About

The American Board of Pathology

WELCOME

The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) was established in 1936 to advance the specialty of pathology and ensure the competence of pathologists for the benefit of the public. Certification by the ABPath is a hallmark of public and professional trust. As we face new challenges in healthcare, the vital role of board-certified pathologists is more important than ever. Our Mission and Vision statements exemplify our commitment to promote excellence in pathology and maintain the highest standards of care.

WHAT WE DO

The American Board of Pathology issues primary certificates in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology, Anatomic Pathology, Clinical Pathology, Anatomic Pathology/Neuropathology, and certification in eleven subspecialties.

MISSION

The mission of the American Board of Pathology, a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, is to serve the public and advance the profession of pathology by setting certification standards and promoting lifelong competency of pathologists.

VISION

The American Board of Pathology improves the health of the public by promoting excellence in the practice of pathology.
STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Identify and implement relevant and meaningful processes for the assessment of residents and fellows in initial certification programs.
2. Increase the value of Continuing Certification programs by promoting lifelong learning, creating relevant assessments, and supporting diplomates in their efforts to stay current in their area of practice.
3. Increase diplomates’ and other stakeholders’ satisfaction with and perceived value of ABPath and certification.
4. Develop infrastructure and implement processes that support and promote strategic and organizational effectiveness.
5. Ensure long term financial viability of the ABPath.
6. Increase the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees.
Innovation, accountability and transparency are among the American Board of Pathology’s core values. In 2023, the Board’s strategic and operational initiatives underscored the ongoing commitment to our goals of identifying and implementing relevant and meaningful processes for the assessment of residents and fellows in initial certification programs and increasing the value of continuing certification by promoting lifelong learning, creating relevant assessments, and supporting diplomates in their efforts to stay current in their areas of practice.

Recognizing the need to better prepare trainees to provide unsupervised care for patients, there has been renewed momentum by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) over the past two years to accelerate the development of and transition to competency-based medical education (CBME) in the graduate medical education setting. CBME is not new. In 1999, the ACGME and the ABMS endorsed the six domains of clinical competency, and the Next Accreditation System and milestones were introduced in 2013 (1). CBME is a learner-centric, outcomes-based approach to education in which the central tenet is to “start with the end in mind” and focus on what type of graduate is needed. The needs of patients and the health system define competencies and educational outcomes, which then inform the development of the curriculum, and assessments that are designed to drive learning, evaluate competency and support the desired outcomes.

In the CBME framework, the relationship between education and assessment is closely interwoven with a move from a single point in time, high stakes summative assessment to more continuous, multiple work-place based assessments, using direct observation with emphasis on formative feedback, followed by an end of training higher stakes certification examination. In Miller’s Pyramid of competency evaluation through performance (2), assessment of knowledge by multiple choice questions still has an important place in testing large bodies of knowledge — “the knows and knows how,” which is foundational to learning. Complementing this with demonstration of learning and performance in the practice environment via assessment methods such as simulations and Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) allows us to get at the “shows” and “does” higher levels of competency that support “entrustment” decisions.
Competency Based Assessment (CBA) and Competency Based Board Eligibility (CBBE) is where the role of specialty certification boards comes into play. ABMS member boards are embracing CBME and some specialties (e.g., general surgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, pediatrics, and others) have piloted and have/are implementing CBME/CBA in training and certification requirements. (3) Advantages of in-training CBA include emphasizing a growth mindset, identification of gaps with time to remediate during training; better assessment of content areas not well represented on the certification exams and of competencies/skills that cannot be adequately addressed with a multiple-choice exam; as well as being able to provide more objective evidence of competency-based board eligibility (CBBE) for the trainee, program directors and certification boards. As we know, with change comes challenges- CBME/CBA requires substantial buy-in from education leadership, faculty and learners as well as resources for successful implementation.

Determining ABPath’s role in the development and implementation of CBME for Pathology was a major initiative during my presidency. In November 2023, after active engagement and many discussions with the leadership of other ABMS boards, the Pathology ACGME review committee, the National Pathology EPA Group and the Board’s cooperating societies, the Trustees adopted a resolution on the ABPath’s strategy for CBA. (4) Among Dr. Procop’s strategic initiatives as the Board’s incoming CEO, was piloting a voluntary, formative, competency-based, in-training assessment. This aligns perfectly with the Board’s CBA strategy and a simulated sign-out pilot in breast pathology is expected to launch in 2025. The ACGME previously included graduated responsibility in the pathology training requirements, with the goal of attaining oversight supervision and starting in July 2024, incorporation of competency-based workplace assessments for fellow feedback will be a core requirement for pathology subspecialties. (5) ABPath will continue to engage with other stakeholders to collect data to inform meaningful future changes to certification in the CBME setting.

The Board has actively engaged in collecting data toward harmonizing training requirements, training and certification with the needs of practicing pathologists and identified gaps in training. (6, 7, 8, 9) CBA could facilitate “education equity” if learning modules are provided before the assessment, especially in “need to know areas” that not all programs are able to provide exposure to. Dr. Procop completed and recently launched a histology primer to fill a significant gap in the transition from UME to pathology residency- this has already been accessed by over 1200 users. In 2023, the Board’s test development advisory committees were charged with analyzing and qualifying exam item category codes to develop detailed content specifications for primary and subspecialty examinations, beyond the exam blueprints that are currently available. The draft will be available for public comment in the latter half of 2024, before being finalized and approved for release on the recently updated ABPath website. (https://ab-path.org/) Over the past year, the Board has shared data and responded to publications on trends in
primary and subspecialty examinations (11,12,13). The exam application process has been streamlined by eliminating late deadlines and fees and a major update of PATHway is underway which will enhance diplomate communications. The ABMS recognized Health Care Administration, Leadership, and Management (HALM) as a subspecialty in February 2023 and ABPath diplomates are eligible to apply for this certification (14).

Because CBME is an approach to medical education and not just about assessment, it will be able to inform future meaningful changes to the curriculum in response to gaps that the new assessment efforts demonstrate and identify areas where higher levels of competency are better achieved in the practice setting rather than in the training period. As medical practitioners, we have the privilege of self-regulation and the ABPath supports the need for lifelong learning. The ABPath Continuing Certification (CC) Program is in compliance with the ABMS standards for CC, and currently enrolls close to 12,000 diplomates. As an early adopter and one of seven ABMS specialty boards that use the CertLink platform for longitudinal assessment (10), ABPath offers a choice of 31 practice areas for a personalized assessment design. In 2023, we launched a two-year ABPath CertLink quality improvement initiative to enhance user experience and provide a robust assessment “of learning” and incorporate new content “for learning.” We appreciate diplomate feedback and have an ongoing list of future enhancements that will continue to increase the value of the CC program.
I am delighted to report that the ABPath Speakers Bureau, a pilot I initiated in the fall of 2023, was approved by the Trustees as a standing program through which each of the 142 ACGME-accredited pathology residency programs have now been contacted by the Board and will be visited once over a 4 year period by a trustee or our CEO, either in person or virtually, to engage with diplomates and educators and provide updates on the present and future initiatives of the Board.

Thanks to the commitment of our “small but mighty staff” in Tampa—led by Dr. Gary Procop (CEO) and Ty McCarthy (COO) and ~200 pathologists and trainees who lend their time and expertise to serve as volunteers for the Board of Trustees, our test development and advisory committees and CC crowdsourcing—we are well poised to address the opportunities and challenges of these exciting and transformative times in education, certification and the practice of pathology. In 2023, I had the pleasure to recognize Drs. Susan Fuhrman, Karen Kaul, and Steven Swerdlow as Life Trustees of the ABPath, thank Constance Filing, our first public member, for her service and invite Dr. Javarro Russell, Senior Director for the MCAT Program at the AAMC to fill this key role on our Board. We also welcomed the American Society of Dermatopathology (ASDP) as the Board’s 16th Cooperating Society. (15)

It has been my privilege and a highlight of my professional career to have served as President of the ABPath. I am excited about the future prospects for pathologists and our specialty and look forward to my remaining years as a Trustee of the Board. For 2024, our President, Dr. Barbara Sampson brings significant experience and expertise to lead the Board forward in its continuing support of our diplomates, and ABPath’s mission to serve the public and advance the specialty of pathology.

Ritu Nayar, MD
ABPath President 2023

Ritu Nayar, MD
ABPath President 2023

At the ABPath booth: Dr. Nayar flanked by ABPath staff Renée Holder and Mary Pyfrom
In 2023, the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) initiated an exploration of Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) as a component of Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) within pathology training. This initiative aims to enhance the evaluation of pathology residents’ skills, abilities, and judgment, aligning more closely with the demands of the field. Additionally, this effort presents an opportunity to reconsider and potentially refine the duration, structure, and content of both primary and subspecialty certification examinations in the coming years.

During this planning phase, ABPath has actively engaged with Cooperating Societies to gather input, reviewed CBA methodologies employed by other American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) boards, and participated in ABMS-ACGME CBME conferences and interest group discussions. These collaborative efforts have provided a wealth of information and guidance.

Following these valuable discussions, ABPath has outlined the next steps for re-evaluating certification examinations and investigating in-training CBA methods leading to the adoption of the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION ON COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

In 2023, the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) initiated an exploration of Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) as a component of Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) within pathology training. This initiative aims to enhance the evaluation of pathology residents’ skills, abilities, and judgment, aligning more closely with the demands of the field. Additionally, this effort presents an opportunity to reconsider and potentially refine the duration, structure, and content of both primary and subspecialty certification examinations in the coming years.

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Following these valuable discussions, ABPath has outlined the next steps for re-evaluating certification examinations and investigating in-training CBA methods leading to the adoption of the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the assessment of skills, ability, and judgment relevant to pathology is implicit in the mission of the American Board of Pathology, in addition to the assessment of knowledge, and

WHEREAS, competency-based assessment (CBA) aligns with and supports this mission, and promotes competency-based medical education (CBME), now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the American Board of Pathology will re-evaluate the length, format, and content within the primary and subspecialty certification examination(s) and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Board of Pathology shall pilot in-training CBA methods as a means to provide formative and summative feedback to trainees and program directors prior to primary certification examination and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Board of Pathology will determine the relationship of CBA with certification.

In October 2023, ABPath announced a significant change to its certification examination application and registration process.

Effective for the 2024 exam season, ABPath will no longer offer a late application/registration deadline or assess a late fee for Primary and Subspecialty certification exams.

Historically, ABPath has offered applicants a late application deadline, accompanied by a late fee, in addition to the original deadline. However, moving forward, we honor only one application deadline per exam in order to expedite the application approval process for physicians seeking board certification in pathology.

Read the original announcement here.
ABPATH WELCOMES NEW PUBLIC BOARD MEMBER JAVARRO RUSSELL, PHD

The ABPath announced the election of Javarro Russell, PhD as the new public member to the Board of Trustees with a term beginning on January 1, 2024. Dr. Russell brings a wealth of experience in exam development and administration, making him a valuable addition to the Board.

Read the full announcement here.
SUSAN FUHRMAN, MD; KAREN KAUL, MD, PHD; AND STEVEN SWERDLOW, MD HONORED AS LIFE TRUSTEES

Susan Fuhrman, MD; Karen Kaul, MD, PhD; and Steven Swerdlow, MD, were honored in August of 2023 as Life Trustees for their many years of dedicated service and contributions to the Board. They were awarded the Life Trustee plaques by Dr. Ritu Nayar, President at the Summer 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

Susan Fuhrman, MD was a Trustee from 2011-2022 and served as President in 2019 and Vice President in 2018. Dr. Fuhrman is the former System Director for Pathology and Laboratory Services at OhioHealth, a large not-for-profit integrated healthcare delivery system based in Columbus Ohio.

Karen Kaul, MD, PhD was a Trustee of the ABPath from 2011-2022 and was President in 2018 and Vice President in 2017. Dr. Kaul is the Chair of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at NorthShore University HealthSystem in Evanston, Illinois, and a Clinical Professor of Pathology at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.

Steven Swerdlow, MD was a Trustee of the ABPath from 2011-2022 and served as President in 2020 and Vice President in 2019. Dr. Swerdlow is a former Professor of Pathology and Director, Division of Hematologyopathology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Read more about our Life Trustees here.
ABMS RECOGNIZES HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP, AND MANAGEMENT AS A SUBSPECIALTY

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) officially approved Health Care Administration, Leadership, and Management (HALM) as a subspecialty at its February 2023 Board of Directors meeting. The American Board of Anesthesiology, American Board of Emergency Medicine, American Board of Family Medicine, and American Board of Preventive Medicine co-sponsored the application for the subspecialty certificate, allowing physicians certified by 13 of the 24 ABMS Member Boards to apply for the new certificate.

In addition to the four co-sponsoring Member Boards, there are currently nine other boards whose diplomates will be eligible to apply for this subspecialty certificate through ABEM including the ABPath.

Read the full announcement here.

LAUNCH OF THE NEW ABPATH.ORG WEBSITE

In July of 2023, ABPath launched the all-new ABPath.org website, the dedicated source for comprehensive information on board certification in pathology. The primary goal during the development of this site has been to enhance user-friendliness, providing a seamless experience for pathology residents/fellows preparing for board certification exams and board-certified pathologists participating in the Continuing Certification Program. With a modern design and intuitive navigation, we aimed to improve our visitors’ interaction with the site. Some new features include a new expanded menu, quick links for candidates, diplomates, and credentialers, and an improved search function.

ABPATH Announcements

The ABPath March 2024 Primary Exam Spring 2024 Primary exam results have been released. View your report and note the Board Correspondence page to review your results.

July 10, 2024
- The ABPath office will be closed on Thurs., July 4 and Fri., July 5.
- Please have your report or letter request ready by the deadline.
- The 2024 Primary Exam will be administered on Saturday, July 7.

July 11, 2024
- Full-Primary Exam Closing Deadline for those with a Period of Board Eligibility.
- Visit the ABPath website to view report and letter request.
- To contact ABPath, call 1-800-321-4722.

July 14, 2024
- ABPath CME Certificate (CEPC) Quarter 2 Extension Questions for Quarter 2 will be sent the week of June 16. Questions for Quarter 2 will be sent the week of June 16.
- CME can be awarded for the quarter.
- The 2024 Primary Exam will be administered on Saturday, July 7.

For more information, visit ABPath.org.
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF DERMATOPATHOLOGY (ASDP) AS A COOPERATING SOCIETY

The American Society of Dermatopathology (ASDP) was approved as a Cooperating Society of the ABPath. The addition of ASDP as an ABPath Cooperating Society was approved on February 17, 2023, at an ABPath Board of Trustees meeting. The mission of the ASDP is to improve patient care, support member needs and advance the field of Dermatopathology through education, advocacy and innovation.

Read the full announcement here.

ABPATH LAUNCHES TWO-YEAR IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE FOR ABPATH CERTLINK TO ENHANCE USER EXPERIENCE

ABPath officially launched a two-year quality assurance/quality improvement initiative for ABPath CertLink® (ABPCL) in February 2023. ABPCL is the online longitudinal assessment platform for the Continuing Certification Program. This initiative is designed to enhance the user experience and ensure that the program continues to support the highest standards of continuous learning and professional development of board-certified pathologists.

“We have listened to the feedback from our diplomates and are taking action to make a great program even better,” says CEO of ABPath Gary W. Procop, MD. “We are committed to providing the highest quality program for our physicians, and this two-year improvement initiative is a testament to our dedication to our diplomates and the profession of pathology.”

Read more about the Initiative here.
Dr. Alter was one of the top contributors of items (questions) in 2022 and 2023 for ABPath CertLink, ABPath’s online longitudinal assessment for the Continuing Certification Program. We appreciate his dedication and his thoughtful approach to his volunteer question submissions.

As a board-certified Clinical Pathologist in Chemical Pathology (ABPath) and its doctoral counterpart, Clinical Chemistry (ABCC) with 23+ years in non-academic and academic environments, I believe all pathologists, regardless of specialty or practice type, should be familiar with aspects of Chemical Pathology as it can be the connective tissue across most, if not all, pathology disciplines; AP and CP. To that end, I submit Chemical Pathology questions to be used in ABPath CertLink along three themes: 1) fundamental concepts; 2) as related to other pathology specialties (AP and CP) and 3) its role for the future and current laboratory medical director. In my opinion, the Continuing Certification (CC) Program provides an efficient mechanism to disseminate these concepts to practicing pathologists. For that reason, I encourage diplomates to include Chemical Pathology questions as part of their quarterly CertLink assessment. As someone with a non-time-limited certification, I have found it very helpful for my continued growth as a Pathologist.

Dr. Turashvili generously contributed over 27 items in 2023 to be used in ABPath CertLink. We thank her for her time, dedication and expertise in support of Continuing Certification in Pathology.

Gulisa Turashvili, MD, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Pathology at the Emory University School of Medicine, and Gynecologic and Breast Pathologist at Emory University Hospital, Atlanta, GA. She is also the Surgical Pathology Fellowship Director and Gynecologic Pathology Rotation Director. Dr. Turashvili received her medical degree from Tbilisi State Medical University in Georgia. Her pathology training included Anatomic Pathology Residency at Queen's University, ON, Canada, and Gynecologic and Breast Pathology Fellowships at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, NY. She is the Deputy Editor-In-Chief of Gynecologic Pathology at PathologyOutlines and a member of the Pathology Work Group of International Gynecologic Cancer Society, College of American Pathologists Cancer Committee, and other international and national committees. Dr. Turashvili serves on the Editorial Board of Modern Pathology, Laboratory Investigation, BMC Cancer, and other peer-reviewed journals. She has co-authored several book chapters and over 115 peer-reviewed publications.
THANK YOU TO PAUL SHITABATA, MD

ABPath extends its gratitude to Dr. Paul Shitabata, President of the Dermatopathology Institute in Torrance, CA, and Director of Dermatopathology at Harbor-UCLA Division of Dermatology, for his generous donation of an impressive glass slide library. These slides will be an invaluable resource for developing certification examinations and competency-based assessments, inspiring future generations of pathologists.
Cooperating Societies

The ABPath collaborates with our Cooperating Societies to identify and address issues of importance to the profession of pathology. Through these valuable relationships, our Cooperating Societies support diplomates in their life-long learning and improvement in practice, their participation in Continuing Certification, and document their participation in educational and quality assessment activities.

The Societies’ participation in our annual ABPath Summit of Cooperating Societies has been especially beneficial as training requirements for board certification evolve. In 2023, our Trustees met with the Societies in Chicago to discuss competency-based assessment in pathology and received feedback from each society. The discussion and feedback collected will be instrumental in exploring and developing competency-based assessment in pathology training.

2023 COOPERATING SOCIETIES

- Association for Academic Pathology (formerly the Association of Pathology Chairs)
- Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies
- Academy of Clinical Laboratory Physicians and Scientists
- American Association of Neuropathologists
- American Medical Association Pathology Section Council
- American Society for Clinical Pathology
- American Society of Dermatopathology
- American Society for Investigative Pathology
- American Society of Cytopathology
- Association for Molecular Pathology
- Association of Directors of Anatomic and Surgical Pathology
- College of American Pathologists
- National Association of Medical Examiners
- Society for Hematopathology
- Society for Pediatric Pathology
- United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology
Board Certification Examinations

ADMINISTRATION HISTORY OF ABPATH CERTIFICATION

ABPath offers four Primary certificates and 11 Sub-specialty certificates in pathology. This table reflects when we began offering each primary and subspecialty certification and how many certificates have been issued from inception through 2023.

EXAMINATION STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Initial Year</th>
<th>Number of Certificates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomic Pathology (AP)</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>9,785</td>
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<td>Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology (AP/CP)</td>
<td>1936</td>
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<td>Clinical Pathology (CP)</td>
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<td>Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine (BB/TM)</td>
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<td>Chemical Pathology (CH)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Informatics (CI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cytopathology (CY)</td>
<td>1989</td>
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<td>Dermatopathology (DP)</td>
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<td>Neuropathology (NP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pediatric Pathology (PP)</td>
<td>1990</td>
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2023 Primary Exam Statistics

The ABPath uses criterion-referenced scoring for its certification examinations. Setting the criterion standard for each exam is performed every 3-5 years. The number of candidates passing the examinations may not match the number of candidates certified for several reasons:

1. Some AP/CP candidates, both first-time takers and repeaters, take only one portion (either AP or CP) of the examination. These candidates are not certified until both AP and CP are passed.
2. Certified candidates include AP/CP candidates who passed either the AP or CP examination previously and requested single certification during the reporting year.
3. Certified candidates also include candidates who passed the examinations in a previous year but did not provide documentation of licensure or other required information until the reporting year.

See the ABPath Website for examination information.

### 2023 PRIMARY EXAMINATION

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<th>Total Candidates</th>
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<th>Repeaters</th>
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<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>#Pass</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>92%</td>
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### 5-YEAR CERTIFIED REPORT

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<td>APNP</td>
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### PRIMARY EXAM PASS RATES

% PASS = SPRING EXAM PASS RATE

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<th>2020 % Pass</th>
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<th>2022 % Pass</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP only</td>
<td>82*</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>84*</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>85*</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94*</td>
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*New criterion standard applied
### Subspecialty Exam Statistics

#### 2023 SUBSPECIALTY CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Subspecialty</th>
<th>Total Candidates</th>
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<td>#</td>
<td>#Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>BB/TM</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>CY</td>
<td>131</td>
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<td>DP</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPClinMB*</td>
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*FPClinMB* = Focus Practice Designation-Clinical Microbiology

#### 5-YEAR CERTIFIED REPORT

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subspecialty</th>
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<th>2022</th>
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<td>BB/TM</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>1</td>
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*FPClinMB* = Focus Practice Designation-Clinical Microbiology
### Participation Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subspecialty</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
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<td>New Certificates Enrolled</td>
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<td>1091</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certificates Lapsed/Revoked</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Diplomates Enrolled</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>639</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diplomates Lapsed/Revoked</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
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### Subspecialty Examination Pass Rates

<table>
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<tr>
<td>BB/TM</td>
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<td>89*</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>FPClinMB**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*New criterion standard applied

**FPClinMB = Focus Practice Designation-Clinical Microbiology

### Continuing Certification

- **Top Improvement in Medical Practice (IMP) Activities Reported by Diplomates in 2023**
  1. ABPath-Approved Slide Review Program
  2. Department or Hospital/Institution Quality Assurance Committee
  3. CLIA Mandated Cytology Proficiency Testing

11,749 Diplomates are enrolled in the Continuing Certification Program.

Total Diplomates Enrolled at the End of 2022: 11,160
ABPath revenue is generated from multiple sources. Candidates pay examination fees for the Primary, Subspecialty, and Continuing Certification reinstatement exams and diplomates pay a fee for administration of the Continuing Certification Program. The ABPath supports two other boards with their exams each year; the revenue is captured under Exam Support. Examination questions are written by volunteer pathologists. Per the IRS, their services must be reported as an In-Kind Contribution (equivalent time a pathologist would be paid had they charged for these services).

**2023 Revenue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary/SS Examination Fees, Net of Refunds</td>
<td>58.78%</td>
<td>$3,259,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC Examination Fees, Net of Refunds</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC Reporting</td>
<td>32.24%</td>
<td>$1,787,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Support: Other Boards</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
<td>$13,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Kind Contributions</td>
<td>6.29%</td>
<td>$348,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.43%</td>
<td>$134,814</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue w/o Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$5,546,162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: YearEndAudited2023;
EXPERTS

Examination expenses cover the cost of credentialing candidates; the development, administration via Pearson VUE test centers, and scoring of the exams, and reporting results. Meeting expenses include the travel and administrative expenses for volunteer test committee members and Trustees. Management and general expenses include employee salaries, benefits, insurance, information technology support and licensing, facility and equipment rental and maintenance, ABMS member fees, and the cost of providing services to our diplomates, such as ACCME PARS. CC Program Services includes all of the above type expenses that are directly affiliated with the CC Program to include ABPath CertLink*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examinations</td>
<td>56.42%</td>
<td>$3,341,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>11.99%</td>
<td>$710,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC Program Services*</td>
<td>12.80%</td>
<td>$757,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management &amp; General**</td>
<td>18.79%</td>
<td>$1,112,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$5,921,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: CC&ABPCL2023
** Also includes management/oversight and overhead costs of the CC Program.
The 2023 Board of Trustees

The ABPath is governed by 12 physician members and one public member. Each member is highly esteemed and accomplished in their respective fields and subspecialty. ABPath Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic goals and governing and upholding the integrity of the Board’s mission to serve the public and advance the profession of pathology by setting certification standards and promoting lifelong competency of pathologists.

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Little Rock, Arkansas

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ABPath Volunteers

2023 TEST DEVELOPMENT AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES (TDAC)

The ABPath appreciates the many contributions of our Test Development and Advisory Committee members who volunteer their time as subject matter experts to provide direction and content for certification examinations. Each of the committees is chaired by an ABPath Trustee. We thank them for contributing their time and talents.

The 2023 members were as follows:

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Jennifer Boland-Froemming, MD
Alain Borczuk, MD
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Susan Muller, MD
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Stacy E. Melanson, MD
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Ahmed Alomari, MD
Luis Blanco, MD
Bonnie Choy, MD
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Jennifer Hammers, DO
Eviita Henderson-Jackson, MD
John Higgins, MD
Abberly Lott Limbach, MD
Balaram Puligandla, MD
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Deborah Henderson, MD
Evita Henderson-Jackson, MD
Zahra Maleki, MD
Swati Mehrotra, MD
Tolgay Ocal, MD
Roseann Wu, MD

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(Includes ABPath and American Board of Dermatology appointees)
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Travis Vandergriff, MD
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John Lacy, MD
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Kyle T. Bradley, MD
Dong Chen, MD
Casey Gooden, MD
Russell Higgins, MD
Carla Wilson, MD
CC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The Continuing Certification (CC) Advisory Committee is made up of volunteer diplomates with diverse backgrounds, specialties, and experience and is chaired by an ABPath Trustee. It is responsible for advising the ABPath Board of Trustees for continuous evaluation and improvement of Continuing Certification from a diplomate’s perspective. Each member serves three years on the Committee.

2023 COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Eric Glassy, MD – Chair
La’Tonzia Adams, MD
Daisy Alapat, MD
Michelle Aurelius, MD
Nick Batalis, MD
Deniz Peker Barclift, MD
Jennifer Findeis-Hosey, MD
Raul Gonzalez, MD
Jennifer Kasten, MD
Matthew Kuhar, MD
Rose-Marie Rodriguez-Oringo, MD
Jaclyn Rudzinski, MD
Saloni Walia, MD
Roseann Wu, MD
Debra L. Zynger, MD

RESIDENT AND FELLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The ABPath Resident and Fellow Advisory Committee is made up of Pathology Residents and Fellows with the purpose of providing feedback and suggestions for improvement to ABPath about the board certification process.

2023 COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Gary Procop, MD – Chair
Fahire Akarca, MD
Thuy Cao, MD
Mischa Covington, MD
Brian Cox, MD
Joshua Davis, MD
Hanadi El Achi, MD
Maryam Foroughi, MD
Savanah Gisriel, MD
Portia Letham, DO
Chukwuemeka Oriala, MD
Neda Wick, MD
ABPath TDACs

ANATOMIC PATHOLOGY

CYTOPATHOLOGY

HEMATOPATHOLOGY

NEUROPATHOLOGY

CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY

FORENSIC PATHOLOGY

PEDIATRIC PATHOLOGY

BLOOD BANKING/ TRANSFUSION MEDICINE

ANATOMIC PATHOLOGY ABPATH CERTLINK®

CLINICAL PATHOLOGY ABPATH CERTLINK®
VIRTUAL MEETINGS

RECOGNITION of SERVICE

Erin Presnell, MD  Uma Sundram, MD  Susan Muller, MD  Jason L. Hornick, MD

Stacy E. Melanson, MD  Gordon L. Love, MD  Karen Mann, MD  Anthony Yachnis, MD

Tolgay Ocal, MD  Kathleen Nicol, MD
The following posters were presented at the ABMS 2023 Annual Meeting in Chicago:

**ABPath CertLink® — Taking Great to Greater**  
Kasey Williamson, Ritu Nayar, MD, Bonnie Woodworth, Ty McCarthy, Gary W. Procop, MD, MS, MEd

**Degrees of Separation — ABPath Primary Examination Pass Rate Differences by Degree (MD vs DO; MD vs PhD) from 2006-2022**  
Tyler J. Sandersfeld, PhD, Ty McCarthy, Gary W. Procop, MD, MS, MEd

### ABPath CertLink® - Taking Great to Greater

**Kasey Williamson, Ritu Nayar, MD, Bonnie Woodworth, Ty McCarthy, Gary W. Procop, MD, MS**  
The American Board of Pathology (ABPath)

#### Background

ABPath CertLink (ABPCL) is a longitudinal assessment platform designed to support continuous learning and professional development. ABPCL is used to fulfill the assessment requirement for ABPath’s Continuing Certification (CC) Program.

#### Overview

The 2022 ABPCL End-of-Year Survey demonstrated a high degree of satisfaction from diplomats participating in the ABPCL program. It also identified opportunities for improvement that include keeping items up-to-date with new practice guidelines, improving image quality, and introducing new material. ABPath is implementing a sustainable and continuous quality improvement initiative that will deliver current and relevant content, higher-quality images, and the timely presentation of new content in the rapidly evolving field of pathology. The survey results and a description of the improvement process design are presented.

#### Plan to Improve – The Rebuild Phase

- **Active Items**  
  From current ABPCL item bank
- **Item Writers**  
  Focused requests to fill content gaps
- **Medical Editors**  
  Review for Style, Format, Grammar, Punctuation
- **Subject Matter Experts**  
  Address Content Accuracy, Images, Terminology Updates, Feedback from ABPCL Participants
- **Medical Editors**  
  Confirm all item components are correct

#### 2022 ABPCL End-of-Year Survey Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree or Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you rate the overall quality of the content in the ABPCL assessment?</td>
<td>1,587</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you rate the overall quality of the content in the ABPCL assessment?</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objective

To implement a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) process that supports CertLink’s goal of being an assessment of learning... for learning.

#### Survey Comments

- The questions are good. Keep up the good work! This is an outstanding and essential tool in maintaining proficiency while earning CME!
- Test questions need better review; there were a couple that were blatantly incorrect.
- ABPath has done a great job making this process professionally relevant and educational.
- Many of the images were blurry and of very low quality. Also, some of the questions were poorly worded.

#### Future Considerations

- Administration of unscored items... for learning
- Journal article-based questions
- Virtual microscopy functionality
- PREDIP, SBP, and PRL competency content introduction

https://shrtm.nu/PwpPXAR
**Background & Objectives**

The American Board of Pathology administers two Primary Certification Examinations each year for practicing pathologists in Anatomic Pathology (AP) and Clinical Pathology (CP). Most candidates and diplomates hold Doctor of Medicine (MD) degrees, but some candidates may instead hold Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degrees or the combination of Doctor of Medicine and Doctor of Philosophy (MD,PhD), among others. It has been observed on occasion that DO candidates had more difficulty passing the APAB’s Primary Certification Examinations than MD candidates. The APAB sought to determine whether MD candidates significantly and meaningfully differ in their performance on various DO candidates. Additionally, the APAB wanted to see whether MD,PhD candidates performed differently from MD candidates.

**Methods**

The APAB gathered all pass/fail results from the AP and CP exams from 2006 to 2022 for first-time candidates. The candidates were separated by degree into three groups: MD, DO, and MD,PhD. All candidates holding other degrees (MBB, MMedSci, etc.) were excluded from this study. Comparisons were done between MD and DO candidates and MD and MD,PhD candidates; DO and MD,PhD candidates were not directly compared. Due to the large number of candidates, hypothesis testing may provide significant results for spurious effects. Therefore, odds ratios and Cohen’s d effect sizes were calculated to determine the extent of a degree type's effect on pass rates over that on another degree type.

First, the odds ratio between MD and DO or MD,PhD and MD was calculated for each individual year and the entire 17-year period from 2006 to 2022. The formula for the bias-corrected odds ratio (OR) is:

\[ OR = \frac{P_{pass} \times (1 - P_{fail})}{(1 - P_{pass}) \times P_{fail}} \]

where \( P_{pass} \) is the number of passing candidates and \( P_{fail} \) is the number of failing candidates for MD, DO, or MD,PhD candidates. These odds ratios were then converted into the logarithmic odds ratio (LOG):

\[ LOG = \ln(OR) \]

These log odds ratios were finally converted into a standardized effect size called Cohen’s d:

\[ d = \frac{LOG}{\sigma} \]

The absolute value of the effect size must be at least 0.2 to be considered meaningful. An effect size of 0.2 to 0.498 is "small," an effect size of 0.5 to 0.799 is "medium," and an effect size of 0.8 or greater is "large." Additionally, each odds ratio was converted to a z-score.

\[ z = \frac{LOG}{\sigma} \]

The two-tailed probability of each z-score was calculated and tested. A p-value of 0.05 or below was statistically significant.

**Results**

MD vs. DO: AP test results showed a statistically significantly higher pass rate for MD candidates over DO candidates throughout the 17-year period, but this can be attributed to the large sample size. The overall effect size between MD and DO candidates fell short of the 0.20 threshold for a "small" meaningful effect. Only two individual years showed a statistically significant advantage for MD candidates with a medium effect. CP test results showed no significant or meaningful difference between MD and DO candidates throughout the 17-year period, and only one individual year with a statistically significant medium effect favoring MD candidates.

MD vs. MD,PhD: AP test results showed a statistically significantly higher pass rate for MD candidates over MD candidates throughout the 17-year period, but this can be attributed to the large sample size. The overall effect size between MD and MD,PhD candidates fell short of the 0.20 threshold of a "small" meaningful effect. No individual years showed a statistically significant advantage for MD candidates. CP test results showed a statistically significant medium effect favoring MD candidates over MD candidates throughout the 17-year period. Every individual year from 2006 to 2020 showed a meaningful effect favoring MD candidates, with four of the 17 years showing a statistically significant medium to large effect.

**Discussion**

The odds ratios for MD and DO candidates’ pass rates from 2006 to 2022 showed that while MD candidates did have a slightly higher pass rate on the AP; the difference was not great enough to justify a meaningful effect favoring MD candidates on either Primary Certification Examination.

MD,PhD candidates were significantly and practically more likely to pass the CP Primary Certification Examination than MD candidates over the 17-year period. Considering that DO,MD candidates are more likely to work in clinical laboratories throughout their training than just MD holders, this may explain the medium overall effect. Only 2011 and 2021 showed no meaningful difference between MD and MD,PhD candidates on the CP. This change may reflect changes in educational content delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.
ABPath Staff

Our staff is proud to support the ABPath mission and strategic goals. They work very hard to support our candidates and diplomates in achieving and maintaining their board certification.

THE 2023 ABPATH STAFF

Alissa Eagle
Slide Librarian

Amanda Zombro
Coordinator of Information Services

Anthony Schlinsog
Chief Information Officer

Bonnie Woodworth
Communications Director

Colette Earnest
ABPath CertLink® Support Specialist

Gabriela Lago
Intermediate Full Stack Developer / IT Generalist

Gary W. Procop, MD, MS, MEd
Chief Executive Officer

Geri Wills
Accountant

John Lemke
Continuing Certification Coordinator

Josie Santos
Chief Financial Officer

Kasey Williamson
ABPath CertLink® Coordinator

Clarita Scioscia
TDAC Coordinator

Lily Veith
TDAC Coordinator

Mario Lévesque
Senior Systems Developer

Mary Pyfrom
Primary Certification Coordinator

Reneé Holder
Subspecialty Certification Coordinator

Ty McCarthy
Chief Operating Officer

Tyler Sandersfeld, PhD
Psychometrician

Pictured from left to right: Front row: Kasey Williamson, Renee Holder, Geri Wills, Ty McCarthy, Dr. Gary W. Procop, Anthony Schlinsog, Josie Santos, Amanda Zombro
Back row: Colette Earnest, Mary Pyfrom, Clarita Scioscia, Tyler Sandersfeld, Alissa Eagle, Bonnie Woodworth, John Lemke, Mario Levesque
Not pictured: Gabriela Lago and Lily Vieth
In Memoriam

The American Board of Pathology family deeply mourns the loss of Mario Lévesque, who passed away in early 2024. Mario was a valued member of our team and made significant contributions to our success. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones. Mario will be remembered fondly by all who had the privilege of working with him.
Congratulations to the Following Diplomates Who Received their Primary Board Certification in 2023

Samir Attia, MD
Amy L. Austin, MD
Alexandria Erika Avery, DO
Claire Avillac, MD
Vahid Azimi, MD
Buket Bagci, MD
Dorukhan Bahceci, MD
Lixia Bai, MD
Ayetha Ahmed Baig, MD
Cedric Alexander Riteziel Bailey, DO
Gabrielle E. Bailey, MD
Joanna Balcerek, MD
Vandana Baloda, MD
Sepideh Bamdad, MD
Anne Katherine Bartels, MD
Shaham Beg, MD
Vindhnya Bellamkonda, MD
Harsharan Svakumar Bhardwaj, MD
Narendra Bhattacharai, MD
Samuel Sebastien Bidot, MD
Melissa Marie Bilek, MD
Brooke Haley Blake, MD
Heath Tayton Blankenship, MD
Tiffany Bohr, MD
Ravi Tej Bommuru, MD
Nicholas Craig Borcherdins, MD
Cara Bornstein, MD
Melanie Bourgeau, MD
Rupinder Kaur Brar, MD
Ryan Christopher Braunberger, MD
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