THE SEARCH

The American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) invites applications and nominations for the position of Executive Director (ED). ABPM was established in 1948 to promote the health and safety of the American people through its high standards in the certification and maintenance of certification for physicians practicing within the field of preventive health. ABPM awards certificates of special knowledge in Preventive Medicine in the specialty areas of Aerospace Medicine, Occupational Medicine or Public Health, and General Preventive Medicine, as well as in the subspecialties of Medical Toxicology, Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine, Clinical Informatics, and Addiction Medicine.

The ED provides executive leadership for the ABPM. The ED reports to and works collaboratively with its Board of Directors to establish strategic priorities that ensure the rigor and relevance of the ABPM certification and maintenance of certification to the ABPM’s diplomates, the public, and a wide array of other healthcare entities. The ED serves as the primary liaison with the diplomates and is responsible for sustaining healthy relationships with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the Aerospace Medical Association, the American Association of Public Health Physicians, the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American College of Medical Toxicology, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, the American College of Preventive Medicine, the American Medical Association, the American Medical Informatics Association, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society, related academic societies, and the full range of regulatory bodies that govern medical education, licensure, and certification.

The next ED will assume the leadership of an organization that has recently gone through a period of rapid growth. Applications for certification have risen sharply with the relatively recent addition of Clinical Informatics and Addiction Medicine as subspecialties within the Board. To address this growth, and possible future expansion, the ED will utilize exceptional organizational skills and knowledge to further build and organize the systems, infrastructure, and staffing needed to support ABPM. The ED will not only assess and evaluate ABPM’s current needs in this regard but will also work with Directors and staff to set a strategic plan for the future that fully integrates ABPM’s specialty and subspecialty areas. ABPM is an organization with venerable history. The next ED ultimately has the opportunity to build the organization into a major contributor to the field of preventive medicine and to begin broader
conversations related to medical certification, maintenance of certification, healthcare quality, healthcare policy, and other areas.

ABPM is assisted in this search by Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm. All inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (including a CV and cover letter addressing the below challenges, opportunities, and qualifications) should be sent via Isaacson, Miller’s website: www.imsearch.com/6300

The American Board of Preventive Medicine is an EO/EA/AA employer.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

ABPM is presently led by an interim Executive Director, Benson Munger, PhD, following the retirement of William Greaves, MD, MSPH. Dr. Munger brings a depth of experience in running medical certifying boards and has significantly strengthened the organization during a period of rapid growth. In the past four to five years ABPM has seen a ten-fold increase in applications for certification -- from approximately 200 to over 2000 in 2017 -- largely due to the addition of two subspecialties: addiction medicine and clinical informatics. Currently there are more than 4375 active ABPM diplomates in the United States and abroad.

In response to this growing demand, ABPM has invested significantly in technology and additional capacity to manage the examination and application processes through improved communication and operations. With the assistance of an outside developer, ABPM recently completed an online platform to manage the initial certification process and will soon begin work on a related product for maintenance of certification. They are also in the midst of rebuilding the ABPM website. In an effort to perfect and streamline the examination process, the ABPM engaged the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) this year to administer its examination processes.

THE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

ABPM is a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). ABPM is a non-profit corporation governed by a board of directors whose members are nominated by the following organizations:

- Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA)
- American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP)
- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM)
- American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- Directors of the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM)

Each specialty and subspecialty has a separate exam. The exam writing and reviewing process is managed by an exam committee comprised of individuals certified in that discipline. Exam committees
are responsible for reviewing and developing changes in certification policies, implementing those policies, and reviewing applications for that specialty/subspecialty.

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of 11 physician Directors who are clinicians, administrators, public health officials, industry consultants, and/or academicians within the three preventive medicine specialty areas. In addition, the Board is served by three sub-board chairs, each from one of the subspecialty boards, who attend Director meetings and other ABPM activities. Board Directors are chosen for a three-year term with the option of two additional three-year terms. Members of the 2017 Board of Directors are listed in the appendix.

The ABPM staff is composed of seven individuals along with a cadre of contract employees who oversee application processes, provide assistance to diplomates and applicants, and manage the operational processes of the ABPM. The ED directly manages the Administrative Director, who in turn, supervises all staff, assisted by HR support from ABMS. The ED also oversees all finances and other administrative functions.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROLE

The ED is ultimately responsible for the overall performance and activities of ABPM, including examination development and administration, credentialing, communications, finance, administration, human resources, and advocacy. In addition, the ED will sustain and build the recognition of ABPM as the organization that established the standards for certifying physicians in Preventive Medicine and its subspecialties. Additional responsibilities of the ED include:

- Managing the overall development of the staff and assuring that adequate human and other resources are available to implement the programs of ABPM while nurturing alignment among the ABPM directors, committees, and staff
- Conceptualizing, articulating, and implementing ABPM policies and procedures and further developing and implementing effective standard operating procedures that ensure responsive and efficient handling of all applications and administrative affairs
- Developing effective fiscal operating plans in cooperation with executive leadership, officers, committees, and staff and ensuring the financial resources of ABPM are sufficient to deliver on its mission
- Serving as spokesperson for the ABPM and advocating for its mission
- Building relationships with external constituencies and organizations to promote the value of ABPM certification
- Working with ABPM leadership and staff to develop and plan comprehensive and productive meetings
- Maintaining and continuing to grow the communications programs of ABPM while maintaining the appropriate intellectual property controls
- Building strong external relationships among those organizations that have an interest in and impact on the quality of the disciplines with the ABPM
The next Executive Director will be a strategic-minded leader possessing the experience and stature to effectively lead a certifying board. Experienced in guiding complex organizations, the ED will excel in working collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders including the Board of Directors. The ED will bring the proven capacity for innovation, a deep commitment to delivering excellence in healthcare, and a clear understanding of certification, assessment, quality improvement, and continuous education in healthcare.

As the public face of ABPM, the next ED will be a superb communicator with a proven ability to bring groups together under a common mission. The ED will be open, receptive, and responsive to feedback in promoting strong relationships in furthering the mission of ABPM.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Reporting to and working closely with the Board of Directors, the next ED will effectively direct and inspire the ABPM in proactively responding to and addressing and the following opportunities and challenges:

Manage the organization with effective business strategies

The next ED must possess a savvy business sense and strong operational acumen to evaluate the current needs of the ABPM and respond to current and potential business opportunities. The ED will work with the board in modifying governance structures as needed and will further revise and develop appropriate staffing levels, operational processes and procedures, as well as additions or amendments to program offerings as the need arises. It will be important for the next ED to review workloads, consider the complement of full time and contract staff, and decide upon an effective staffing structure to optimally support ABPM’s goals. The ED will need to formalize processes and procedures across multiple functions including budgeting and finance, human resources, communications, and governance. There may also be opportunities to bring on additional staff expertise in these areas.

Establish a clear vision and strategic plan for ABPM’s next chapter

ABPM is a very different organization than it was even five years ago. The dramatic rise in applications has brought changes that have impacted the culture of the organization and surfaced clear needs for more structure, technology, and formal planning. This growth has further highlighted ABPM’s unique design and challenging structure as an organization with multiple specialties and subspecialties under one umbrella. The next ED will decide on a clear vision for ABPM as a board that represents preventive medicine as a whole. The ED must then, with the support of the Directors and staff, weave this vision into a clear strategic plan that outlines ABPM’s path over the coming years.

Ensure the rigor and value of initial certification and continuous certification

A central priority for the next ED is evolving the initial certification and MOC (continuous certification) processes across the ABPM specialties and subspecialties in order to establish and maintain high standards in preventive medicine, and provide diplomates with the means to continually assess and
improve their ability to meet these standards. The ED and Directors will refine this process at each step to add maximum value with minimum burden. Demonstrating value through data is critical. The ED will lead the Directors in communicating the essential value of certification, the importance of participation in MOC, and the promise of lifelong practice improvement to the public and to diplomates. ABPM must be agile and responsive to changes happening with continuous certification across ABMS member boards. Indeed, ABPM has an opportunity to step out as a leader in setting a direction for continuous certification.

**Partner with Directors and staff to determine priorities and ensure success in all areas**

The ABPM Directors have invested significant time and energy to enable ABPM to function as a highly successful organization. That said, the demands on Directors are significant and, in line with best practices, should shift from operational to strategic. Over the coming years the next ED will guide conversations regarding both the roles and responsibilities of both the Executive Director and Board of Directors to ensure the best use of their abilities.

The ED should also pursue and/or develop opportunities to build even stronger lines of communication between Directors and staff. The staff is an important resource for both the ED and Directors, providing a thorough understanding of program needs and professional standards. The ED serves as the bridge between the Directors and staff, internalizing feedback from both, while managing the feasibility and scope of what Directors expect and translating those strategic priorities to staff assignment and goals.

**Convene and engage all audiences and key organizations toward shared goals**

The ED serves as the advocate and public face of the ABPM and plays the primary role of convening conversations among the interconnected players in medical specialties, health professionals, providers, and the public. Diplomates seek an interactive ED who will not only build strong ties among diplomates but be a good partner to others. The ED is expected to listen to, influence, and find common ground with other certifying boards, professional organizations, and other related associations. Through proactive engagement the ED can use the ABPM as a platform to improve quality, reduce cost, and position preventive medicine as central in rapidly changing healthcare models.

**QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE**

The ED will serve as the public face of an influential certifying board. The ED will successfully manage board relationships while overseeing a complex organization in a strategic fashion. The successful ED candidate will be knowledgeable about the mission, goals, functions, and work of ABPM or a similar certifying board. Physician and non-physician candidates will be considered. The next ED will bring a proven ability to lead through influence and to work effectively with external and internal constituencies. This mandate requires an understanding of healthcare, the forces affecting the field of preventive medicine, and the ability to anticipate and respond to new trends that will affect diplomates. The ED will have the knowledge, insight, and fortitude to make thoughtful but decisive judgments for both the present and the future.
The successful candidate will embody many of the following professional qualifications, skills, experiences, and personal qualities:

- Strong resonance with the mission of the ABPM; a commitment to upholding, in all ways and at all times, the organization’s core principles
- Demonstrated success in leadership and effective management, ideally in a medical certifying board or medical specialty society
- Proven track record of developing, overseeing and implementing efficient and effective operational functioning within a complex and expanding organization
- A leadership style that is characterized by a roll-your-sleeves-up mentality coupled with the desire to grow and mentor staff
- An understanding of the graduate medical education system in the United States and the role certification plays in it
- Financial and budgetary experience in an organization with similar resources
- An appreciation for emerging technologies and their role in healthcare assessment and certification processes
- A firm grasp of the challenges facing healthcare specialists today, including rapidly evolving requirements from various medical organizations as well as the ever-increasing complexity of today’s healthcare system
- Proven experience in developing strategic priorities, and thinking tactically. An ability to exercise political savvy and to form collaborative relationships
- A keen ability to convene groups with diverse agendas and connect the dialogue and debate to the larger framework of quality improvement in healthcare
- A demonstrated track record of finding creative solutions to difficult problems
- Outstanding interpersonal and political skills to work internally and externally with a wide variety of constituencies and decision makers; the ability to partner effectively with the organization’s diverse constituencies, including the general public, diplomates, the medical education community, and medical societies and associations
- A highly collaborative team builder with strong interpersonal and organizational skills
- An effective, engaging communicator; clear and compelling in oral and written work
- Willingness to travel
- High personal integrity
- Respectful of others, intellectually curious, and appropriately decisive
- Adaptable and innovative; energetic and forward-thinking
APPENDIX

ABPM HISTORY

ABPM originated from recommendations of a joint committee comprised of representatives from the Section of Preventive and Industrial Medicine and Public Health of the American Medical Association and the Committee on Professional Education of the American Public Health Association. The Board was incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware on June 29, 1948 as “The American Board of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Incorporated.”

In 1952 the name was changed to The American Board of Preventive Medicine, Inc. In February 1953, the Advisory Board of Medical Specialties and the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association authorized certification by the Board of preventive medicine specialists in Aviation Medicine (the name was changed to Aerospace Medicine in 1963); in June 1955, preventive medicine specialists in Occupational Medicine; in November 1960, preventive medicine specialists in General Preventive Medicine; and in 1983, Public Health and General Preventive Medicine were combined into one specialty area of certification. In 1989 the American Board of Preventive Medicine was approved to offer a subspecialty certificate in Undersea Medicine (the name was changed to Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine in 1999), in 1992 a subspecialty certificate in Medical Toxicology, in 2010 a subspecialty certificate in Clinical Informatics, and in 2017 a subspecialty in Addiction Medicine.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

ABPM has vital relationships with many organizations including the following:

- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA)
- American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP)
- American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)
- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM)
- American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT)
- American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA)
- American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)
- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- Program Directors Organization for each certificate area
- Residency Review Committee for Preventive Medicine (RRC-PM)
- Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS)
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