



# TRACERS

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## Message from the Executive Director

### *Maintenance of Certification: Moving from Extrinsic Value to Intrinsic Value*



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*Executive Director, ABNM*

The American Board of Nuclear Medicine (ABNM) Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements began in 2007. It has been a requirement for all ABNM diplomats since 1992. Since 2011, the American Board of Medical Specialties has been listing on its public website whether physicians are meeting MOC requirements, regardless of whether they have lifetime or time-limited certification ([www.certificationmatters.org](http://www.certificationmatters.org)). Participation in MOC is becoming a more frequent requirement of credentialing bodies, payers, and accrediting organizations. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provides a financial incentive for physicians who are participating in PQRS and participate more frequently in MOC than required by their specialty board ([http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment\\_Instruments/PQRS/Maintenance\\_of\\_Certification\\_Program\\_Incentive.html](http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment_Instruments/PQRS/Maintenance_of_Certification_Program_Incentive.html)).

Participating in a program because it is a requirement is an example of its extrinsic value. A program only with extrinsic value, however, is less desirable than a program with intrinsic value. A program with intrinsic value to physicians is one that significantly improves knowledge and skills in a

way that is better, more convenient and time-efficient, and less expensive than other methods. A program with intrinsic value will be widely adopted regardless of whether it is required.

One of my goals as Executive Director is to improve MOC so that it has greater intrinsic value. I would like to see physicians eager to participate in MOC. How many of us go to a meeting and attend a continuing education session designated for SAM credit because we need to earn an average of 8 hours per year, and not because the topic is important to our practice? How many times have we attended an educational session where the audience response system did not truly enhance our learning experience?

How many of us look at the MOC exam as an opportunity to self-direct our education to areas where we would like to improve our knowledge and skills? How many of us have used the results of the MOC exam to improve our knowledge in areas that we are weak?

How many of us have done a Practice Improvement Assessment (PPA)? How many of us who have done a PPA found that it actually improved our practice?

ABNM will be working steadily on improving the intrinsic value of MOC to its diplomates. I encourage everyone to share his or her ideas on how we can improve MOC by sending an email to [abnm@abnm.org](mailto:abnm@abnm.org).