SAM Study Group Guidelines
Introduction

The American Board of Family Medicine has instituted the Maintenance of Certification Program for Family Physicians (MC-FP) as a mechanism for the ongoing assessment of family physicians. To implement MC-FP, ABFM Diplomates are phased into the program over a seven year period, starting with the group of Diplomates who certified/recertified in 2003 and entered MC-FP in 2004 and ending with the group of Diplomates who will certify/recertify in 2009 and enter MC-FP in 2010. To maintain certification with the ABFM, Diplomates are required to meet the requirements set forth in the four components of MC-FP prior to the expiration of their certificate. Those components include Professionalism, Self Assessment and Lifelong Learning, Cognitive Expertise, and Performance in Practice. The components addressing Self Assessment (Part II) and Performance in Practice (Part IV) are fulfilled by the completion of online modules. Although Diplomates can complete the Part II component via the ABFM website, we are offering the opportunity for those organizations that are interested to hold SAM Study Group sessions to discuss a module of their choice.

SAM Study Group sessions allow ABFM Diplomates to discuss and complete the Knowledge Assessment portion of the module that is being presented by the coordinating organization.

Details regarding the administration of these sessions can be found within this document.
The landscape of continuing medical education (CME) is changing, with increasing concerns by the public, the government, payors, the press, and many in the CME community about the role of commercial influence on the topics and content of CME programs. While debate continues about how and if adequate “firewalls” can be put in place to separate commercial support from influence over CME or curricula, others have expressed the opinion that firewalls cannot quell public perception of undue influence. This sentiment, among other concerns, is highlighted by a January 2008 report from the Josiah Macy Foundation, which, among other recommendations for CME reform, advocates the elimination of all commercial support from CME by 2012. This has caused considerable concern in the CME community, because 60% of CME funding is currently garnered from industry. As a result, industry supporters may look to partner with entities to develop performance improvement CME activities, such as those found in Part IV of Maintenance of Certification.

As an organization accountable to the public, ABFM leadership feels that further elucidation and expansion of our current policy on industry support of MC-FP components is in order to decrease public concerns about potential industry influence. Therefore, we propose the following updated Policy on Industry Support of Components of Maintenance of Certification for Family Physicians.

1) The ABFM reaffirms current board policy of not accepting industry support for any MC-FP component developed by the ABFM.

2) We will consider proposals for MC-FP components developed by:

- Academia
- Medical specialty societies
- Other ABMS specialty boards
- Medical Groups
- Health Plans
- Hospitals
Quality Improvement Organizations

Federal agencies

Non-industry related nonprofit foundations

3) Components that are directly or indirectly funded by, supported by in-kind donations, or developed by or in conjunction with employees/representatives of medical drug and device manufacturers will not be considered.

4) Industry support may not be used to support honoraria for faculty or the expenses of faculty participating in the development or delivery of any MC-FP related activities.

5) Industry support may be used to support the delivery of MC-FP related activities (e.g., marketing, publicity, IT support, etc.) by the sponsoring organization. In instances where industry support has been used by a sponsoring organization to support the delivery of an MC-FP activity, the organization must provide a statement on any materials that are used in association with or to promote the activity that clearly delineates what specifically has been supported and clearly states that no support has been provided for the development of content, expenses of faculty, or faculty honoraria. (Suggested statement: “[Name of Company] has provided support for the [the specific activity supported {e.g., marketing, publicity, IT support, etc.}] of this program. No support has been received for the development of the content or the expenses and honoraria of faculty associated with this activity.”) Additionally, the logo of the company that has sponsored the delivery of the activity may not be used on any materials related to the activity.

6) Externally developed MC-FP Part IV modules that include quality measures which are not components approved by the AQA, NQF, or the AMA Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement will not be considered.

7) In addition to review by ABFM staff (and the MC-FP committee, if necessary) for compatibility with other ABFM standards, all externally developed Part II (SAM) and Part IV (PPM) MC-FP components will undergo a rigorous peer review process by the ABFM for subtle bias toward any individual or class of medical drug or device, or bias toward interventional treatment when alternative treatments (i.e., lifestyle) are an equally evidence-based, quality option.

8) This prospective policy applies to all new external component MC-FP designations starting January 23, 2008. Previously approved internal and external MC-FP components are exempt from this policy. However, industry support may not be used to revise, refresh, or update the content of MC-FP components produced with industry support prior to the approval of this policy on April 28, 2008, and thereby previously exempted from this policy.

9) The ABFM may, at a future date, develop stricter policies regarding industry involvement in externally-developed MC-FP components, based upon the then-current menu of approved activities and changes in the regulatory and CME environments.

10) This policy will be reviewed at least on an annual basis.

*In this document, “industry” is defined as any company producing pharmaceuticals or medical devices.
Important Information

1. Organizations wishing to host a SAM study session must comply with the ABFM Policy on Industry Support of Components of MC-FP. The policy is included with these materials for review.

2. If the host organization chooses to charge a fee to attend a SAM Study Group session, it is important to note that these fees do not include the ABFM Maintenance of Certification (MC-FP) fees. This information is to be provided in all promotional material related to the SAM Study Group session.
   a. Participants in MC-FP will be required to pay MC-FP fees in order to complete the Clinical Simulation portion of the SAM module
   b. Participants not in MC-FP who desire to receive CME credit will be required to pay the current SAM fee in order to complete the Clinical Simulation portion of the SAM module and prior to receiving CME credit

3. Participants will only receive MC-FP credit for the module if all of the following are true:
   a. Participant is currently eligible for and enrolled in the MC-FP process
   b. Participant has not already completed the module topic that is being covered in the SAM Study Group session
   c. Participant has not already completed his/her current MC-FP Stage requirements
   d. Participant successfully completes the Knowledge Assessment portion of the SAM module within the group or afterward if needed as well as the Clinical Simulation
   e. They attend and fully participate in the educational discussion of the entire session

*** Family physicians participating in MC-FP may elect to complete additional SAM modules for CME credit even after they have completed their current MC-FP Stage requirements. These modules will not be applied to subsequent MC-FP Stages. Additional costs may or may not apply depending on what payment plan was chose by the Diplomate. Please contact the ABFM Support Center at 877-223-7437 for more information.

4. All educational materials for the SAM Study Group session are the responsibility of the organization that is hosting the session

5. The host organization of the SAM Study Group is responsible for submitting the group information to the ABFM in order to arrange for
access to the group session (see below under Host Coordinator Responsibilities)

**Request**

**Host Organization Coordinator Responsibilities**

- After reviewing the SAM Study Group Guidelines, complete and submit the ABFM SAM Study Group session application to set up your organization’s initial SAM Study Group session

Contact: Ashley Webb, ABFM SAM Study Group Coordinator
  - Phone: 888-995-5700 ext 1000
  - Fax: 859-335-7516
  - Email: awebb@theabfm.org

**Preparation**

**Host Organization Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Provides the ABFM with the following information to set up the initial SAM Study Group Session:
  - Module to be covered in the session
  - Date of session
  - Name of the organization holding the session
  - Host Coordinator Information
    - First Name
    - Last Name
    - Email Address
    - Phone Number
- For all future sessions, enter the above information into the SAM Study Group Administration system.
- Enter the session participants in to the SAM Study Group Administration System, including either their ABFM ID or AAFP ID

**SAM Study Group Session**

**Faculty Facilitator Responsibilities**

The Faculty Facilitator will need to make the following announcements at the beginning of the session and repeat them at the end of the session:

Participants will only receive MC-FP credit if all of the following are true:
You are currently eligible for and enrolled in the ABFM MC-FP process
You have not completed your current MC-FP stage*
You pay your MC-FP fees to the ABFM prior to completing the Clinical Simulation
You complete the Clinical Simulation
You attend and fully participate in the educational discussion for the entire session

The Faculty Facilitator is expected to review the module questions with the group. **Under no circumstances** will the Faculty Facilitator provide the group with the answers. The Faculty Facilitator or the Host Organization Coordinator is also expected to enter the group answers in the administration system. The administration system:

- Allows the ability for the group to see if they have successfully completed the module
- Provides feedback for which questions the group have not answered correctly

**Materials**

**All materials are the responsibility of the host organization**

- Replication of SAM questions and references is permitted by the ABFM
  - Educational Materials
    - Should not explicitly provide the correct answer or the item critique from the ABFM website
    - Highly recommended that Evidence Based (EB) Material be utilized in the discussion around the question
  - Educational materials do not need to be reviewed by the ABFM. The ABFM will be happy to review the material upon request if faculty facilitator is unsure about it meeting the above criteria

**Data Entry**

- Group answers **must** be entered prior to the completion of the SAM Study Group session using the SAM Study Group Administration System
- Review feedback is provided by the administration system after submission of the group’s answers
- Results
  - **Successful Completion**
- 80% in each competency area of the Knowledge Assessment required for successful completion
- Physician’s will need to visit the ABFM website to complete the Clinical Simulation portion of the SAM module
  www.theabfm.org
- Physicians are required to pay MC-FP fees prior to accessing the simulation portion of the SAM module
- Physicians who are not MC-FP eligible, who desire to receive CME Credit, will be required to pay the current SAM fee in order to complete the Clinical Simulation portion of the SAM module prior to receiving CME credit
  - **Unsuccessful completion**
    - Options
      - Go back and review the questions that the group missed and re-answer them to successfully complete the module
      - Inform the group they did not successfully complete the Knowledge Assessment portion of the module during the session, but they must review the incorrect questions of the Knowledge Assessment on the ABFM website (www.theabfm.org) at another time. Once they successfully complete the Knowledge Assessment they can move on to the Clinical Simulation

**Post Study Group Session**

**Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Verify list of participants prior to the submission of the data to the ABFM
  - **No Shows**
    - Delete no shows from the participants list using the administration system
  - **Late enrollers** may be enrolled at the time of registration
    - Need to be added to the list of participants using the administration system and check eligibility
    - ABFM cannot guarantee that the participant is eligible to receive MC-FP credit
- Submit data to the ABFM using the administration system
- Alert the ABFM SAM Study Group Coordinator, Ashley Webb, with any problems that occur while submitting the SAM Study Group session data
- Data for the SAM Study Group session must be finalized and submitted within 5 business days from the date of conducting the session
ABFM Responsibilities

- Provide assistance to the Host Organization Coordinator with the data submission process if needed
- Verify that the data was successfully submitted to the ABFM once we have received submission verification

ABFM Services

The following services will be provided by the ABFM:

- Administration software
- PDF version of the SAM questions and references
- Training for administration software
  - PowerPoint presentation
  - Follow-up support to answer any questions that the coordinator may have
- Support
  - Ashley Webb
    - 888-995-5700 ext 1000
    - awebb@theabfm.org
  - Immediate Back-up: Debbie Medley
    - 888-995-5700 ext 1292
    - dmedley@theabfm.org
  - Support Center
    - 877-223-7437
    - help@theabfm.org

The following services will NOT be provided by the ABFM:

- Faculty Facilitator
- Endorsement
- Educational Materials
- Will not cover the cost of the Faculty Facilitator or their accommodations
- Will not cover the cost of the SAM Study Group session venue