

**Inspiring Curiosity and Restoring Humility:
The Evolution of Competency-Based Continuing Medical Education**

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Dr. David Price and his colleagues, in their article in this issue of Academic Medicine, summarize the findings from recent studies regarding the association of Maintenance of Certification and physicians' learning and improvements in care. Their evaluation demonstrates that physicians often changed their practice because of these educational interventions. In this Invited Commentary, the author argues that, although this finding is reassuring, it may be the right answer to the wrong question. The critical questions the profession faces are whether physicians have the humility to routinely submit themselves to the judgment of their peers, whether they will accept responsibility for managing their professional competence and that of their colleagues, and whether they are willing to create a process for identifying and remediating underperforming clinicians.

If certifying boards assume responsibility for this system of accountability, then each would need to set the competency expectations for physicians in its specialty areas, allow clinicians to self-identify their core scope of practice, assume responsibility for summative assessment, provide formative feedback to participants, and link physicians to recommended professional development activities. Continuing certification must be sensitive to the burdens it puts on physicians and recognize engagement in a spectrum of learning activities that are integrated with daily practice, including continuing medical education. By assuming responsibility for their own continuing competency and that of their colleagues, physicians can manifest their commitment to their patients and their profession.

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