

AMERICAN BOARD
of
DERMATOLOGY



YEAR IN REVIEW
2023

MISSION

To serve the public and distinguish the profession by certifying that diplomates have the knowledge and skills to provide high-quality, safe, and effective dermatologic care.

VISION

Advance excellence in dermatologic care and improve outcomes for all patients.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- Cultivate and strengthen our partnership with diplomates and trainees.
- Support diplomates' ability to compassionately and effectively evaluate and manage patients of all backgrounds.
- Distinguish the value of ABD Certification.
- Enhance governance processes and effectiveness.

ABD Board of Directors

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EXECUTIVE STAFF

Executive Director: Randall K. Roenigk, MD

Associate Executive Director: Stanley Miller, MD

Associate Executive Director: Marta J. Petersen, MD

Associate Executive Director: Julie V. Schaffer, MD

Associate Executive Director: Erik J. Stratman, MD

Managing Director: Elysia M. McGowan

Item writers are Diplomates who volunteer their time. Names and Committees may be found [here](#).

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from ABD Executive Director

Randall Roenigk, MD

Dear Colleagues,

We've all had special people in our lives who have guided us to be better, to do more. My Dad was one of those people for me. When [Henry H. Roenigk, Jr., MD](#), died Dec. 10, 2023, he left a legacy of inspiration for his medical students, dermatology trainees - and me. I followed in his footsteps, professionally and personally.

Dad had high standards for himself, his students, and his children. It rubbed off on me. I learned the value of education and experience early on. I have always tried to apply high standards to myself and my trainees. And I have felt privileged to join the efforts of so many ABD certified dermatologists who volunteer to set standards for our specialty. I am grateful to them, and to my fellow dermatologists on our [Executive Team](#), who show exceptional leadership in all areas of certification.

Last January, we announced the [ABD's strategic plan](#), developed by our Board of Directors and Executive Staff. This plan will guide our initiatives for the next several years.

I am pleased to report that we have made much progress in accomplishing our four strategic goals. This report will provide details on our initiatives, explaining how they benefit you, your practice, and/or your patients. While the ABD exists to serve the public, we accomplish that purpose by supporting your efforts to attain and maintain high standards of education, training, knowledge and skills essential for providing superior specialized care to patients with cutaneous diseases.

Accountability

When we accepted our roles in 2021, your Executive Team promised transparency about ABD operations. We also promised to provide opportunities for you to be more engaged with ABD leadership so that together, we can make certification a more valuable resource for you and your patients. We are gratified by the level of engagement from so many of you in responding to surveys and offering feedback.

As part of keeping those promises, we have provided an Annual Report each year, informing you about progress in various areas of initial and continuing certification. This year, we are expanding that report with additional details, calling it the Year In Review.

We also attained and have maintained the highest level of financial transparency available through GuideStar (now Candid), the leading source of information on U.S. non-profit organizations. To achieve the platinum level, organizations share not only financial details from tax returns, but also information about goals, leadership and purpose. You will find a summary of [financial details](#) in this report.

ABD operations are supported by exam fees and by your annual fees. As we reported in our April 18 Perspective, [“What You Get For Your Annual Fees.”](#) the ABD has not raised your \$150 fee since it was initiated in 2006, but the value you get for your money has increased with new initiatives like CertLink and our own Focused Practice Improvement (fPI) library.

Relevance

We are committed to making all certification activities relevant to your practice. We pay attention to the aggregate comments we receive from your CertLink feedback and strive to follow your suggestions. We are working with several dermatology profession organizations to help identify gaps in training and continuing education that ABD activities could help address. We asked these same groups to nominate individuals who would help us identify the most important articles within their subspecialty and participate in writing CertLink questions based on those articles.

We have expanded our dermatologist search tool to help you tell patients where your practice is located and in what areas you specialize. (If you haven't added your public profile details, what are you waiting for?)

We've made it easy for you to create and download your personalized Certification Mark and reprint a copy of your certificate. And we have provided access to all scholarly articles used for CertLink, even the ones you did not choose for your annual questions.

People

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a couple of people who left the ABD in 2023.

In June, Lela A. Lee, MD, retired after more than three decades of service to the ABD. Throughout her career, Dr. Lee volunteered in nearly every aspect of certification - from item writing, to communications, to exam development. Most recently, she served as Senior Executive Consultant, providing additional consistency during the transition to a new executive leadership team. Thank you, Lela!

I would also like to thank Bruce Bartels, MBA, who served as the public member on the ABD Board of Directors from 2014 through 2023. As all other Board of Directors members are working dermatologists, Bruce helped us remember to always consider the impact of our policies on patients. Learn more about [his successor](#) and how the ABD is changing its nomination process.

And importantly, I would like to thank our terrific staff. The ABD employs seven people to work with all 15,000+ of us certified dermatologists and 1,700 or so trainees who take BASIC, CORE, and/or APPLIED certifying exams each year. They are a knowledgeable, empathetic group who will guide us through any individual questions we have. Please don't hesitate to contact them or anyone on the Executive team at Communications@abderm.org.

With Best Wishes,
Randall K. Roenigk, MD
Executive Director



Father and son -- Henry and Randy Roenigk shared a love of sports.

Minding the Gap

Nearly 100 certified diplomates volunteer time and expertise to support certification. They write questions for BASIC, CORE and APPLIED Exams as well as for CertLink. They prepare focused practice improvement activities and develop policies that guide certification for dermatologists and dermatology subspecialists. They represent many facets of dermatology, including private practitioners from across the country, dermatology faculty members, practitioners in academic institutions, subspecialists.

Dermatology training is intended to prepare residents and fellows to diagnose and treat patients who come to them. Continuing certification is intended to support life-long learning for certified dermatologists and subspecialists.

But are there any important elements that we are missing? Are there gaps?

To find answers, we've reached out to several dermatology professional organizations, asking them to share their expertise with the ABD in two ways, which are explained in the following articles.

CertLink Content Advisory Groups

The ABD reached out to national subspecialty organizations in the areas of cosmetic dermatology, dermatopathology, medical dermatology, pediatric dermatology, surgical dermatology and skin of color/gender identity issues and asked them to nominate experts to join our efforts to make CertLink an increasingly relevant learning tool. These nominees have joined ABD Directors and item-writers in newly-formed CertLink Content Advisory Groups (CCAGs). These CCAGs will review appropriate specialty and subspecialty literature annually to identify the most important and relevant articles within their subspecialty written in the last year. The CCAG members then will write CertLink Article-Based questions based on these publications.

With the cooperation and permission of the academic publications, the ABD also has made all articles used for CertLink article-based questions available through the [CertLink Library](#). Every dermatologist participating in Continuing Certification now has access to read all articles identified as important, not just the ones he or she chooses to answer CertLink questions.

The CertLink Library is available to diplomates when they open their CertLink platform under RESOURCES. More than 220 articles are available.



“The subject-matter experts representing subspecialty societies in our CCAGs provide a vital service to our diplomates. They understand the nuances and long-term impact of the latest research findings. Together with our item-writing experts, we are able to provide thought-provoking questions to help diplomates recognize the importance of these articles.”

-- Stanley J. Miller, MD, Associate Executive Director for Continuing Certification

Gap Analysis of Practice Improvement Needs

We also asked dermatology professional organizations and subspecialty associations to help us identify gaps in training and continuing education that ABD activities could address. In 2023, 10 groups told us where they perceive gaps exist in competency and/or performance within the specialty. For example, do their subspecialist members see gaps in care provided by dermatologists who refer patients to them. Can additional training or continuing certification activities help fill these gaps? The organizations also provided references to publications supporting those areas.

The organizations that responded include the Association of Academic Cosmetic Dermatology, The Gay and Lesbian Dermatology Association, Hidradenitis Suppurativa Foundation, American Acne and Rosacea Society, Association of Professors of Dermatology - Dermatologic Surgeons Section, American Contact Dermatitis Society, Society of Dermatologist Hospitalists, American Society for Dermatologic Surgery, and Society for Investigative Dermatology.

One of the first results was identifying areas where additional focused professional improvement (fPI) modules were needed to help diplomates stay on the cutting edge of dermatologic care. As a result, volunteers - many from these groups - wrote 17 new fPI modules on topics related to cosmetics, dermatologic surgery, and dermatopathology. We also retired a few activities that were no longer relevant to current practice, bringing the total number of modules from which to choose to 78.

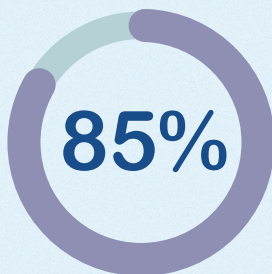


“We are grateful to our colleagues who share our commitment to ensuring that each dermatologist is well prepared to meet each patient’s needs. Focused Practice Improvement modules are one way to help fill gaps. We look forward to working with these organizations to ensure that all certified dermatologists have resources to stay on the cutting edge of advances in our specialty and subspecialties.”

-- Erik J. Stratman, MD, Associate Executive Director for Continuous Program Improvement and Research.

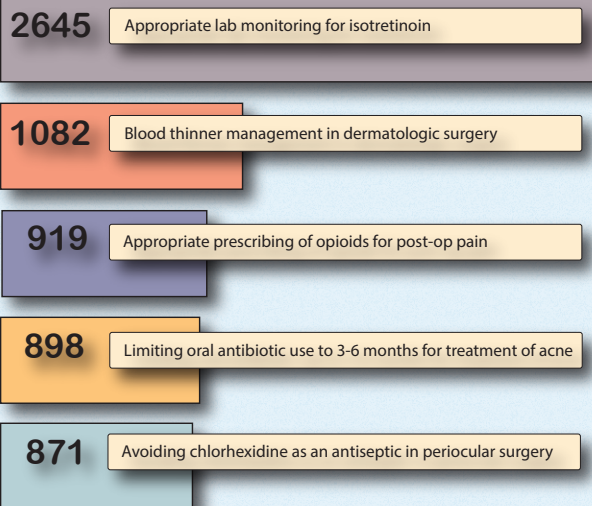
fPI Compliance

Average percentage of diplomates who already are in compliance with fPI best practices and need to make no changes.



Most Popular fPIs

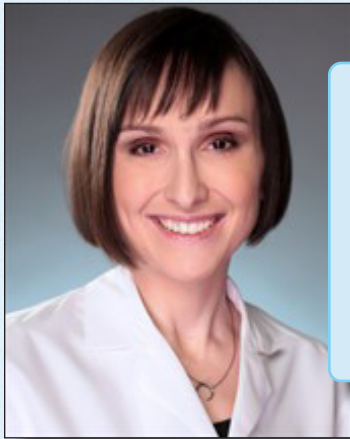
(# completed since 2016)



Exam Item Writing Initiative

Pediatric Dermatologists Volunteer for Pilot

In September, the ABD invited all certified pediatric dermatologists to participate in a pilot initiative aimed at enhancing the ABD's bank of questions for the Pediatric Dermatology Subspecialty Certification Exam, which is taken annually by Pediatric Dermatology fellowship-trained ABD diplomates.



“Certified pediatric dermatologists know what knowledge and skills physicians in this field need to diagnose and treat patients without supervision. We reached out to all ABD-certified Pediatric Dermatologists with the hope of gaining access to a larger variety of diagnoses, high quality images, and case details. Our goal is to ensure that future diplomates are well-prepared to contribute to our profession.”

-- Julie Schaffer, MD, Associate Executive Director for Exam Development.

More than 27 volunteered for in the item writing process, supplementing the existing Pediatric Dermatology Item Writing Committee. The pilot volunteers received training in item writing before writing their 5 assigned questions. In early 2024, they will participate in virtual group review and editing sessions. Also, we asked these volunteers to submit 5 de-identified patient images, accompanied by relevant patient/case details (also de-identified).

After the pilot volunteers complete their review and editing, the ABD's established exam development committee will take it from there. The 2024 Pediatric Dermatology Subspecialty Certification Exam will be administered Oct. 15.

This kind of outreach also is consistent with the ABD's strategic plan, specifically our goal to cultivate and strengthen our partnership with diplomates and trainees. This pilot initiative provides an opportunity for more diplomates to express their interest in writing items for certifying exams. We want to make committee membership more transparent and attainable.

“We are pleased with the interest and engagement of volunteers for this pilot initiative,” Dr. Schaffer says. “If it continues, we will consider expanding the initiative to other subspecialties.”

If you have an interest, please contact us at Communications@abderm.org.

Proud to be Certified?

Ways to Publicize Your Accomplishment

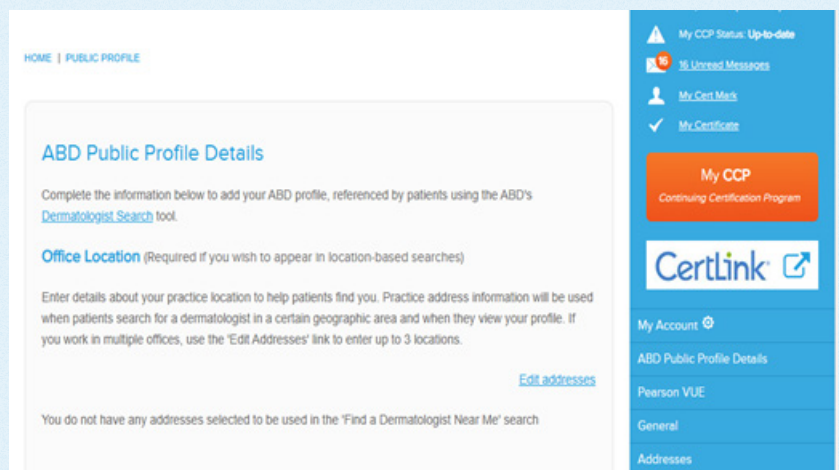
One of the ABD's strategic goals is to distinguish the value of ABD certification. The ABD has developed tools to help diplomates explain why certification is important to their patients.



“Most dermatologists remember the moment they learned they were certified. That sense of pride at having met the high standards of dermatological knowledge and expertise should continue throughout their career – from residency to retirement. But while dermatologists understand what certification represents, your patients may not fully understand the difference between being ‘licensed’ and being ‘board certified.’”

-- Marta J. Petersen, Associate Executive Director, Candidate, Program and Diplomat Relations

In 2023, the ABD developed a feature that allows each diplomate to populate his or her profile with a clinical address, website link, and other information about their practice. These details will soon show up in the ABD's [Dermatologist Search](#) tool. Please click on “My Account” (under the CertLink button) when you log in and choose ABD Public Profile Details.



We have information on our website explaining [what a dermatologist is](#), how we are trained, and [what it means to become board certified](#) in our field. We explain the difference between having a license and being certified. Most importantly, we explain the advantage of choosing a board-certified dermatologist for diagnosing and treating skin disease. Please feel free to copy or link to this information for your own website.

Your patients don't have to go to our website to get information. We have created a [flyer that you can print out and give to patients](#), or leave a copy in your waiting room or office.

Also, you can create your own personalized ABD Certification Mark that can be used on your website, email signature, social media posts, business cards or anywhere else you promote your practice. Just log onto your profile and click on “My Cert Mark” in the blue box.



Finally, if you believe someone is wrongfully attesting to patients and the public that they are board-certified in dermatology, please let us know and we will follow up.

Offering a Public Perspective

New Director Selected

Aileen Shinaman, JD, of Milwaukee, WI, has been named the latest Public Member on the ABD Board of Directors. Ms. Shinaman is Senior Vice President and General Counsel for the Medical College of Wisconsin. Until recently, she was Vice President and General Counsel for the University of Rochester Medical Center.

The position had been filled in 2014-2023 by Bruce Bartels, MBA. In [this Perspective](#) on our website, Mr. Bartels describes the role and value of the Public Member.



“Because the American Board of Dermatology - like all medical specialty boards - exists to serve the public, it’s important to have the voice of a non-physician represented. Health care and insurance are growing increasingly more complex today. While no one person can possibly represent all patients, the public member can offer some perspective to our Board and our diplomates into what is important to patients and the public.”

-- Aileen Shinaman, JD

In early 2023, the ABD reached out to all diplomates, inviting them to nominate a non-physician with knowledge of the healthcare industry to serve on the Board. More than a dozen nominations were received from across the country.

Opening the nomination process for this Board position stems from the work of a task force created in 2023 to examine the ABD’s governance structure, including duties of volunteers on committees and boards. The task force supports the board’s strategic goal of enhancing the ABD’s governance processes and effectiveness.

“By having a public member on the Board of Directors, your leadership is demonstrating their commitment to having the perspective of patients/the public represented in every decision.”

-- Bruce Bartels, MBA



2023 Highlights

Dr. Stratman Joins ABD Executive Team

[Erik J. Stratman, MD](#), joined the ABD Executive team in July, serving as Associate Executive Director for Continuous Program Improvement and Research.

As with all executive team members, Dr. Stratman's role is part-time. He will continue his practice and research for the Marshfield Clinic Health System, a multispecialty group practice in Wisconsin.

The role of associate executive director for continuous program improvement and research is new for the ABD. Dr. Stratman will oversee the board's continuous program improvement needs and direct its research agenda.

Read more about Dr. Stratman's role [here](#).

(Dr. Stratman also coaches high school football and other sports -- go Spencer-Columbus Rockets!)



Dr. Heinecke named ABD's First Visiting Scholar

Gillian Heinecke, MD, Assistant Clinical Professor, SSM Health/Saint Louis University, has been named the American Board of Dermatology's first ABMS Visiting Scholar. Dr. Gillian is one of 13 scholars selected to participate in the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Visiting Scholars Program. She is certified in Dermatology and in Dermatopathology and is participating in the ABD's Continuing Certification Program (CCP).



Established in 2014, the one-year, part-time [Visiting Scholars Program](#) supports early-career physicians and researchers in scholarship and leadership development, focusing on initial and continuing board certification. Each Visiting Scholar receives a \$15,000 financial award.

Dr. Heinecke will explore the value of the BASIC Exam (which is administered at the end of the first year of dermatology training) to predict residents' future performance on CORE Exam modules and the APPLIED Exam. Also, she will assess current attitudes toward the Basic Exam performance and whether training programs are initiating interventions at minimum Basic Exam score thresholds.

Read more about the Visiting Scholar [here](#).

HALM Subspecialty Available to ABD Diplomates

Certified dermatologists may apply to earn a subspecialty certificate in [Health Care Administration, Leadership and Management](#) (HALM).

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has announced approval of the HALM subspecialty, which is co-sponsored by the American Board of Anesthesiology (ABA), American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM), American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM), and American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM).

The American Board of Dermatology is one of 13 ABMS Member Boards whose diplomates can pursue this subspecialty certification. The first HALM exam is scheduled to be administered in 2024. Information regarding eligibility requirements may be found on the ABEM website.

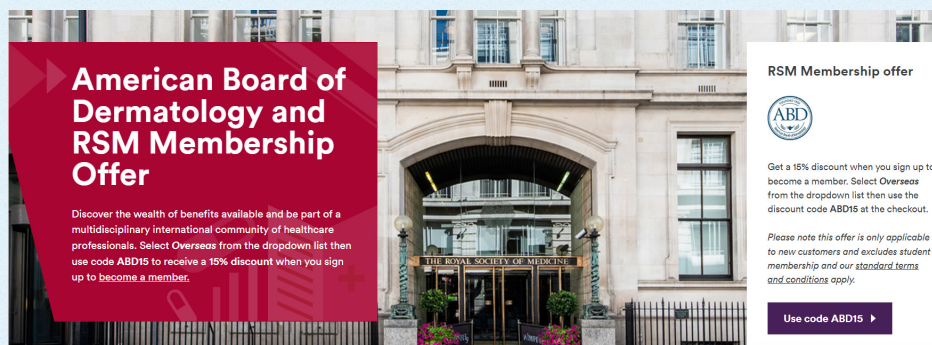
[More information](#) also is available from ABMS.

CertLink Library Expands Access to Journal Articles

The ABD has established a new [CertLink library](#) that provides links to all the articles used to write Article-Based questions since the CertLink pilot started four years ago, not just the articles based on questions you choose to answer.

“These articles have been identified as significant and valuable in the field of dermatology. “We’re delighted so many of our diplomates are interested in reading more of them,” says ABD Associate Executive Director for Continuing Certification, Stan Miller, MD.


Additionally, knowing that not everyone has access to journals through an academic institution, the ABD has negotiated a [discount for diplomates](#) for Royal Society of Medicine (RSM) membership, which provides electronic access to thousands of medical journals and books. (Non-members may access the library, but full-text articles are available only to members.) The discounted price is approximately \$325/year, depending on exchange rates.



American Board of Dermatology and RSM Membership Offer

Discover the wealth of benefits available and be part of a multidisciplinary international community of healthcare professionals. Select Overseas from the dropdown list then use code ABD15 to receive a 15% discount when you sign up to become a member.

RSM Membership offer



Get a 15% discount when you sign up to become a member. Select Overseas from the dropdown list then use the discount code ABD15 at the checkout.

Please note this offer is only applicable to new customers and excludes student membership and our standard terms and conditions apply.

[Use code ABD15 ▶](#)

ABD Expands Practice Improvement Library

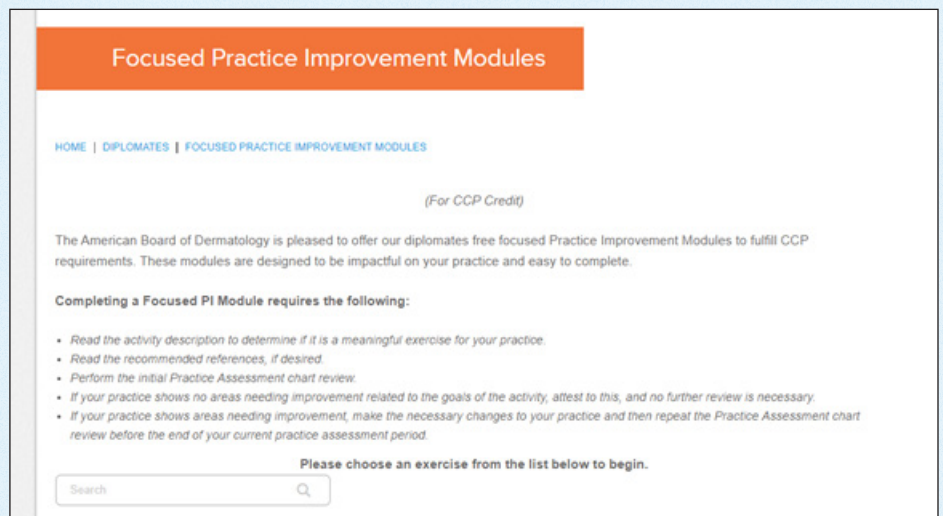
The ABD has expanded and updated the [focused practice improvement \(fPI\) module library](#) to accommodate dermatologists in more areas of practice. Now, 78 modules are available after 17 were added in 2023 to provide new activities in cosmetics, dermatologic surgery, and dermatopathology.

Every five years, diplomates are required to complete an fPI. A library of activities is available when you log into your profile.

Whether it is how you order monitoring bloodwork for isotretinoin or how you manage anticoagulation therapies before surgery, these modules are designed to help you look critically at certain diagnostic or care strategies in your practice. (See which modules are most popular [here](#).)

The modules are written by groups of diplomate volunteers from various subspecialties who have background and interest in dermatology quality improvement.

Based on critiques that diplomates provide when they complete each fPI, the program is popular -- 99 percent of diplomates say their self-selected modules were relevant to their practice and 98 percent say that they would recommend the module to a dermatology colleague.



While most modules help to affirm the great care provided by the dermatologist, around 20% of dermatologists report that the modules help them improve how they manage their patient population. And, up to a third of dermatologists said a patient experienced an improved outcome because of something the diplomate learned when completing the project.

To learn more, see the [Perspective](#) written by Erik J. Stratman, MD, ABD Associate Executive Director for Continuous Program Improvement and Research.

Also, check out the fPI video on our Facebook page!

2023 CertLink®

Since its Jan 6, 2020 launch, 11,187 diplomates have enrolled in CertLink - 96% of those participating in Continuing Certification. Within that group, 3,123 have at least one subspecialty certification.

Most diplomates not already participating in CertLink were automatically enrolled in January 2023, and the remainder will be enrolled by 2026. Newly certified diplomates begin CertLink each January, after passing the APPLIED Exam.

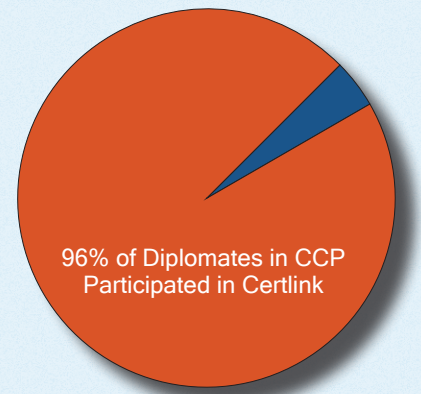
We completed a CertLink standard setting exercise this past summer, and based on that data, we expect the pass rates to be similar to the old MOC Exam - in the upper 90s.

“We anticipate that the vast majority of diplomates who participate in CertLink regularly will receive a passing score,” says Stanley Miller, MD, ABD Associate Executive Director for Continuing Certification. “CertLink is designed to be educational, not punitive.”

ABD leaders are determining how a diplomate who does not pass CertLink will continue his or her certification.

“We are working out details of how a remedial exam could be administered,” Dr. Miller says. “However, we know that a makeup exam will not offer second chances to get questions right, as occurs in the regular CertLink program, so we encourage everyone to avoid exam stress and participate in CertLink regularly.”

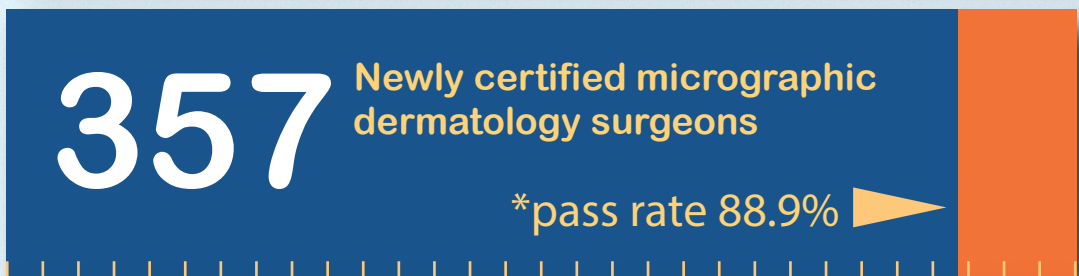
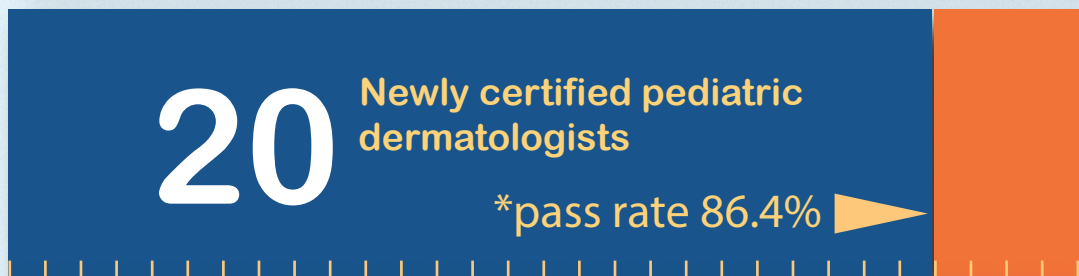
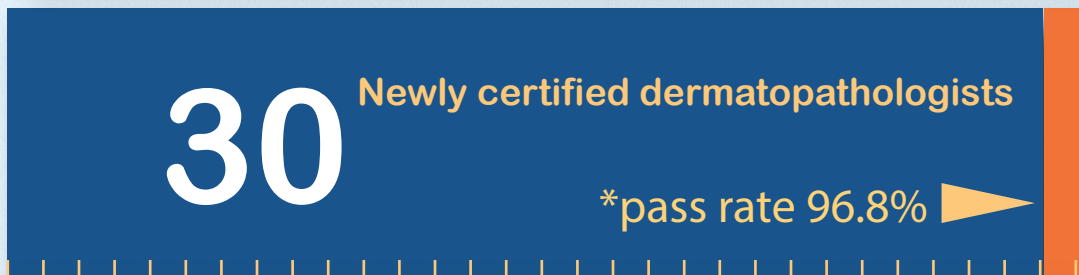
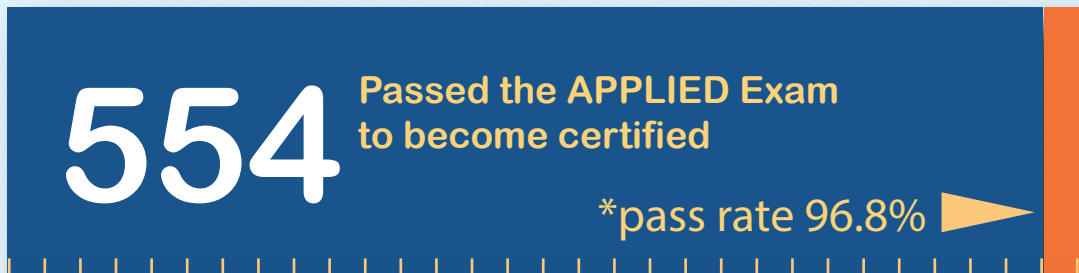
Check out the [CertLink Frequently Asked Questions](#), or log into your profile and click to CertLink button to check your progress and see how you compare with other participants.



- Appreciated seeing helpful, clear, and thorough “why the right answer is right and the others are wrong” while completing my three medical subspecialty Qs today. Thank you!
- [CertLink] feels more relevant, less stressful, less expensive and more suited to both ongoing learning and addressing knowledge gaps.
- I think CertLink is much more relevant for keeping clinicians up-to-date, and it is better for helping clinicians take great care of patients, which should be our ultimate goal as physicians.

-- Anonymous feedback from CertLink users

At a Glance



*Exam pass rates are calculated using results of candidates taking the exam (or module) for the first time.

At a Glance

Financial Overview

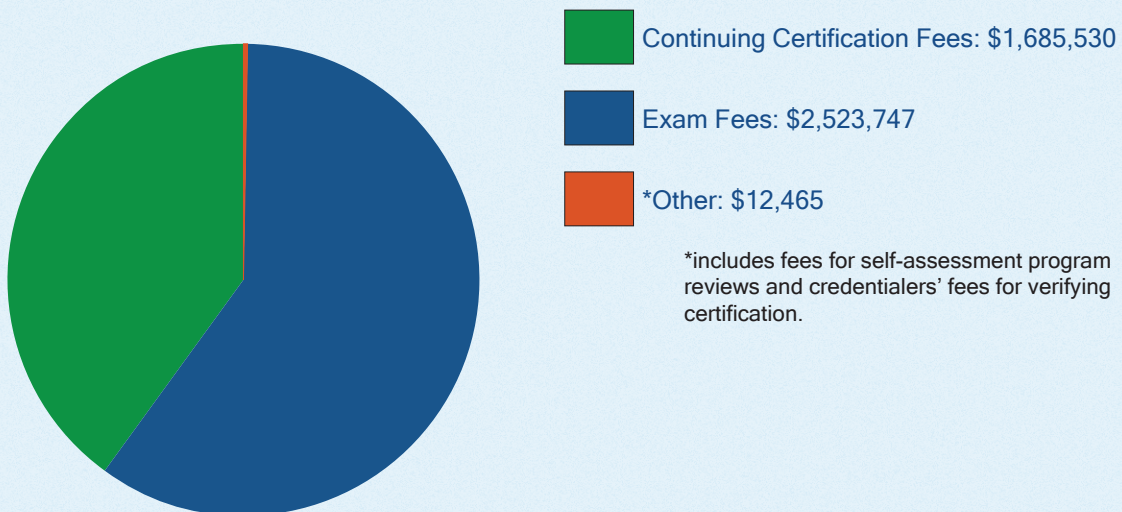
Detailed financial information about the ABD's revenue and expenses are available through the board's tax returns (IRS 990s).

You can find these reports through Candid (formerly GuideStar), ProPublica, Economic Research Center, or the IRS.

The ABD maintains a Platinum Seal of Transparency with Candid, the highest level of transparency that Candid awards. Transparency levels are based on the additional information that organizations voluntarily provide.

2023 Expenses: \$4,450,888

2023 Revenue: \$4,221,742



Did you know the ABD hasn't raised Continuing Certification Program fees since the program was initiated in 2006?

Find out what you get for your \$150 [here](#).

Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.



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