Self-Evaluation of Practice Performance

Practice Improvement Modules: A Path to Quality Improvement

The American Board of Internal Medicine's (ABIM) Maintenance of Certification program is designed to engage physicians in lifelong learning and to enhance the knowledge and skills essential to high quality care. In addition to maintaining good professional standing and current knowledge in their field, ABIM diplomates must also provide evidence of lifelong learning and evaluation of practice performance to maintain certification.

ABIM's Practice Improvement Modules (PIMs) are used by physicians to evaluate their practice performance as part of Maintenance of Certification. These modules help physicians acquire the competencies of practice-based learning and systems-based practice, which begins by understanding and applying quality measurement to practice and using results from that measurement to guide actions to improve care.

What is a PIM?
A PIM is a Web-based self-evaluation tool that guides a physician or group of physicians through a quality improvement cycle for a specific population of patients. The PIM guides practice-based learning and improvement; no prior knowledge about measurement or improvement is needed. Completing a PIM provides the physician with 20 to 40 points toward his or her Maintenance of Certification requirement, plus:

- 20 Category 1 CME credits through a program jointly sponsored by the American College of Physicians and ABIM.
- The option of using data collected through the Diabetes PIM to apply for NCQA's Diabetes Physician Recognition Program (DPRP).
- Possible recognition from health plans and other organizations.

Many physicians who complete the PIM learn something by seeing their practice as a population of patients with a common condition. They realize that the quality of care provided depends not only on what they know, but also on the system that supports the delivery of care.

Practice Improvement Modules

- Asthma
- Care of the Vulnerable Elderly
- Clinical Preventive Services
- Colonoscopy
- Communication - Primary Care
- Communication - Subspecialist
- Communication with Referring Physicians
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis C
- HIV
- Hospital-Based Patient Care
- Hypertension
- Osteoporosis
- Patient and Physician Peer Assessment
- Preventive Cardiology
- Self-Directed

Our Mission: To enhance the quality of health care by certifying internists and subspecialists who demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for excellent patient care.
PIM Components

1. Collect Patient Data: The user collects performance data on a specific subset of patients through chart abstraction, claims data, and/or patient surveys. This provides an opportunity to assess key elements of clinical process and outcome in the population of patients the practice serves, and to determine if important areas of care are not being addressed adequately. Patient data collection requirements vary in different types of PIMs.

2. Examine Practice Systems: The user completes a comprehensive questionnaire about the practice system to evaluate both human processes and information technology that affect the reliability of care. Adding simple routines and using resources already available can lead to substantial improvements in both reliability and quality of outcomes.

3. Identify Goals and Redesign Processes: ABIM summarizes the data collected in steps 1 and 2, and provides the user with a summary report of the practice in order to identify goals for improvement. The user then redesigns one or more relevant practice processes to achieve the desired goals.

4. Perform Focused Re-measurement: The user performs a "Plan, Do, Study, Act" (PDSA) cycle to test the impact of the change on the practice. The results of the re-measurement and lessons learned are reported to ABIM as a final step to completing the PIM.

PIMs for Group Practices and Residency/Fellowship programs

Many of ABIM’s PIMs are available to group practices, as well as residency and fellowship programs. Working as a group, participants will use the PIM to collect practice data to calculate performance measures. Participants will receive one report identifying goals for improvement in the practice. Improvement will be achieved on two levels: individual improvement through reflective practice and systems improvement as an active group participant.

For More Information:
To review a demonstration version of any PIM:
http://www.abim.org/online/pim/demo.aspx

To review a five-minute tutorial describing the PIM:
http://www.abim.org/moc/sempbpi.shtm

To order a PIM:
http://www.abim.org/online

For questions about the PIMs:
800-441-2246, ext. 3567 (M-F 8:30 am – 5:00 pm EST)

ABIM is the only board in the specialty of Internal Medicine recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties – the highest standard, achieved by only 24 medical specialty boards. ABIM’s Board of Directors consists of national leaders in medical education, clinical practice, academic medicine and research.