
Correspondence

MOC: WE NEED MORE DATA AND LESS HYPE

To the Editor: I read the recent “Perspective” by Dr. John James and Dr. Mark Corbett touting Maintenance of Certification (MOC) with some concern.¹

After 40 years of reading medical journals, I have learned to “follow the money.” When I read articles comparing Drug X with Drug Y, I have found that I do not need to read the article; just jump to the financial sponsor. If the manufacturer of Drug X supported the study, Drug X almost always comes out ahead. If the manufacturer of Drug Y supported the study, Drug Y almost always triumphs. I do not know how this happens, but if you do not believe me, try it yourself.

Therefore, when the article supporting MOC states that the authors are affiliated with the American Board of Allergy and Immunology, I must have more information before I can give credence to their opinions, no matter how well intended, about the use of MOC.

I need the following financial data:

1. How much money (if any) does the Board make from the MOC Program?

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doi:10.1016/j.anai.2011.04.014

2. What is the annual salary (if any) of the President of the Board?
3. Are members of the Board paid, and if so, how much?
4. How much money do our professional societies make from their “prep” courses for recertification, and are Board Members ever paid as faculty members for such courses?

After all, priests, senators, judges, attorneys, supreme court justices, and so forth *do not* have “MOC” requirements. The public is *not* clamoring to place MOC requirements on doctors, so who is and why? In no way am I calling into question the honesty or professionalism of anyone, but before I accept the conclusions of any author, I’ve found it helpful to “follow the money” so as to better evaluate any possible conflicts of interest that might perhaps slant those conclusions. Probably no such conflicts of interest exist, but your readers should certainly have this information before they decide on MOC. Until then, prudent physicians might defer their decision “to MOC or not to MOC.” That is the answer!

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1. James J, Corbett M. Perspective: The American Board of Allergy and Immunology maintenance of certification program: “To do or not to do? That is the question.” *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*. 2010;485–488.

Erratum

In the print version of the article “Development and validation of the Drug Hypersensitivity Quality of Life Questionnaire” by Baiardini et al (*Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol* 2011;106:330-335), the author’s names were transposed. The

correct author listing should be as follows: Ilaria Baiardini, PhD*; Fulvio Braidò, MD*; Omar Fassio, PhD†; Rosaria Calia, PhD‡; Walter Canonica Giorgio, MD*; Antonino Romano, MD‡; and DrHy-Q PROs Research Italian Group.