

MOC:PQRS incentive: what it is, how to earn it

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September 2013—The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has approved the American Board of Pathology for participation in the MOC:PQRS Additional Incentive Program. This approval allows ABP diplomates who are participating successfully in the PQRS incentive program to earn an additional 0.5 percent incentive payment on the total Medicare part B allowed charges for participating in MOC:PQRS in 2013.

PQRS is the federal voluntary quality reporting program that provides an incentive payment to eligible physicians who satisfactorily report data on specified quality measures. Pathology currently has five quality measures.

Physicians can choose to fulfill the PQRS reporting requirement through Medicare part B claims (most commonly used by pathologists), a qualified electronic health record, or a qualified registry, such as that used by MOCMatters described here. For 2013 and 2014, the PQRS incentive payment is 0.5 percent of a physician's total Medicare part B allowed charges. Physicians who do not participate in PQRS in 2013 will incur a 1.5 percent penalty in 2015. In 2013, if two members of a group (physicians with the same tax ID number) are reporting quality measures using a registry, the entire group can receive the incentive payment based on its total Medicare part B allowed charges. (See www.cms.gov or the CAP PQRS Resource Center at www.cap.org for more information.)

MOC:PQRS offers eligible physicians who have satisfactorily submitted data under PQRS the opportunity to earn an additional incentive payment of 0.5 percent for participating in the CMS-qualified American Board of Pathology MOC program "more frequently" than is required to maintain board certification. For diplomates with time-limited certificates, "more frequently" has been defined as any one of the following:

- MOC part II: Complete more than 25 CME credits per year, or complete more than 10 SAM credits per year, or
- MOC part III: Take the secure examination in years seven, eight, or nine of the MOC cycle, or
- MOC part IV: Complete more than one performance improvement/quality assessment per year, or
- Patient safety course: Complete an ABMS-approved patient safety course during the first MOC reporting period.

MOC:PQRS participants must satisfactorily submit data on the PQRS quality measures per CMS requirements for a 12-month period, either as an individual physician (claims-based, registry, or qualified EHR) or as part of a group practice under one of the PQRS group practice reporting options. Physicians must continue to report to the CMS as usual to receive the baseline 0.5 percent incentive payment and to qualify for the additional 0.5 percent MOC:PQRS incentive payment.

Diplomates must use the MOC:PQRS attestation module at www.mocmatters.abms.org. This module provides step-by-step instructions and an explanation of the MOC:PQRS program. The discounted cost for the attestation module is \$30. There is also an option to purchase the MOC:PQRS bundle, which includes the attestation module and the PQRS reporting via a registry module. The PQRS reporting via registry qualifies for the PQRS group reporting option. The discounted cost of the bundle is \$100. ABP diplomates are exempt from the CMS requirement to participate in a patient experience of care survey.

All participants in MOC:PQRS are required to complete in 2013 at least one MOC part IV practice assessment (performance improvement/quality assessment) activity.

For diplomates with lifetime certificates, voluntary enrollment in the ABP's MOC program will meet the "more frequent" CMS requirement to qualify for the additional MOC:PQRS incentive payment.

Lifetime diplomates should send an e-mail request to abp-moc@abpath.org to enroll in the ABP's MOC program. The MOC booklet of information is available at the ABP Web site: www.abpath.org. The cost of MOC enrollment is \$100. The first report of MOC activities is not due to the ABP until Jan. 31, 2015. There is no jeopardy to the lifetime certificate if a diplomate chooses not to report or continue participation in MOC. Lifetime diplomates must also use the MOC:PQRS attestation module at www.mocmatters.abms.org and attest to having completed at least one MOC part IV practice assessment (performance improvement/quality assessment) activity during 2013.

The attestation module must be completed by Dec. 31, 2013 to qualify for the incentive payment.

For questions or more information, send e-mail to the ABP at abp-moc@abpath.org or call Jill Gordon, MOC coordinator, at 813-286-2444 ext. 222.

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