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January 20, 2010

Michael Coyne
American Board of Medical Specialties
222 North LaSalle Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Mr. Coyne:

On behalf of the National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS), I am writing to express our concern regarding the American Board of Pediatrics' (ABP) recent implementation of permanent certificates and the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program.

While we were aware that all 24 member boards of the ABMS would implement a MOC process by 2016, we were surprised by the ABP's 2010 implementation date; particularly because medical services professionals have not been provided with information on methods to verify the MOC and how that may affect credentialing. Verifying certification is connected to the hospital accreditation survey process, we would appreciate clarification of the following concerns.

First, we would like more guidance on how medical staff departments should verify the certification of a provider. Currently, this is performed by verifying the expiration date of the provider's certification. Without this date, we are unaware of how we should monitor the certification status of ABP-certified physicians, specifically how often certification status needs to be reviewed. Having a process for verifying certification is especially important for specialties that require certification per medical staff bylaws.

Second, we are uncertain as to who will be responsible for the tracking a physician's educational activities to fulfill MOC requirements. We would like clarification as to whether this is something that will need to be maintained by the medical staff department, or if it will be tracked by the medical board.

NAMSS supports the effort by the medical boards to ensure that certified physicians meet the competencies required through the MOC process. However, we request guidance from the ABMS and the ABP with guidelines on how credentialing should be performed in accordance with the new MOC requirements so we can pass this education on to our membership. We would also request that the ABMS

work with the medical boards to ensure that medical services professionals are made aware of future implementation of the MOC and any effects it may have on the credentialing process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Reed, PhD, CPMSM". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and 'R'.

Karen Reed, PhD, CPMSM
2010 NAMSS President