



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

Frequently Asked Questions for ABPN Diplomates Certified in Pain Medicine

What is ABPN's role with the subspecialty of Pain Medicine?

For the subspecialty of Pain Medicine (PM), the American Board of Anesthesiology (ABA) is the primary administrative Board; in other words, the ABA develops and administers the assessments for PM. The ABPN is responsible for credentialing applications for our diplomates, and for issuing the certifications for diplomates who qualify by passing the PM assessments.

How do I meet the Pain Medicine Continuing Certification/CC assessment requirement?

Per ABA policy, all PM-certified diplomates *must* participate in the Pain Medicine Longitudinal Assessment (PM LA) to fulfill the *assessment* component of your continuing certification requirements for your PM certification.

The PM Re-Entry Examination is *only* available as a re-entry pathway for diplomates who do not meet the performance standard in PM LA, in other words, only for diplomates whose PM certification has lapsed or is at risk of lapsing. The Re-Entry Examination will be offered annually for this purpose.

Please also note that the ABPN's Article-Based Continuing Certification (ABCC) pathway is *not* available for PM, since we are not the primary administrative Board for PM.

When am I eligible to begin the LA?

All Pain Medicine certified diplomates must participate in the PM LA to continue their certification, regardless of certification end dates or when they last took the Pain Medicine examination.

How will I know if I am meeting the PM LA participation requirement?

Diplomates must answer 60 questions annually. The ABA will release 15 questions each quarter of the calendar year. Continued annual participation will fulfill the *assessment* component of your continuing certification requirements for Pain Medicine. As this is an educational process, the focus is on education rather than elimination of diplomates.

- Fifteen questions per quarter are provided. Each quarter, 15 questions are added to the platform for a total of 60 questions in a calendar year.
- Questions roll over each quarter. To maximize learning and impact, the ABA recommends physicians complete all 15 questions within the quarter they are intended; however, the questions will remain until the end of the year.

- Diplomates are limited to answering 15 questions per day. Please plan accordingly to complete all 60 questions by Dec. 31, 11:59 p.m. ET. *Any questions left unanswered by the end of the year will be marked incorrect and negatively affect performance.*
- Questions are scored in real-time. When board-certified physicians log in to their dashboard, they will see their real-time p-value (MDT value) and whether they are meeting our performance standard. Find more information on scoring [here](#).
- 60-seconds per question. Once opened, each question needs to be answered within 60 seconds. The timer begins as soon as the "Next" button is clicked.
- The ABA utilizes aimeQED, a longitudinal assessment platform for PM LA that is accessible via mobile devices or desktop.

What if I do not complete all the questions?

The ABA highly recommends diplomates complete all 15 questions in the quarter they are intended to assist with retention and continuous review and learning; however, the questions will remain available until Dec. 31, 11:59 p.m. ET. Any questions left unanswered by the end of the year will be marked incorrect and negatively affect performance.

How do I study for the LA?

The longitudinal assessment is different from an examination. The platform delivers frequent timed assessments to encourage learning and improve retention.

What happens if I am unsuccessful in the LA/do not meet the performance standard?

If diplomates do not meet the performance standard in both 5-year LA cycles while enrolled in PM LA, they cannot continue in the LA and must pass the ASPEX-PM exam (PM CC exam) before the end of their 'Assessment Due' year outlined in their [ABPN Physician Portal](#) to remain certified, then they will automatically be re-enrolled in the LA after. Applications can be found in your [ABPN Portal account](#). After passing the exam, diplomates will be re-enrolled in the LA to fulfill the *assessment* component of your continuing certification requirements for your PM certification.

Am I eligible for the LA if my certification has lapsed?

No, PM LA is only to continue certification, *not* a point of re-entry after a lapse in certification. If diplomates are in their final year of certification and have failed PM LA, or if they are within the grace year after lapsing, they can take ASPEX-PM to continue certification or recertify. If a diplomate's certification has been lapsed for more than one year, they will be required to take the Pain Medicine initial certification exam to become certified again. After passing the exam, they will be automatically re-enrolled in the PM LA.

Is my Pain Medicine certification dependent on my primary specialty certification?

No, ABPN diplomates have the choice as to whether or not to continue their primary specialty certification (i.e., in psychiatry, neurology, or child neurology). This is based on ABPN policy that allows ABPN diplomates certified in PM to follow the ABA's policy regarding maintenance of primary certification for subspecialty certification. However, please note that if you choose to maintain your PM certification without continuing your primary

specialty certification, you will no longer be able to present yourself as a board-certified psychiatrist, neurologist, or child neurologist; you would *only* be able to present yourself as a board-certified pain medicine physician.