



ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

ABA MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

“Examination Dates and Qualification Deadlines: 2010”

A physician's ability to demonstrate his or her qualifications through continuous certification is gaining attention among the public, as well as regulatory, licensing, and accrediting organizations. The American Board of Anesthesiology (ABA) recognizes the importance of such an initiative and has developed the Maintenance of Certification in Anesthesiology (MOCA) Program to help physicians demonstrate their commitment to quality clinical outcomes, and patient safety. MOCA offers certified anesthesiologists the opportunity to participate in personal improvement activities to improve their effectiveness, while advancing the standard of specialty medical care. An overview of the MOCA Program follows.

WHAT IS MOCA?

MOCA is a four-part program that consists of the following requirements: Part I: periodic assessment of professional standing (medical licensure); Part II: continual participation in lifelong learning and self-assessment activities (continuing medical education); Part III: demonstration of cognitive expertise (*via* examination); and Part IV: participation in practice performance assessment and improvement activities.

The ABA voluntary Anesthesiology Recertification Program is being phased out in 2009. The final application window is now closed, and the last recertification examination will be administered in December 2009. MOCA is now the only recertification option, and is available to all ABA diplomates, whether or not their initial certification is time-limited.

Diplomates certified before 2000 hold a non–time limited (NTL) certificate. The ABA *will not* alter the status of NTL diplomates if they choose not to recertify or complete the MOCA program. However, the ABA strongly encourages NTL diplomates to participate in MOCA because the program promotes lifelong learning with an emphasis on improving the overall quality of care delivered to patients. Maintenance of certification moves beyond the ABA's former recertification model to formally assess the diplomate's continuous commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

ABA diplomates certified after 1999 have a time-limited certificate and must complete the 10-year MOCA program in order to maintain their diplomate status. The ABA automatically enrolls them in MOCA when they are awarded initial certification. They can view their MOCA progress report by accessing their portal account through the ABA website (www.theABA.org). The earliest they can qualify for examination is three years before their certification expires (*i.e.*, 2010 for diplomates with a certificate that expires in 2013).

EXAMINATION DATES AND DECISION DEADLINES

Different forms of the examination are administered annually in January and July or August, by computer, at test centers in the United States and Canada. MOCA and Recertification candidates take the same examination in 2009; only MOCA candidates can qualify for examination in 2010. The test dates and deadlines by which diplomates must qualify for examination during testing windows in 2010 are:

EXAM DATES	REGISTRATION DEADLINES
January 16–30, 2010	November 20, 2009
July 17–31, 2010	May 21, 2010