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The ABR MOC Part IV: Practice Quality Improvement (PQI)

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The overriding objective of Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is to improve the quality of health care through diplomate-initiated learning and quality improvement. There is a national imperative to measure what all medical professionals do, including radiologic physicists, as their practices impact patient outcomes. The MOC initiatives being implemented by the American Board of Radiology (ABR) as well as by all 23 other member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), have arisen in part as a response to public concerns regarding the quality of medical care, medical errors and patient safety within the health care system of the United States. The fourth component of MOC is the focus of this presentation; namely, Part IV: Evaluation of Performance in Practice. Through this program, medical physicists demonstrate a commitment to practice quality improvement (PQI). The first year's activity involves documented education in the processes and procedures of quality improvement as they affect an individual's practice. Opportunities for obtaining this training as will be reviewed include among others: On-line courses from societies or commercial vendors; society-sponsored CME offerings, self- assessment modules (SAMs) on quality improvement. Diplomates must select a project in PQI to be completed over the 10-year cycle that has the potential for improving the quality of the individual or systems practice and enhancing the quality of care. PQI projects may be chosen from five categories: (1) Safety for patients, employees, and the public, (2) accuracy of analyses and calculations, (3) report turnaround time and communication issues, (4) practice guidelines and technical standards, (5) surveys (including peer review of self-assessment reports). For the project selected, the steps involved are: (1) Collect baseline data relevant to the chosen project, (2) review and analyze the data, (3) create and implement an improvement plan, (4) remeasure and track, and (5) report participation to the ABR. Specific examples of individual PQI projects for each of the three disciplines of radiologic physics will be presented.