



Certification Support at the State Chapter Level—A Pilot with the Ohio AFP and ABFM

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP) is partnering with the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) to test a pilot of personalized stage activity planning for members who are board certified. The goal of this pilot is to see if family physicians could benefit from facilitated discussion to enhance their understanding of certification requirements, to use activities to help identify and address knowledge gaps, and to increase relevance of activity selection to their practice setting and needs.

An outcome of a 2019 OAFP Board of Directors planning retreat was the desire for ABFM certification assistance and programming support at the state chapter level. This led to the idea of providing personalized board-certification planning assistance to members in concert with Knowledge Self-Assessment (KSA) Study Groups sponsored by the chapter in 2020. By offering this in conjunction with these study groups, the chapter hopes to help their member-diplomates with support in reaching their certification requirements in a timely and stress-free manner.

The OAFP developed a proposal to host four KSA Study Group sessions throughout Ohio and approached ABFM about working together on this pilot. ABFM was eager to collaborate, given that a redesign of the online Physician Portfolio is underway and could benefit from learning from Ohio in ways that could inform that process. The first session was held in January 2020. Attendees remained after completion of the KSA to learn about updates in Family Medicine Certification focused on new options for tailoring certification activities most relevant to individual practice types and scope.



Dr. Ryan Kauffman during the 2020 Family Medicine Workshop on Cerebrovascular Disease KSA event in Columbus, OH on January 12, 2020.

“We see this as is an opportunity to really work with physicians and help them be comfortable with the process because these are certainly physicians who value their board certification and want to maintain that. By working together, we’re able to approach things in different ways, learn different ways of doing things and be able to improve the care we’re giving, and the whole process is incredibly valuable to keep us connected to each other.”

— **Dr. Ryan Kauffman,**
*ABFM Diplomat and Chair
of the OAFP Quality Improvement
Workgroup*

The 63 physicians who attended the session provided very positive feedback, including the following:

- “Great talk, very informative. The presentation relieved some of my anxiety regarding continued certification.”
- “It really does seem that the board is making practical changes by trying to minimize “busy” work, being more flexible for people in alternative practices, and acknowledging the work we are already doing.”
- “The session helped me understand the ‘why’ behind what the ABFM does.”

Throughout the year, KSA Study Group session attendees will work in small groups to navigate their own physician portfolios and determine where they are in their current certification stage. Dr. Kauffman believes this will allow opportunities for networking and idea sharing around potential performance improvement activity ideas based on practice setting and similar capabilities.

At the end of the pilot, the OAFP and ABFM will synthesize what they learn in a way that informs similar opportunities and resources that can be offered for other chapters to utilize. A summary of those findings will be published and shared following the conclusion of this year.