

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Betsy Williams, PhD, MPH

President, Society for Academic Continuing Medical Education

Unfortunately, despite the passage of several months, we continue to face and confront significant challenges associated with COVID-19 and racial inequality. I am hopeful that despite these challenges, each of you continues to do well personally and professionally. As new medical information continues to emerge on a daily basis, our organization's commitment to promoting the highest value in patient care and health of the public through the scholarship of continuing medical and inter-professional education is even more critically important. But an equally important strength and benefit of SACME is its incredible sense of community and ongoing support to its members. That sense of community and support have been invaluable to me these past several weeks as I have had to navigate both professional and personal challenges. I encourage you to reach out to me, the Board and/or one of your colleagues whether it be to get a specific question answered, just to chat, or for support.

Planning for our 2021 annual conference, that will be held virtually February 24-26, is well under way. I am delighted to report that the program that is being created addresses the diverse needs of our membership. At this critical time when offices are rapidly shifting content and delivery methods because of the pandemic, we recognize that knowledge, skills, and practical advice about operational elements of a CME/CPD office and expanding knowledge and skills in program evaluation and scholarship are critical to our constituents. We also recognize the importance of content and activities that promote well-being, leadership, ongoing engagement, and a sense of community.

Our theme for this year's event, *Art and Science of CPD: New Technology, New Knowledge, New Learning* not only captures our new reality in this time of pandemic but also the historic momentum of the social justice movement.

Our plenary sessions and oral abstract presentations will address strategies for building personal and professional resilience, showcase innovative approaches to the use of technology that fosters growth in CME/CPD programming, and describe methods to create a culture of belonging and inclusion in our organizations and in our activities.

continued on page 2



In This Issue

The President's Perspective	1
Updates from the Academy of Fellows	3
Updates from the AAMC	4
Updates from the ACCME	7
Updates from the ABMS	10

Highlights of the program include:

Keynote Speaker:

Julio Frenk, MD, MPH, PhD, President, University of Miami, and Professor of Public Health Sciences, Health Sector Management and Policy, and Sociology. Dr. Frenk will share his insights and wisdom, global perspective, and ideas on educational reform along with his upbeat and energetic view on the promises of tomorrow vis-a-vis medical education.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion Panel

- Ndidi Unaka, MD, Pediatric Hospitalist & Associate Pediatric Residency Director at Cincinnati Children's Hospital
- William Ross, MD, Professor of Medicine at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and Associate Dean for Diversity Programs
- Nita Mosby Tyler, PhD, Chief Catalyst and Founder of The Equity Project and former Senior Vice President and Chief Inclusion Officer for Children's Hospital Colorado will bring insight and inspiration to the sensitive and critical topic of racial inequality

Longitudinal programming including pre-conference activities will be available for registrants and include the option to sign up for interactive workshops on key topics. For complete program and registration information visit: <https://www.sacme.org/Annual-Meeting>

I look forward to seeing you all virtually in February. In the meantime, stay safe!



UPDATES FROM THE ACADEMY OF FELLOWS

By William F. Rayburn, MD, MBA, Chair, Academy of Fellows

The Academy of SACME Fellows is an organization consisting of pre-eminent individuals recognized for their long-term contributions to academic continuing medical education and professional development. The Academy is not merely an honorific group rather one that engages SACME leaders and members in pursuing innovative programs and lofty goals to advance the field. What follows is a summary of events since our last INTERCOM issue 3 months ago.

New Technologies Committee

The SACME Board of Directors recently discussed where to best position this committee within SACME. The Board discussed whether New Technology should be a new independent SACME committee or a subcommittee of an existing SACME committee. The Board voted to gather more data and prepare a final recommendation before our 2021 annual SACME meeting. Many thanks to Dr. John Parboosingh for his assistance in this effort.

Review of Abstracts for 2021 Annual SACME Meeting

The call for abstracts closed October 11th. Several Academy Fellows have volunteered to provide their expertise in reviewing the abstracts. They will be working with the Scholarship Committee in this effort.

Task Force on the Organizational Relationship of the Academy of Fellows to SACME

The Academy continues to define and develop its roles in contributing to SACME. A new task force, requested by the SACME Board and appointed by President Williams, was formed. The charge of the Task Force is to consult with various stakeholders, including SACME Committee Chairs and SACME Academy of Fellows Committee Chairs, to determine, in the best interest of the Society's members: (a) how best to define the identity, responsibilities, and financial needs of the SACME Academy of Fellows and (b) its formal administrative relationship to the SACME Board of Directors, Strategic Affairs Committee, and all other standing committees of the Board, and to provide to the Board a written recommendation on

what the SACME Academy of Fellows' organizational identity, responsibilities, financial needs, and formal administrative relationship to SACME. The task force consists of Academy and senior SACME members. The target date for the report is December 1, 2020. More information will be available at the next INTERCOM issue.



Mentor/Mentee Program Update

Dr. Jack Kues has presented survey data from the immediate past mentors and mentees. Those findings will be incorporated into guidelines of the next program. President Williams has suggested that additional data and discussions occur so that there can be a clearer understanding of the purpose of the program, selection criteria of the mentees and mentors, scope of services being asked of the Academy members, level and nature of support of the Academy, and how broad the program can be. We will have a report presented as part of the 2021 meeting.

Pre-2021 SACME Annual Meeting Workshops

The SACME Program Committee working with Academy Fellows has agreed to offer a faculty development workshop facilitated by Dr. Don Moore, and a leadership workshop, facilitated by Dr. Moss Blachman and Dr. Barbara Barnes. It is anticipated that both Academy and non-Academy SACME members will serve as faculty.

Topics at Quarterly Academy Meetings

Much of the focus of our past Academy meeting pertained to the mentor/mentee program. Our next meetings in late October and December will focus on recommendations from the Academy to the SACME Board about faculty development and leadership. Dr. Don Moore intends to provide survey data about the needs of the SACME membership for faculty development.

We would appreciate hearing from you, the SACME members, about any ideas or needs.

UPDATES FROM THE AAMC

By Lisa Howley, MEd, PhD, Sr Director of Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships lhowley@aamc.org

The AAMC advances key initiatives and provides opportunities to discuss and promote medical education. Below are updates that are relevant to our colleagues in continuing medical education and continuing professional development.

During these uncertain and challenging times, we extend our deep appreciation for all of those working in academic medicine and healthcare more broadly. Whether you are an educator supporting the development needs of those providing care for patients, a researcher working towards the discovery of new knowledge, or an educational researcher working towards the translation of the science of learning into clinical practice, we thank you for your continued commitment and service to our field. Like many of our affiliate organizations, we have been designing and enhancing our programs, offerings, and methods of support for our members and affiliates. If there are other ways we can be supportive, please reach out. We would like to hear from you!

AAMC Releases Strategic Plan to Respond to Rapidly Changing Health Care Landscape

The AAMC has released its new strategic plan, “A Healthier Future for All.” Developed by the AAMC Board of Directors and leadership team, with extensive input from the community of academic medicine — including the CPD community — and AAMC staff, the plan outlines 10 action steps to realize the AAMC’s new vision of “a healthier future through learning, discovery, health care, and community collaborations.” Several of the focus areas have direct impact on the work and priorities of faculty, including topics designed to strengthen medical education, support students, increase diversity and inclusion, prioritize science, and promote health equity and health justice.

Important AAMC Leadership Announcement

On September 17, David J. Skorton, MD, announced that AAMC chief academic officer John Prescott, MD, will be retiring at the end of 2020 after 40 years as a practicing physician, medical school dean, and 12 years

of distinguished service at the AAMC. Additionally, Dr. Skorton announced the decision to combine two AAMC clusters: the Academic Affairs cluster and the Medical Education cluster, led by Alison Whelan, MD, into a new cluster under her leadership. Since joining the AAMC in 2016, Dr. Whelan has dramatically strengthened the AAMC’s connections to the medical education community and broadened the association’s efforts to advance and work *across* the continuum of medical education to meet our society’s evolving health needs. Bringing the two clusters together in the organization will leverage both teams’ strengths and create even more opportunities to strengthen the AAMC’s commitment to the continuum, academic affairs, and medical education initiatives and operations.



Select Major Initiatives and Events

Register Now for Learn Serve Lead 2020: The Virtual Experience

Registration is now open for Learn Serve Lead 2020: The Virtual Experience, which will begin Nov. 16-18 with extended medical education content being offered into 2021. The meeting will tackle academic medicine’s most significant challenges head-on while providing an opportunity for attendees to reconnect with colleagues and make new virtual connections. During four live plenaries, the Voices of Medicine and Society series, and 30 breakout sessions, attendees will hear how leaders in academic medicine are paving the way to confront the issues of today and tomorrow. Additional content will be released in the months following the meeting. To register, visit: www.aamc.org/professional-development/events/learn-serve-lead

AAMC Collection of Stories and Poems Focused on Times of Uncertainty

As part of ongoing efforts to support the integration of arts and humanities throughout medical education, the

AAMC, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, has published a collection of 55-word stories that explore the lived experiences of the health care workforce during the coronavirus pandemic and persistent racism and inequities in America. Through a mix of media and forms (including visual imagery, poetry, and storytelling), the collection highlights a diverse range of voices and perspectives from the entire academic medicine community — from premeds to faculty, clinicians, and educators — to honor and chronicle the community's experiences during this unprecedented time. Submissions will continue to be accepted on an ongoing basis. To view the collection and information on how to submit, visit: <https://frahme-aamc.org/>

AAMC, NMA Announce Action Collaborative on Black Men in Medicine

The AAMC and the National Medical Association (NMA) announced a joint effort to convene an Action Collaborative that will address the lack of representation of African American men in medicine. The Action Collaborative will be comprised of subject matter experts across disciplines who will develop an action agenda. The AAMC and the NMA will then engage a broader range of partners in K-12, higher education, academic medicine, community-based organizations, professional organizations and societies, and other key stakeholders to work together to further refine the action agenda and plan for the implementation and evaluation of systems solutions. More information is [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

AAMC Telehealth Competencies for Medical Educators

The AAMC, with input from a broad range of education stakeholders, has developed telehealth competencies for use across the continuum of undergraduate medical education, graduate medical education, and continuing medical education. Providing care through telehealth is critical now more than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic, and these competencies will be especially useful in curricular development, assessments, cross-continuum collaborations, and, ultimately, improving health care delivery and outcomes. The competencies are intended to guide educators developing curricula, students learning to practice, and professionals continuing their professional development. The competencies were developed using an iterative, modified Delphi, approach and with input from 210 stakeholders. Upon formal publication in 2020, they will be published as the 2nd in a [New & Emerging](#)

[Areas in Medicine Series](#). View the competencies here: www.aamc.org/system/files/2020-09/hca-telehealthcollection-telehealth-competencies.pdf

Select AAMC Resources

AAMC Releases Framework to Address and Eliminate Racism in Academic Medicine

Racism impacts all aspects of academic medicine, from inequitable medical school admissions policies to inadequate care of patients of color. The AAMC has released a framework that outlines concrete steps the AAMC will take to address structural racism across all fronts. Read more here: www.aamc.org/addressing-and-eliminating-racism-aamc-and-beyond

Academic Medicine Collection on Addressing Race and Racism in Medical Education

Academic Medicine, a peer-reviewed journal of the AAMC, is committed to assisting medical schools and teaching hospitals, their faculty and trainees, and the public in dismantling racism. A collection of free articles addressing race and racism is now available and was curated to help readers engage in necessary conversations about race and inform strategies to eliminate structural racism in their institutions. The collection is [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

MedEdPORTAL® Collection of Anti-Racism Resources for Educators

MedEdPORTAL®, the open-access journal of the AAMC, has created a collection of resources to provide educators with practice-based, peer-reviewed content to teach anti-racist knowledge and clinical skills, and elevate the educational scholarship of anti-racist curricula. The resources will support a community of collaborators dedicated to the elimination of racism in medical education. The collection is available here: www.mededportal.org/anti-racism

AAMC Report on the State of Women in Academic Medicine

The AAMC's State of Women in Academic Medicine report highlights key advances — and the challenges that remain for women. The report uses various AAMC and external datasets to illustrate the pipeline of women in academic medicine and science. In combination, the data present a snapshot of women's representation at key

continued on page 6

junctures in their roles as learners, faculty, and leaders. The report is [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

AAMC Data: U.S. Physician Shortage Growing

A new AAMC report projects a shortage of up to 139,000 physicians by 2033, including shortfalls in both primary and specialty care. Among the factors: older patients and retiring doctors. The report is [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

AAMC Data: Graduates Practicing in Primary Care and Rural and Underserved Areas

The AAMC has published a new data snapshot illustrating recent trends in graduates now practicing in primary care in rural and underserved areas. The analysis shows that graduates now practicing in these areas are lower than in the previous four years. However, schools with a stated public mission to produce graduates into these types of practice have graduated a higher percentage of students across these areas. The snapshot is [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

Select AAMC COVID-19 Resources

AAMC Releases Road Map to Reset Nation's Approach to COVID-19

On July 29, the AAMC released “The Way Forward on COVID-19: A Roadmap to Reset the Nation’s Approach to the Pandemic.” The evidence-based plan calls for immediate action to remedy critical shortages and increase testing, as well as longer-term actions to provide health insurance to millions of vulnerable Americans. The plan is available here: www.aamc.org/covidroadmap/roadmap

AAMC Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resource Hub

The AAMC continues to monitor guidance from federal, state, and local health agencies as it relates to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Find information and updates from the AAMC on this emerging global health concern here: www.aamc.org/coronavirus-covid-19-resource-hub

Resources for Medical Schools & Medical Educators During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused dramatic and disruptive changes to medical education. The AAMC has **curated critical documents** to support medical schools during this challenging time. Curated by topic, you will find the latest guidance and resources from the AAMC and its partner organizations. You will also find ways

to connect with the AAMC and your colleagues across the country to share best practices and lessons learned through open webinars and calls for submissions; visit: www.aamc.org/coronavirus/medical-education

In response to COVID19, we launched a special series to the long-standing “AAMC Building Better Curriculum Webinar” titled: [COVID-19's Impact on Curriculum](#), which focused on **curricular innovations** built in response to the pandemic and learners being pulled away from clinical rotations and services. These popular webinars ran weekly through May and then bi-monthly through October. To date, there have been over 6,100 views of the live and recorded sessions making this one of our most popular medical education webinars. (Contact: Mallory Lee)

Many of these webinars drew content from the New Digital Collection: [Clinical Teaching and Learning Experiences Without Physical Patient Contact](#), which was built in response to the COVID-19 pandemic's significant impact on the teaching and learning of health professionals. Designed by diverse educators, this living collection features over 250 **clinical learning experiences**, which can be readily used or easily adapted for specific, local settings, without the need for physical patient contact. To date, there have been over 25,000 page views and over 12,400 downloads of these free resources. The collection and webinar recordings are [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

Leaders across the academic medicine community are facing unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. To support the communities it serves, the AAMC has developed a virtual resource library on **leading in difficult times**, with a focus on managing self, leading others, and leading institutions. For more information, visit [THIS PAGE](#).



UPDATES FROM THE ACCME

Graham McMahon, MD, MMSc
President and CEO, ACCME

Rarely has there been a time in recent history when the entire healthcare system has been faced with unprecedented, simultaneous public health crises: the pandemic; racism and health disparities; and attacks on science and the spread of medical misinformation. Healthcare professionals rely on CME — now more than ever — for new information and new skills. We have seen the CME community demonstrate flexibility and resilience, delivering accredited education and supporting clinicians amid these crises. At the ACCME, we've focused — and we will continue to focus—on meeting the needs of our educator community during unprecedented times.

Please read about our recent initiatives below and visit our [website](#) for additional information. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out and let us know how we can better support your work.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: HOW THE PANDEMIC IS AFFECTING THE PROVIDER COMMUNITY

To help plan for an uncertain future, we conducted a survey of our accredited providers as well as several interviews. Although accredited CE providers reported that they are facing many current and future challenges, some survey respondents did express optimism for the coming year, projecting increases in numbers of activities and learners in 2021. As expected, almost all respondents reported a shift from live to virtual or hybrid formats for CE activities, bringing both benefits and challenges. Accredited providers anticipate that online programming will be the dominant format for the foreseeable future, a shift that may become permanent. [Learn more about the opportunities and challenges accredited providers shared with us.](#)

COVID 19 RESOURCES

- [**COVID-19 Clinician Resources**](#): We've posted a searchable database of CE activities and additional resources for clinicians. This is one of our most popular pages. We encourage you to share this resource with your learners and to send us information about your

COVID-19 education. View the page and download a form to submit your activities for posting.

- [**COVID-19 Educator Resources**](#):

This page includes resources to help you change meetings from live to virtual formats, provide physicians with COVID-19 education that also helps them meet Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements, and more.

- [**Planning Form for Expedited COVID-19-Related Education**](#):

As part of our efforts to support the delivery of crucial education to clinicians and teams on the front lines of the pandemic, we removed the requirements for disclosure of relevant financial relationships and resolution of personal conflicts of interest for activities related to COVID-19 only. You can use this form through the end of the year. In response to your suggestions, we plan to create a revised form that will help accredited providers expedite the planning and delivery of activities addressing topics where the disclosure and resolution requirements would not be necessary. We aim to introduce the form before the end of the year.

- [**Evolving CME Amid a Global Pandemic**](#): In a LinkedIn article, I address the strength of the CME community during these challenging times and the responsibility of the ACCME to provide meaningful support to accredited organizations. [Read the article](#).

VIRTUAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

In the archived webinar, “Continuing Education in Action: Strategies for Challenging Times,” we discuss strategies for supporting the evolving needs of our learners. Topics include how to virtualize an existing live meeting, rapidly accredit a CE activity, facilitate workplace-based learning, and provide directed training to individuals and teams. [Watch the webinar](#).

continued on page 8



[Here are more resources for planning and delivering virtual education.](#)

ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE RESOURCES

As an educational community, we have an opportunity to be part of the solution, navigating a path from empathy to understanding to action. The [Advancing Social Justice Resources](#) webpage includes videos and resources to help accredited CE leaders, clinician-educators, and administrators respond to healthcare inequities and social injustices.

THE ACCME DATA REPORT SHOWS STEADY GROWTH IN ACCREDITED CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION–2019

Each year, we compile data to share with our stakeholders about the CME system. I appreciate the efforts our accredited providers made to submit this data during the pandemic. The [ACCME Data Report Shows Steady Growth in Accredited Continuing Medical Education–2019](#) illustrates that the CME community is strong, stable, growing, and capable of adapting to the changing environment. The number of educational events, hours of instruction, and learner interactions increased in 2019, continuing a ten year upward trajectory.

Key Takeaways

- More than 1,700 accredited CME providers offered nearly 190,000 educational activities in 2019.
- The number of activities, hours of instruction, and interactions with learners has increased, despite some consolidation among CME providers, continuing a 10-year trajectory of growth.
- This education comprised approximately 1.3 million hours of instruction and approximately 37 million interactions with healthcare professionals.
- Investment in CME grew, demonstrating the value that accredited education brings to clinicians, teams, healthcare leaders, and institutions.

[Download the report.](#)

CME THAT COUNTS FOR CONTINUOUS CERTIFICATION

New Collaboration: We're pleased to [announce that we've collaborated with the American Board of Surgery \(ABS\)](#). Starting in February 2021, accredited CME providers and jointly accredited providers will be welcome to register CME activities that meet ABS Continuous Certification Program requirements and to submit learner completion data in the Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS). With this collaboration, there are now seven certifying boards working with the ACCME to simplify and align the continuing certification process, reducing burdens for physicians. For more information, visit [CME that Counts for MOC](#).

New Article: In the article, "[Continuing Board Certification: Seeing Our Way Forward](#)," published in the *Journal of The American Board of Family Medicine*, my co-author, Warren Newton, MD, MPH, and I address four key areas needed to move forward with a board certification system that is effective, relevant, and valuable.

CE BY THE TEAM, FOR THE TEAM

New Collaboration: Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education™ has announced a new collaboration with the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Jointly accredited providers now have the option of offering accredited CE activities and profession-specific credit for Registered Dietitians and Dietetic Technicians, Registered, without needing to attain separate program or activity accreditation through CDR. There are now nine accreditors collaborating in Joint Accreditation, enabling providers to offer activities for multiple professions without needing separate accreditations.

Celebrating 10 Years of Joint Accreditation: This year, Joint Accreditation is celebrating its 10th anniversary of accreditation decision-making! Joint Accreditation has grown to include nine professions and more than 100 accredited organizations. Learn more [here](#).

Second Annual Data Report: The [Joint Accreditation Report: Growth and Diversity of Accredited Continuing Education for Healthcare Teams–2019](#) provides a comprehensive picture of the scope of the accredited interprofessional continuing education (IPCE) community. We encourage jointly accredited providers to use this

report to benchmark themselves against their colleagues and to demonstrate the value of their work to leadership and stakeholders.

- In 2019, 87 jointly accredited providers offered more than 55,000 educational activities, comprising more than 250,000 hours of instruction.
- In addition to the data about physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians, this data report includes, for the first time, the numbers of learner interactions with optometrists, physician assistants (PAs), psychologists, and social workers. Providers reported the most interactions with nurses (50%), followed by physicians (25%).
- The most common activity types were courses (49%), followed by Internet enduring materials (32%).

Find out more at the [Joint Accreditation website](#).

LOOKING AHEAD

Despite the challenges we are all facing, we, as a community, will continue to meet the needs of the patients and families we serve. As a difficult year draws to a close, I encourage you and your entire leadership team to take the opportunity to pause, reflect, and appreciate the important contributions you and your educational programs are making to the well-being of our communities. I thank you for your dedication and look forward to continuing to work together to provide high-quality, trusted education to clinicians and teams.

CONNECT WITH US

Coffee with Graham Podcast: Catch up on each episode now streaming on all podcast apps or visit the [Coffee with Graham](#) webpage to listen to each episode as it's released.

- **Countering Medical Misinformation with CE:** In episode 11, Dr. Hank Chaudhry, President and CEO, Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), joins us on the podcast to discuss the importance of evidence-based medicine, continuing education, and building trust to counter medical misinformation and disinformation.

LEARN WITH US

Commendation Criteria Resources

We've developed several new resources in response to your requests, as part of our ongoing efforts to support the CME community's successful adoption of the Menu of Criteria for Accreditation with Commendation. [These resources include examples of compliance and non-compliance and observations from our decision-making process.](#)

Webinar: Advancing Care for Veterans and Their Families with Accredited CE

In support of National Veterans and Military Families Month, the ACCME and the Veterans Health Administration co-hosted a webinar to address how the accredited CE community can advance care for veterans and their families. Visit our [website](#) to view the archived webinar.

The webinar is part of our Meeting Challenges Together webinar series, which convenes our accredited CE community to address timely concerns and opportunities for our learners, educational teams, organizations, and the communities we serve.

Mark Your Calendars: ACCME Meeting 2021

Our dates for the ACCME 2021 Meeting have been set! We will host ACCME 2021 virtually from April 27–29, 2021, and will include a new, optional longitudinal learning component in the weeks leading up to the meeting. We will be sharing details about the schedule and opportunities throughout November and December of this year. Registration for the ACCME 2021 Meeting will open in early January 2021.

Call for Proposals: We are looking forward to providing you with the opportunities to learn from and with your colleagues. Watch for our Call for Proposals, which will give you the option to propose a session to facilitate during the meeting, share research on CE that you have been engaged with, or leverage the convening power of our meeting to lead a group of CE professionals in a working group for the meeting. Details about our new Working Groups and who should consider leading one will be included in the Call for Proposals.

UPDATES FROM THE ABMS

By Greg Ogrinc, MD, MS

Senior Vice President, Certification Standards and Programs

As the leading organization for physician Board Certification, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) provides the expertise, insights, and support to elevate the discipline of specialty medicine. Given that much of our work intersects with continuing medical education and continuing professional development, we provide the following relevant updates.

ABMS, NBME Publish Proceedings Paper of Professionalism Symposium

In September 2019, ABMS and the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) hosted a joint Symposium entitled *Advancing Assessment of Professionalism in Continuing Certification*. The ABMS/NBME Symposium on Professionalism brought together leaders in health care, medical education, assessment, and professional self-regulation from across the country to define, discuss, and explore how to enhance medical professionalism and examine the important role that continuing Board Certification may play in assessing physicians' professional behavior. Among the presenters was SACME's President, Betsy Williams, who provided insights about perceived challenges and potential solutions to evaluate professionalism in the context of continuing certification. The information and discussions shared that day are captured in a [proceedings paper](#) and will help carve a pathway forward not only for ABMS and NBME, but for the profession at large.

ABMS Issues Recommendations on CBME During COVID-19 Disruptions

In response to the extraordinary circumstances and disruptions in residency and fellowship training programs across the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ABMS is offering guidance surrounding competency-based medical education (CBME) when a program is disrupted by the novel coronavirus.

The [recommendations](#), developed by a task force with representatives from ABMS and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), were created for program directors, designated institutional officials (DIOs), and ABMS Member Boards. They acknowledge that while traditional, time-based, or volume-based requirements may require modification, there also must be a trusted and practical means of determining that a resident or fellow is ready to progress to the next phase of his/her professional career.

Completion of a residency or fellowship is an essential element to qualify for Board Certification and the judgment and attestation from program directors are extremely important in determining readiness for independent practice. The recommendations, adopted by both orga-



nizations, outline five core recommendations to assist program directors and clinical competency committees in assessing a trainee's competency in his/her specialty or subspecialty. This guidance will serve to address the needs of trainees, program directors, and DIOs, while assuring health care providers, patients, families, and communities of the integrity and trustworthiness of the decision-making process regarding a fellow or resident's competency.

ABMS Announces Progressive Leave Policy for Residents, Fellows

ABMS recently announced the adoption of a progressive [leave policy](#) that will offer residents and fellows more flexibility, reduce stress, and increase autonomy in making life decisions, especially with regard to family and parental leave.

Starting in July 2021, all ABMS Member Boards with training programs of two or more years duration will allow for a minimum of six weeks away once during training for purposes of parental, caregiver, and medical leave, without exhausting time allowed for vacation or sick leave and without requiring an extension in training. Member Boards must communicate when a leave of absence will require an official extension to help mitigate the negative impact on a physician's career trajectory that a training extension may have, such as delaying a fellowship or moving into a full, salaried position.

The development of the new ABMS Policy on Parental, Caregiver and Family Leave was initiated following a report from the ACGME's Council of Review Committee Residents in June 2019. ABMS and ACGME co-sponsored a workshop on resident and fellow parental and family leave this past February that brought together more than 80 multidisciplinary stakeholders to explore this issue and make recommendations for improvement.

Following the workshop, an ABMS Task Force on Parental Leave was established to develop the policy.

The newly approved policy offers Member Boards the flexibility to create a parental, family, or medical leave protocol that best suits the training required for their specialty and/or subspecialty. [Read more.](#)

ABMS Portfolio Program Offers Templates for QI Activities

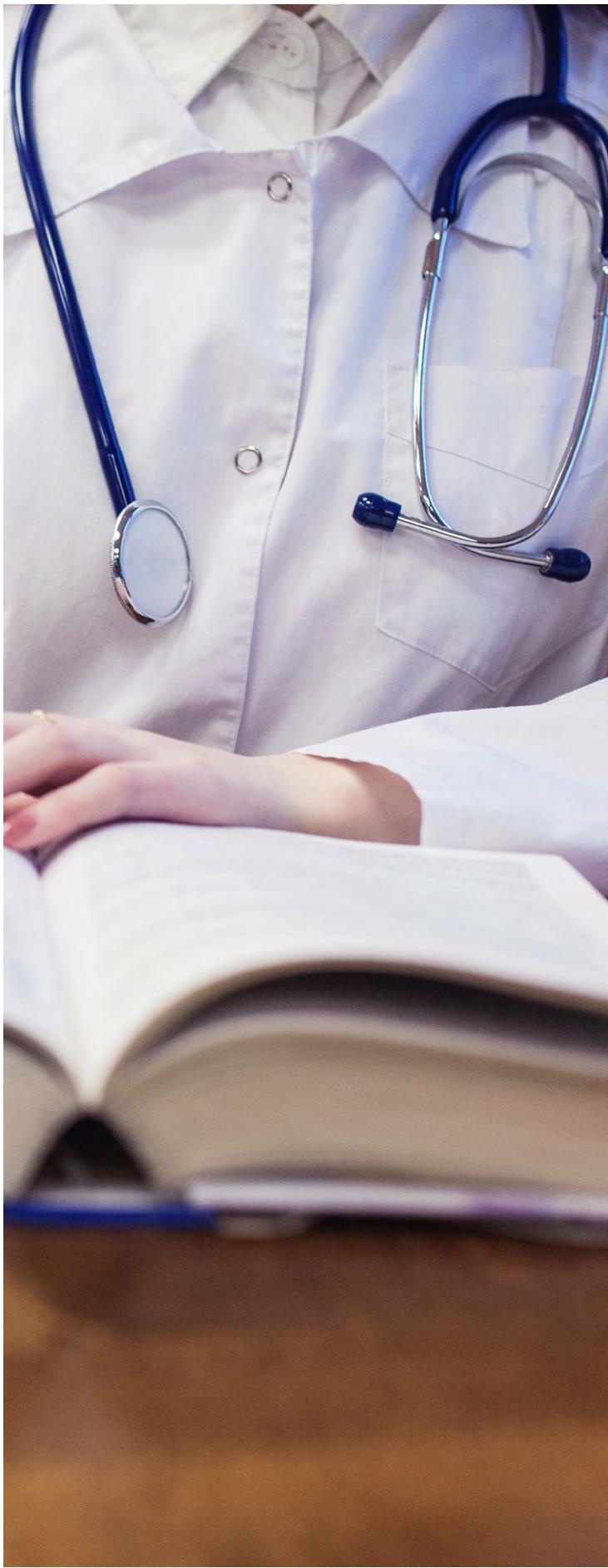
Target COVID-19, health disparities, and opioid-related efforts

[ABMS Portfolio Program](#)[®] Sponsors may now plan, facilitate, and submit COVID-19, health disparities, and opioid-related quality improvement (QI) work utilizing three new templates.

These templates were created to simplify and streamline the development, implementation, and submission of QI and patient safety work being done in these critical areas of health care. They provide a means by which to capture and report the details of the work while encouraging reflection on it.

Portfolio Program requirements, [which were updated this past June](#) and now allow for one intervention cycle, education as a sole intervention, and credit to be awarded for those serving in QI leadership roles, are integrated into these new templates. This approach enhances the ease of administering the Portfolio Program for Sponsor organizations.

Physicians certified by participating Member Boards who engage in this work are eligible for continuing certification credit when they meet meaningful participation requirements as defined by the individual Portfolio Program Sponsor. A parallel program helps physician assistants receive credit from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.



INTERCOM

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The views expressed in the INTERCOM are those of the authors and are not intended to represent the views of SACME or its members.

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