

Dear Members of the Sleep Medicine Community:

In December 2019, we shared a summary of the status of a Sleep Medicine continuing certification assessment pilot proposed by the American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (ABOHNS), as well as next steps in vetting the pilot with the community. In essence, the pilot proposed a new longitudinal assessment for ABOHNS Sleep Medicine diplomates with a ‘focused content’ component, resulting in an increased percentage of total questions drawn from the content outline elements that are most relevant to the surgical aspects of Sleep Medicine. We are writing now to provide an update on our progress and a status report on where things stand. COVID-19 definitely caused some delays, but we have moved forward, nevertheless.

On June 25, 2020, we convened a summit comprised of representatives from specialty societies who represent the breadth of the Sleep Medicine discipline and patient stakeholders. Summit participants discussed how to approach an ABOHNS continuing certification pilot in Sleep Medicine.

During the summit, multiple viewpoints were expressed. Many participants supported the intent of the pilot, while some put forward concerns and cautions. There was general agreement that practice relevant assessments are important – and that any effort to develop practice relevant assessments must avoid fragmenting the discipline. Overall, summit participants expressed that the assessment component of the pilot should hold true to the principle that physicians *will maintain currency of the broad domain of the specialty* while simultaneously being more relevant to some forms of the practice of Sleep Medicine.

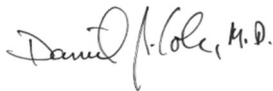
After learning so much at the summit, we are pleased to provide an outline of the current plan:

- The American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) will introduce a longitudinal assessment for Sleep Medicine in 2022. This longitudinal assessment will be available to Sleep Medicine diplomates from all co-sponsoring boards. As an alternative assessment option, Sleep Medicine diplomates can still choose to take the traditional proctored MOC exam.
- A focused assessment experience (a mix of 30% focus and 70% breadth of the field), developed from the ABOHNS pilot concept will be available as a component of the Sleep Medicine longitudinal assessment starting in 2023. Content development for the focused component will unfortunately not allow for sooner implementation.
- Focused content will come from the Sleep Medicine content outline – with heavier emphasis/higher percentage of questions deemed a greater part of ABOHNS Sleep Medicine diplomates’ practices. It does not include content outside of the current content outline (i.e., it will not focus on content specifically gained during Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery training – it will only be content from Sleep Medicine training). There will not be focused content options for other disciplines at this time (e.g., pediatrics).
- Focused content about the surgical aspects of Sleep Medicine will comprise 30% of the ABOHNS pilot assessment, with the other 70% taken from the breadth of the rest of the content outline.
- Focused content will be developed by a sub-committee of the ABIM Test Writing Committee, composed of members nominated from the ranks of ABOHNS Sleep Certified diplomates, along with other Sleep Medicine diplomates.

- Focused content approval will be through the ABIM Test Writing Committee – assuring consistent approaches and standards to content development and application of the content outline.
- With content coming from the current content outline, exam items will continue to be appropriate content for all takers – so that the associated pre-testing, equating, and psychometric (scoring) processes will remain valid and relevant.
- This “focused content” assessment will be open to anyone with the Sleep Medicine certification and not just ABOHNS certified diplomates.

We know that COVID-19 has created major challenges for everyone in clinical medicine, and we are grateful for your patience as we have worked to incorporate the diverse voices of Sleep Medicine in the approach to the ABOHNS continuing certification assessment pilot. And we are grateful for your continuing expert service to your patients during these very demanding times. If you have additional feedback or comments, please send to request@abim.org.

Sincerely,



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