keep the boards in operation. For example, the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) which "certifies" one quarter of all US physicians, is currently \$52 million dollars in debt (according to its most recently-available public tax returns).⁴ All the while their executives are compensated three- or four-times the salaries of the average working physician at the expense of these working physicians. The ABMS also sells our testing information for profit to ABMS Solutions, a *for-profit* corporation based in Georgia.⁵ Research on physicians and their practices is performed without our

¹ <http://www.newsweek.com/abim-american-board-internal-medicine-doctors-revolt-372723>

² <http://annals.org/aim/issue/934458>

³ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2020369>

⁴ https://www.pamedsoc.org/PAMED_Downloads/MOCpanelKroll.pdf

⁵ <http://www.abmssolutions.com/>

informed consent or Institutional Review Board oversight, which possibly violates federal law on human subjects research. Additionally, tax forms have indicated that the ABIM and ABMS transfer physician testing fees to the ABIM foundation in the Cayman Islands.⁶

These boards and organizations also will not tell you that CMS regulations prevent hospitals and other private employers of physicians to base credentialing and privileges solely on board certification.⁷ They also won't tell you that the ABMS and its member boards are not the only board certification entity available. National Board of Physicians and Surgeons (NBPAS) exists as a reputable alternative to maintaining board certification. Its existence is only necessary to help physicians across the country escape the extortion of ABMS and its MOC® product. It asks a small fee and no additional time from physicians than the all-ready required hours of CME needed for licensing maintenance. NBPAS certification is accepted by at least 61 hospitals throughout the United States.⁸ Yet, hospital associations and other medical organizations will not support efforts to end MOC®. There is no acceptable explanation for this.

For all of these reasons I ask you to end the onerous and ineffective burden of the ABMS MOC® program on practicing US physicians and patient care. Support and pass HB 273 and support physicians and patients in Ohio. Help Ohio become the 9th state to end MOC® and restore the integrity of the US healthcare system.

Respectfully,



Nicole M. Johnson, MD
Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
Pediatric Sedation

⁶ <http://drwes.blogspot.com/2014/12/the-abim-foundation-choosing-wisely-and.html>

⁷ <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title42-vol5/pdf/CFR-2011-title42-vol5-sec482-12.pdf>

⁸ <https://nbpas.org/>