



AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF RHEUMATOLOGY
EDUCATION • TREATMENT • RESEARCH

Navigating Recertification with ACR Tools

Currently almost 50% of ACR members have time-limited rheumatology certificates, meaning they must enroll and complete the American Board of Internal Medicine's (ABIM) Maintenance of Certification Program to maintain certification in rheumatology. For those physicians, it is essential to understand the recertification process. The following Q&A outlines key points on how the ACR can assist rheumatologists navigate through the process.

Should I participate?

To remain board certified, internists or rheumatologists who were certified in 1990 or later need to recertify every ten years. You do not need to maintain certification in internal medicine to recertify in rheumatology.

What do I need to do to maintain my certificate?

The first step for recertification is to enroll with the ABIM and sign up for the Maintenance of Certification Program. There are three components required for maintenance of certification:

1. Be licensed and in good standing
2. Earn 100 self-evaluation points*, which must include:
 - 20 points from medical knowledge
 - 20 points from practice performance
 - 60 points from either medical knowledge, practice performance or both
3. Pass the secured exam

*If you are renewing multiple certificates, no additional self-evaluation points are required, provided that the 100 points you have earned are valid at the time each certificate expires. However, you will have to take multiple recertification exams.

Below is an example of how an ACR member can earn their 100 Points of Self-Evaluation through ACR recertification tools:

- CARE 2007 – 20 points
- CARE 2008 – 20 points
- CARE 2009 – 30 points (scheduled to launch this September)
- AIM: RA or AIM: Gout – 20 points
- Annual meeting pre-conference course (will cover one ABIM Annual Update) – 10 points

ACR tools that qualify for ABIM medical knowledge points



The Continuing Assessment Review Evaluation or CARE program is an online self-assessment tool that includes 60 relevant clinical case-based questions on the content areas the ABIM uses for the rheumatology recertification exam. CARE 2008 and 2007 are now available – each version offers 20 MOC points in medical knowledge and includes answer rationales, images and over 100 educational reference links. No questions are repeated! Visit www.rheumatology.org/recertification for more information and to register.

ACR tools that qualify for ABIM practice performance points



In 2008 AIM became available to ACR members as a member benefit – all registration fees will be waived! Assess, Improve, Measure, or AIM is a series of practice improvement modules designed specifically for rheumatologists. AIM offers physicians a tool to assess and improve their practice. After submitting data, physicians will receive an automated report supported by evidence-based quality measures that will enable them to identify their practice's strengths and areas for improvement. In addition, the physician will develop and implement an improvement plan to assess its impact of practice changes through chart re-measurement. AIM: RA and AIM: Gout are now available. Upon completion of either program, participants will be able to earn 20 MOC points in practice performance. Visit www.rheumatology.org/recertification for more information and to register.

Why should I use the ACR's tools?

The ACR tools are the only rheumatologist-led recertification resources designed specifically for rheumatologists that offer Maintenance of Certification points and CME credit. Each program respects the resources and constraints of a busy physician/practice.

Are these initiatives relevant if I am not required to recertify?

One of the goals of the ABIM Maintenance of Certification process is to introduce physicians to the competencies of practice-based learning and systems-based practice. Acquiring these competencies begins by understanding and applying quality measurement to improve patient care.

Where can I get more information?

Visit the ACR recertification web page at www.rheumatology.org/recertification or contact ACR staff member Julie Anderson, Sr. Specialist, Continuous Professional Development at 404-633-3777 ext. 338

or by email at janderson@rheumatology.org. If you have any questions for the ABIM about recertification, please contact the ABIM at 1-800-441-2246 or visit the web site at www.abim.org.