



American Pediatric Surgical Association

Position Statement on Maintenance of Certification in Support of the American Board of Surgery Standards

Approved by the American Pediatric Surgical Association Board of Governors
February 20, 2018

Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is the process by which physicians participate in continuous professional development. The purpose is so that physicians keep up to date with current standards of practice and patient care. For pediatric surgeons, this process is required in order to maintain board certification by the American Board of Surgery. Board certification means that a surgeon has met standards of professional development for safe, up-to-date patient care. MOC is divided into six core competencies including practice-based learning and improvement, patient care and procedural skills, systems-based practice, medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills and professionalism. All of these requirements are meant to foster a process of continuous learning and to ensure the public safety.

Despite the goals of MOC to promote high quality patient care, a small but vocal minority of physicians in the United States have expressed discontent with MOC, calling upon state legislatures to make laws prohibiting the use of MOC for physician licensure, hospital privileging, reimbursement and employment. Several states have enacted legislation prohibiting MOC in some way.

The American Pediatric Surgical Association (APSA) fully embraces MOC and is strongly opposed to any legislation prohibiting MOC. Such legislation interferes with the right of any physician association to set standards within its own community, interferes with a hospital's responsibility to set standards for its physicians and denies patients the right to know if their physician meets the standards for board certification and whether they are up to date in their fields. APSA believes that MOC and board certification are vital components of providing the public safe, quality, up-to-date care. We fully support requirements for on-going physician education, MOC and recertification and are against any efforts to limit or prohibit them.