Obesity Medicine: Building Credibility and Seeking Certification in a Stigmatized Field
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Disclosure

- Salaried Employee of the American Board of Obesity Medicine
Disclaimer

The American Board of Obesity Medicine (ABOM) is not currently recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

Recognition by the ABMS and its member boards is a long-term goal for the field of obesity medicine.

In the interim, the ABOM administers an examination to ABMS certified physicians seeking recognition for their added skill set in the treatment of obesity.
ABOM Established in 2011

The American Board of Obesity Medicine (ABOM) was established through the cooperative efforts of the former American Board of Bariatric Medicine (ABBM) and the Certified Obesity Medicine Physician (COMP) steering committee in order to create a single unified certification process. The ABBM was an independent entity that had been administering an examination in obesity medicine since 1997.
Obesity Counseling Rates Remain Low

National studies have shown that obesity counseling rates remain low among health care professionals. The reasons vary and include:

- Time restraints during a busy practice
- Lack of effective treatment options and practical tools
- Low confidence or insufficient training in weight management skills and counseling
- Concern that raising the topic will be interpreted by the patient as being insensitive
Rationale for Developing the ABOM

• Increased prevalence of overweight and obesity.
• Recognition as a chronic disease by the AMA.
• Steep increases in severe, complicated and recalcitrant obesity.
• Advances in obesity care in pharmacotherapy, surgical procedures, and devides.
• Insufficient number of physicians to provide care for patients with obesity and overweight.
• Establish minimal standards of appropriate knowledge and professional practice in obesity medicine.
The American Board of Obesity Medicine (ABOM) serves the public and the field of obesity medicine by maintaining standards for assessment and credentialing physicians. Certification as an ABOM Diplomate signifies specialized knowledge in the practice of obesity medicine and distinguishes a physician as having achieved competency in obesity care. ABOM collaborates with the National Board of Medical Examiners ® (NBME®) to administer the annual credentialing exam.
History of Stigma in Obesity Medicine

• Obesity has been historically viewed from a moral perspective, “sloth & gluttony”. It is their fault that they are fat.

• Healthcare providers often view patients with obesity as non-compliant, weak-willed, lazy and lacking in self-discipline.

• Bariatricians viewed as ‘diet doctors’ who use unsubstantiated and potentially dangerous treatments and sell products out of their office.

• No highly respected physicians would spend their career treating obese people.
The Emerging Field of Obesity Medicine

• Obesity is now viewed as a complex, multifactorial disease with known biological, genetic, metabolic, environmental, and psychosocial determinants.

• Although there is no currently acknowledged standard of care, multiple evidence-based practice guidelines and position papers are available to guide acceptable clinical practice.

• Well-trained and compassionate physicians are now focusing on Obesity Medicine as a career, devoting time to clinical practice, research, and education.
ABOM Eligibility Requirements

- Proof of an active medical license in the U.S.
- Proof of completion of a residency in the U.S.
- Active board certification in an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board.
- A minimum of 60 credit hours of continuing medical education (CME) recognized by the American Medical Association Physician Recognition Award (AMA PRA) Category 1 Credits on the topic of obesity.
# ABOM Partner Organizations

## Primary Obesity CME Partners
- Harvard Medical School Blackburn Course in Obesity Medicine
- Columbia University Institute of Human Nutrition
- Obesity Medicine Association (OMA)
- The Obesity Society (TOS)

## Obesity-Related CME Partners
- American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery
- Canadian Obesity Network (CON)
- Cleveland Clinic Obesity Summit
- Mayo Clinic: Nutrition & Wellness in Health & Disease
- Mass. General Obesity, Metabolism and Nutrition Institute (OMNI)

## American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Fields of Medicine Partners
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)
- American College of Physicians (ACP)
- American Gastroenterological Association (AGA)
- The Endocrine Society (ENDO)

## Public Health Partners
- American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMB) Foundation
- Global Obesity Prevention Center (GOPC) at Johns Hopkins
- STOP Obesity Alliance
- The Obesity Treatment Foundation
- Trust for America’s Health
Number of Obesity Medicine Diplomates

Kushner RF, Brittan D. et al. Obesity 2017;25:982-4
### Diplomates by Specialty (Top 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiology</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>1.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastroenterology</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery</td>
<td>3.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>4.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OB/GYN</td>
<td>4.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrinology</td>
<td>5.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
<td>28.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
<td>33.61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Number of Certificates Issued in Various Medical Specialties

Number of Certificates Issued Per Year

- Endocrinology
- Geriatric Medicine
- Infectious Disease
- Rheumatology
- Obesity Medicine
- Gastroenterology
ABOM Diplomate Badge
ABOM Designation by Speakers

Friday, April 21, 2017

7:30 a.m.  Registration
8:00 a.m.  Medical Evaluation and Treatment of Adult Obesity
           Rekha B. Kumar, M.D., M.S., Diplomate ABOM
9:00 a.m.  Weight Loss Surgery for the Treatment of Adult Obesity: Procedures and Outcomes
           Abraham Krikhely, M.D.
10:00 a.m. Break
10:15 a.m. Nutrient Metabolism and Obesity: Special Considerations after Bariatric Surgery
           Jeffrey L. Mechanick, M.D.
11:00 a.m. Past and Present Challenges in Childhood Obesity
           Sandra G. Hassink, M.D., FAAP
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m.  Obesity Management in the Pediatric Population
           Eugene Dinkevich, M.D.
1:45 p.m.  Nutrition Evaluation of the Patient with Obesity
           Rachel Lustgarten, RDN
2:30 p.m.  Coffee Break
ABOM Designation in News Articles

Type 2 Diabetes: Changing the Paradigm From Management to Reversal

Sarah Hallberg, DO, MS

Dr. Hallberg is the medical director at Virta Health. She is also the medical director and founder of the medically supervised weight loss program at Indiana University Health Arnett and an adjunct professor of clinical medicine at the Indiana University School of Medicine. Dr. Hallberg is a diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Obesity Medicine, and the American Board of Clinical Lipidology and is a registered Exercise Physiologist by the American College of Sports Medicine.

Sunday, April 16, 2017
NBME and the ABOM

- The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) has worked with the ABOM since 2014 to develop, administer and score the ABOM Certification Examination.

- Since 2014 the NBME has hosted annual Item Writing Workshops to assist with the training of new ABOM item writers.

- These workshops are focused on teaching the principles of item writing and have led to more item submissions being accepted by the ABOM item review committee.

- The NBME has recently completed a Job Task Analysis with the ABOM and the results are being used to update the Certification Examination blueprint.
1. Item Writing
- NBME generates a pool analysis as a basis for item-writing assignments to ensure that the pool has robust coverage in all content areas.
- NBME trains new item writers in the principles of item writing.
- New and experienced writers create items that test the application of knowledge required for certification in obesity medicine.

2. Item Editing and Review
- NBME editors review and edit items for grammar, style, and testing flaws.
- Item writers complete interim editing.
- Item writers review all newly written items at a meeting held at the NBME.
- Items are either accepted, flagged for re-write or deleted.

3. Exam Construction
- NBME constructs an initial version of the exam form to meet content and statistical criteria.
- Content experts review the exam form to ensure all content is timely, accurate, and appropriate at a meeting held at the NBME.

4. Exam Administration
- Certification candidates take the exam (5 hours exam with 200 items).
- NBME psychometricians flag items that did not perform well statistically on the exam. Content experts review the flagged items to verify that the answers are correct and the items are fair.
Next Steps for ABOM

- Completion of second Job Task Analysis/Role Delineation Study

- Release of revised rubric

- Implementation of revised MOC program

- Development of the American Board of Obesity Medicine Foundation. **Advancing training to increase the obesity medicine physician workforce so patients with obesity in every community have access to treatment.**
American Board of Obesity Medicine Foundation

• Define the field of obesity medicine by bringing together physician and academic program leaders who play a significant role in the treatment and prevention of obesity.

• Create a Council of Obesity Medicine Fellowship Directors made up of current obesity medicine fellowship directors throughout the United States. The Council will develop documentation that includes a scope of practice, core competencies, and educational content to standardize fellowship education in obesity medicine.

• Identify academic institutions interested in launching fellowship opportunities in obesity medicine and providing them with the documentation created by the Council of Obesity Medicine Fellowship Directors to begin developing additional fellowship opportunities.

• Assist academic institutions in sourcing funding for obesity medicine fellowships