

ABAI Strategic Plan 2021-2026

50 YEARS AND BEYOND: EXCELLENCE IN CERTIFYING ALLERGY-IMMUNOLOGY PHYSICIANS

Introduction:

The ABAI Board of Directors began a strategic planning process early in 2019 to identify organizational strategic priorities for 2021-2026. To embark on the first ever strategic plan with accountability in 2021 holds profound historical significance for ABAI. ABAI celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2021. An ambitious and accountable strategic plan is the perfect way to usher in the next 50 years of specialty board certification.

A Strategic Planning Subcommittee appointed by the Board began the process by conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis, which served as the foundation for the identification of strategic priorities outlined in this strategic plan. This plan was further developed through active engagement of our many stakeholders.

This plan approved by the full Board of Directors in March 2021 will be instrumental in helping ABAI meet its mission and better serve diplomates, the public and all stakeholders.

Strategic vision:

Inspire unsurpassed care of patients with allergic and immunologic disorders through meaningful certification programs

Strategic mission & objectives:

Be the preeminent national organization that provides initial and continuing certification of physicians committed to lifelong learning and exceptional care for patients with allergic and immunologic diseases

- Improve the quality of medical care of allergic and immunologic disorders through the development and utilization of professional and educational standards for initial and continuing certification of physician specialists in Allergy and Immunology;
- Provide assurance to the public that a physician specialist initially certified by ABAI has successfully completed an accredited educational program and demonstrates knowledge and competencies for independent practice of high quality healthcare in the specialty of Allergy and Immunology;
- Provide assurance to the public that a physician meeting requirements for continuing certification unceasingly demonstrates knowledge and competencies for independent practice of high quality healthcare in the specialty of Allergy and Immunology;
- Promote the practice of accessible, equitable and cost-effective care that is in line with current practice guidelines;
- Serve the public and the health care community by providing easily accessible databases containing the initial and continuing certification status of physicians certified by the ABAI;
- Provide certification standards and assessments that contribute to curricula for allergy-immunology fellowship programs in collaboration with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Review Committee for Allergy and Immunology;
- Support ABAI diplomates in their commitment to maintain certification, lifelong learning, professional growth and job satisfaction by providing a robust continuing certification program in collaboration with societies and other education providers;
- Serve as a reference for defining the continuously evolving standard of care and scope of practice of allergists and immunologists



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ABAI Strategic Plan 2021-2026 Goals



GOAL# 1: Enhance communication and responsiveness

Enhance communication with and responsiveness to input from all stakeholders.

GOAL# 2: Continuous Improvement & Validation

Study, build and share ABAI value in collaboration with the American Board of Medical Specialties, our sponsoring Boards (American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Pediatrics) and our collaborating societies.

GOAL# 3: Support Evolving Needs of Diverse Patients and Diplomates

Support diplomates and the public by ensuring ABAI governance, infrastructure and programs adapt to meet the evolving needs and circumstances of the diverse patients and diplomates in the specialty of allergy and immunology.

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ABAI Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Goal #1

Outreach & Communication

Enhance communication with and responsiveness to input from all stakeholders.

Objectives

- augment active engagement of diplomates, educators and learners through use of direct mailings, publications, social media and online tools, town hall meetings and surveys to clearly communicate and solicit feedback on evolving certification and continuing certification requirements and resources
- conduct a public outreach campaign in collaboration with strategic partners to provide education about the specialty and value of certification
- explore development of a patient advisory council
- promote the discipline of Allergy and Immunology to learners and other specialty board communities by raising awareness of our discipline and ABAI activities in partnerships with professional societies
- develop an ambassador program to serve as a resource for diplomates, residencies, fellowships, societies, other boards and public entities

Rationale

ABAI has a very active and engaged group of directors and a highly committed streamlined staff. ABAI has a strong commitment to excellence as it relates to both certification and maintenance of certification, and, in consequence, such credentialing rightfully has great meaning and value both to our colleagues and the public at large. ABAI has been very active in seeking ways to improve the relevance of continuing certification activities to our diplomats and is at the forefront of such initiatives. Accordingly, it is very important that we ensure that all relevant stakeholders are apprised of our progressive activities and high standards and, in turn, the value of our certification. It is equally important that we are receptive to commentaries and other feedback from those same stakeholders as these will guide us in our continued development.



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ABAI Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Goal #2

Continuous Improvement & Validation

Study, build and share ABAI value in collaboration with the American Board of Medical Specialties, our sponsoring Boards (American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Pediatrics) and our collaborating societies.

Objectives

- augment active engagement of diplomates, educators and learners through use of direct mailings, publications, social media and online tools, town hall meetings and surveys to clearly communicate and solicit feedback on evolving certification and continuing certification requirements and resources
- conduct a public outreach campaign in collaboration with strategic partners to provide education about the specialty and value of certification
- explore development of a patient advisory council
- promote the discipline of Allergy and Immunology to learners and other specialty board communities by raising awareness of our discipline and ABAI activities in partnerships with professional societies
- develop an ambassador program to serve as a resource for diplomates, residencies, fellowships, societies, other boards and public entities

Rationale

For nearly 50 years the ABAI has worked to improve the quality of medical care by providing professional and educational standards for the initial certification and maintenance of certification of physician specialists in Allergy and Immunology. In order to increase the value of its maintenance of certification process, the ABAI must provide evidence to stakeholders such as patients and physicians of the benefits of continuing certification to the delivery of optimal care. At present, the models for continuing certification have advanced from periodic high-stakes examinations to newer diplomate-centered approaches involving more frequent core knowledge and article-based assessments. ABAI deeply values its growing relationships with its collaborators including but not limited to the: American Board of Internal Medicine; American Board of Pediatrics; American Board of Medical Specialties; American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Allergy and Immunology; American Medical Association; Clinical Immunology Society, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education; Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education and many other strategic partners. ABAI will work with stakeholders to actively engage in research to validate the importance of continuing certification to the profession and the public, and also research and develop methods to best achieve this and all strategic goals. ABAI will seek data to demonstrate the value of continuing certification participation and impact on clinical practice. For example, ABAI will compare core knowledge-based assessment and survey data from diplomates participating in CAP to diplomates not participating in CAP. While the diplomates have been pleased with the movement to less stressful knowledge assessments, the evidence to support such approaches needs to be studied and validated.



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ABAI Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Goal #3

Support Evolving Needs & Circumstances of Diverse Patients and Diplomates

Support diplomates and the public by ensuring ABAI governance, infrastructure and programs adapt to meet the evolving needs and circumstances of the diverse patients and diplomates in the specialty of allergy and immunology.

Objectives

- regularly reassess competencies and procedures required for ABAI certification using standard and innovative interactive methods
- perform internal assessments to ensure that activities continue to align with strategic goals and mission of the ABAI and ABMS
- explore means of increasing ABAI diplomate involvement regarding selection processes for the selection of Directors and external item writers
- remain highly cognizant of the importance of, and actively work towards expanding Director and Board volunteer diversity, equity and inclusion
- provide meaningful assessments that not only recognize the expanding scope of practice of allergist-immunologists but also contribute to the recognition and alleviation of healthcare disparities
- conduct ongoing specific implicit and explicit bias training for all item writers and reviewers to decrease the potential for bias in assessments
- actively seek to identify and promote redress of identified inequities or disparities in access to and promotion of allergy and immunology training and specialty care
- explore opportunities to support diplomates with multiple certifications and further streamline ABIM and ABP maintenance of certification reciprocity pathways
- optimize governance and strengthen infrastructure by exercising strong stewardship, addressing board diversity, expanding avenues of diplomate participation, and safeguarding system practices and technology
- ensure accountable and responsible financial stewardship of ABAI assets and diplomate fees
- develop strategies to supplement revenue to allow for lesser reliance on continuing certification program fees

Rationale

ABAI requirements and assessments promote advancement of diplomate medical knowledge, competencies and quality of medical care. It is essential that the ABAI actively pursue strategies aimed at appropriately recognizing and assessing the expanded scope of practice for its diplomates and social disparities of patients they serve. Optimization of ABAI governance and infrastructure has been identified as a critical aspect of supporting the ABAI mission. ABAI governance should be both reflective of the diplomates served by the ABAI and sensitive to the needs of the public and health care community. Ensuring strong infrastructure is essential to achieve ABAI missions, to support further growth and programmatic development, and to allow for adaptation to future health care changes. ABAI has an extremely dedicated staff, board of directors, and executive team, however ABAI recognizes that changes in the healthcare landscape, social issues, continuing certification processes, and preparedness for future opportunities and challenges necessitates broadening the ABAI workforce. Furthermore, changes in technologic and IT security needs require frequent and proactive evaluation. ABAI will thus pursue strategic initiatives that ensure decision making and operations prioritize stewardship and maximal functionality and security of information technology systems. To this end ABAI has identified strategies which address these needs.



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