

Report from ABNM: Board of Directors Selection

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The American Board of Nuclear Medicine (ABNM) is an independent nonprofit organization, 1 of the 24 medical specialty boards that make up the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Through ABMS, the boards work together to establish common standards for physicians to achieve and maintain board certification. The boards were founded by their respective specialties to protect the public by assessing and certifying doctors who meet specific educational, training, and professional requirements. At the ABNM, the board of directors is made up of 12 members. They are the governing body of ABNM and are accountable for all its actions. Board members are volunteers and are not paid for their time and work. Practically speaking, they are accountable to all ABNM diplomates and ensure that the board accomplishes its mission and goals. Two new board members (on average) are selected each year, and the selection of board members is primarily based on expertise in specific areas of nuclear medicine, such as pediatrics, therapy, neurology, cardiology, oncology, general nuclear medicine, and basic science. Members serve 2-3-year terms and are not eligible for reelection once terms are completed.

The ABNM is often asked how board members are selected. The primary purpose of the board (and therefore its most essential function) is the advancement of the health of the public through establishment and maintenance of standards of training and education and the qualification of physicians rendering nuclear medicine services to the people of the United States. The ABNM wants to serve its diplomates successfully and communicate well so that they understand all issues concerning and maintaining board certification. It is the goal of the ABNM board to be diverse in geographic locations as well as in practice patterns, gender, and length of board certification, as well as to include diplomates who are lifetime certificate holders, time-limited certificate holders, and even dual-board certified. The ABNM encourages inclusion on the board of not only nuclear medicine board members who are in academic practice but also board members who are in private practice and in large health care organizations. ABNM strives to have board members who represent our diplomates solely and who have not lost touch with what is going on in the world of nuclear medicine.

The ABNM solicits nominations for new board members from current and former board members. In the future we are considering increasing our reach by asking other groups or individuals for nominations. To be considered for the ABNM board of directors, individuals must be ABNM board certified and have sufficient time to dedicate to board activities, which include attending all ABNM meetings in

their entirety, writing questions for all examinations offered by ABNM, and staying current on ABNM Maintenance of Certification activities.

The ABNM tries to select diplomates who share our sense of mission. If they do not care deeply about the purpose of the board, their value is likely to be minimal. Board members should be experts in their field. They must possess a certain level of commitment and organizational competency. Prior experience as a leader is not necessary, but they should understand the principles of what the ABMS boards do, especially ABNM, and should be positive strategic thinkers. They should be willing to volunteer their time to see that the ABNM mission is accomplished and should always understand that their role is governance, not management. Governance establishes mission and programs, whereas management actively works with those programs and is accountable to governance. Management of the ABNM is the task of the executive director, associate executive director, and the administrative (office) staff. Not every board member will have equal measures of the qualities outlined here, nor will he or she be an expert in every subspecialty in nuclear medicine. Most members are more talented in specific subspecialties of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. The board realizes this as we look for new members, and we try to select those with certain areas of expertise to balance the board.

It is helpful for diplomates to understand how board members are chosen. In this era of change and concern about ABMS board certification, it is essential for ABNM to choose the right people to lead the organization. ABNM could not fulfill its mission without the hard work of its volunteer board of directors. We often hear or read comments about ABNM from various sources, including social media, and we constantly work to improve communication with our diplomates to better serve our community and the public. The board will be discussing ways to make its membership more diverse and representative of practicing diplomates. Many ABMS member boards have added public members, an option that the ABNM is considering as a way to include public input. The landscape of board certification is changing rapidly, and the ABNM chooses to have representative board members who recognize the value and necessity of lifelong learning but also appreciate adopting adult learning principles and emerging technologies.



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