



## **American Board of Emergency Medicine**

### **Executive Director Position Profile October 2009**

This profile provides information about the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) and the position of Executive Director. The profile is designed to assist individuals in assessing their interest in and qualifications for the position. Applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to:

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# **Executive Director Position Profile For the American Board of Emergency Medicine**

## **Profile Methodology**

The profile for the position of Executive Director of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) was developed using organizational data and specific feedback from an online survey of members of the ABEM Board of Directors and Search Committee, past presidents, ABEM staff and representatives of related organizations. The survey was conducted to identify and prioritize the skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications and qualities required and desired in an Executive Director. Information regarding organizational and cultural factors, strengths and accomplishments, and challenges and opportunities for ABEM was also developed from the survey responses.

## **About the Organization**

ABEM, a non-profit corporation located in East Lansing, MI, certifies physicians specializing in emergency medicine in the United States who meet its educational, professional standing and examination standards. ABEM is not a membership association; rather, an organization of emergency physicians who seek and earn and maintain certification on a voluntary basis.

ABEM is one of 24 medical specialty certification boards recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), a non-profit umbrella organization established in 1933 to create uniformity in physician certification and to increase public awareness of the value of specialty medical certification. ABEM was officially recognized by ABMS in 1979 and today certifies physicians in the primary specialty of emergency medicine and in five subspecialties of emergency medicine: (1) pediatric emergency medicine; (2) hospice and palliative medicine; (3) sports medicine; (4) medical toxicology; and (5) undersea and hyperbaric medicine. There are approximately 25,400 active “diplomates” (individuals certified by ABEM) in the United States.

***Mission:*** The mission of ABEM is to protect the public by promoting and sustaining the integrity, quality and standards of training in and the practice of emergency medicine.

***Purposes:*** The purposes of ABEM are scientific and educational in nature and include the following:

- To improve the quality of emergency medical care;
- To establish and maintain high standards of excellence in the specialty of emergency medicine and its subspecialties;
- To improve medical education and facilities for training emergency physicians and subspecialists;
- To evaluate specialists and subspecialists who apply for initial and continuous certification;
- To grant qualified physicians certificates or other recognition of special knowledge and skills in emergency medicine and subspecialties, and to suspend or revoke such recognition; and
- To serve the public, physicians, hospitals and medical schools by providing lists of ABEM diplomates.

The ABEM initial certification process comprises two examinations – the qualifying examination and the oral certification examination. A physician must pass the qualifying examination in order to take the oral certification examination. In order to maintain ABEM certification, diplomates must also participate in the Emergency Medicine Continuous Certification (EMCC) program, the current ABMS required Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program for emergency medicine, which addresses the public interest in assuring physicians' continuing competence beyond initial certification. Examinations are developed and written by select diplomates appointed by the ABEM Board of Directors. These are individuals who are actively involved in the clinical practice of emergency medicine and who have distinguished themselves by the high quality of their patient care, teaching, research and/or leadership in emergency medicine.

*Governance and Staff:* ABEM is governed by a 19-member Board of Directors. In addition to the Executive Director, the executive staff comprises three associate executive directors. The organization has a total of 31 staff including the executive team. As codified in the ABEM bylaws, the elected volunteer president serves as the spokesperson for the Board.

*Key External Interactions:* In addition to working closely with the professional staff and the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will represent ABEM interests through interaction with the leadership of ABMS and the other ABMS member boards, and other related organizations including: the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American Medical Association, the American Association of Medical Colleges, the Federation of State Medical Boards, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the American Academy of Emergency Medicine, the Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors, the Association of Academic Chairs of Emergency Medicine, the Emergency Medicine Residents' Association, and Emergency Medicine Residency Review Committee. Other key external interactions may include quality and safety organizations (e.g. AHRQ, Leapfrog), The Joint Commission, CMS and third party payors (e.g. Blue Cross, United HealthCare), and other relevant federal agencies.

## **Programs and Services**

The work of ABEM is focused primarily on two major activities: the development and administration of certification examinations, and the administration of the Emergency Medicine Continuous Certification (EMCC) program. Other activities that support these functions include: (1) the publication of a biannual newsletter; (2) publication of lists of certified emergency physicians; (3) communication to diplomates of requirements and changes in requirements; (4) collaborative activities with ABMS and (5) the emergency medicine subspecialties. ABEM also publishes the annual *Certification Policies and Procedures*, which describes the certification application and examination processes and is distributed by residency programs, with a personalized application form, to graduating residents.

The EMCC program comprises four components of continuous certification: Professional Standing, Life-long Learning and Self-Assessment, Assessment of Cognitive Expertise, and Assessment of Practice Performance (this last component will begin in 2010). The Life-long Learning and Self-Assessment component, in particular, serves as a model for other medical specialty boards and is recognized as a valuable program to demonstrate diplomates'

commitment to critically reviewing current medical literature. Diplomates enjoy access to a secure, interactive section of the ABEM website as a primary source of access to the EMCC program.

ABEM also strongly supports residency training in emergency medicine. It does so by developing and administering the in-training examination, which all programs currently participate in, and through the ABEM Residency Visitation Program which provides a forum to share topics of interest with the residency programs and their residents and faculty physicians. The organization also is in the process of reviewing the initial certification program to ensure that the content and methods for determining compliance with current standards of practice remain relevant and effective.

For more information about ABEM, visit [www.abem.org](http://www.abem.org).

### **Strengths and Accomplishments**

ABEM enjoys a stellar reputation for the quality of its examination development and administration of certification examinations, maintaining a sharp focus on these primary missions. In addition, the following are cited by key stakeholders as strengths of the organization:

1. Relationship with, and examination services for, emergency medical subspecialties;
2. Competency and professionalism of staff and general operation of internal functions;
3. Timely communication of certification requirements to diplomates;
4. Reliability and validity of examinations;
5. Management of issues and internal relations within the subspecialty organizations; and
6. Administrative effectiveness and operation of internal meetings of volunteers (e.g., Board of Directors meetings).

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Perhaps the greatest challenge – and greatest opportunity – for ABEM is positioning itself to adapt to, and become a leader in, the rapidly and dramatically changing healthcare environment. The evolution of organized medicine on a national level – e.g., healthcare reform, national quality movement/individual physician accountability initiatives, recruitment and retention of emergency physicians – presents opportunities for ABEM to enhance its collaboration with other board specialties, strengthen its voice on the national level, and reinforce the importance and value of certification in emergency medicine.

Additional challenges and opportunities include the following:

1. Continued enhancement of initial and continuous certification examinations to improve their clinical relevance on an ongoing basis;
2. Creation and growth of additional subspecialties, and alignment with subspecialties to create fellowship opportunities;
3. Improved visibility and activity within ABMS relative to other board specialties and organizations;
4. Additional outreach to, and communication with, diplomates to better position them to prepare for changes in the health care industry and organized medicine;

5. Preparation of residents, earlier in their training, for certification and continuous certification;
6. Anticipation and recognition of the growing requirements for certification proposed by external bodies, in order to satisfy those requirements without making the certification and/or continuous certification processes onerous for diplomates;
7. Additional demonstration of the value, relevance and importance of board certification;
8. In response to ongoing challenges related to Continuing Medical Education (CME) activities and credits and the evolving requirements of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, continuing to uphold the value of the Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment (LLSA) and support for CME associated with LLSA;
9. Continuing to monitor and participate in discussions with ABMS and the Federation of State Medical Boards regarding collaboration between MOC and the Maintenance of Licensure (MOL) movement ;
10. Anticipation of expenses and financial resources that are projected to be necessary in a climate of increasing ABMS fees, the economic environment and the implementation of additional initiatives;
11. Maintaining stature under the ABMS umbrella relative to larger, more established boards with greater financial resources;
12. Preparing ABEM to respond to and accommodate the generational differences in the ways that physicians access information and learn; and
13. Monitoring competition from non-ABMS boards and maintaining stature as the most recognized and prestigious certification body for emergency medicine.

### **Organizational Culture**

Key stakeholders describe the organizational culture of ABEM as one that is highly effective, successful and respected, due in large part to its adherence to a clear mission and set of objectives. Its reputation in the emergency medicine community is a result of high standards of excellence, an unparalleled commitment to patient care, and a strong and focused work ethic on the part of both volunteers and professional staff. While the nature of its enterprise is described as both academic and conservative, there exists a strong sense of and commitment to collaboration, both internally and externally, and an atmosphere of collegiality, mutual support and responsiveness to the needs of emergency physicians.

The successful Executive Director will capitalize on the solid infrastructure and stability of the organization, while demonstrating forward thinking and continued progress toward the goals and initiatives established by the Board of Directors.

### **Executive Director Position**

*Responsibilities:* The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for implementing all certification and continuous certification programs and examinations, as directed by the board; managing the professional staff and the organization's daily activities; overseeing the \$9.6 million operating budget and financial resources; and developing and maintaining alliances with key stakeholders and partners. In addition, the Executive Director will:

1. Represent ABEM's mission and activities to the public and key stakeholders as directed by the Board of Directors;

2. Facilitate the development, implementation and management of policies, procedures, examinations, certification and continuous certification programs and processes;
3. Build and strengthen alliances and partnerships with, and consensus among, related organizations;
4. Hire, manage and develop talented professional staff to implement activities, programs and initiatives; and communicate effectively with staff to ensure their understanding of ABEM's mission, goals and objectives;
5. Maintain and manage the financial integrity of the organization by aligning the annual operating budget with the board's strategic goals and objectives, and with legal and professional standards of fiscal responsibility.

Education and Experience: The successful candidate will have a doctorate degree ( and a minimum of 10 years of senior-level experience in the healthcare/medical arena. An emergency physician is preferred. If a physician, they must be ABEM board certified. Emergency medicine residency training is preferred. Previous experience as an association Executive Director and/or other experience in nonprofit management, or prior leadership within organized medicine, is preferred. Knowledge of or a background in medical education, certification, evaluation or accreditation programs and practices is considered an asset. Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to advancing medical education and training and the ability to advance the continued development of effective certification programs in emergency medicine.

The following experience is *essential* to the position of Executive Director:

1. Building effective alliances, relationships and partnerships with related industry organizations, and creating opportunities to network, collaborate and exchange information;
2. Developing and implementing strategic plans and initiatives and identifying and prioritizing short- and long-term organizational needs and resources;
3. Facilitating team-building with staff and related organizations on an on-going basis;
4. Leading and managing a complex organization with diverse constituencies through important change and growth; and
5. Serving as the public voice of and spokesperson for an organization.

The following experience is *highly desirable*:

1. Enhancing the visibility, reputation and prestige of a complex organization through effective public relations;
2. Leading and/or managing issues in a related field or organization, preferably in the healthcare/medical arena;
3. Managing relationships, initiatives and activities in a complex governance structure;
4. Developing and supporting an effective board and staff; and
5. Improving and enhancing the quality of existing programs, services and initiatives.

In addition, experience with finance/business and business systems, and enhancement of programs and services is considered an asset.

Skills and Abilities: The following skills and abilities are *essential*:

1. Exceptional visionary leadership, in order to capitalize on opportunities and to identify challenges and the resources necessary to meet those challenges;
2. Effective, clear and concise communication, both orally and in writing; and

3. Consensus-building among diverse constituencies and competing interests, in order to further common goals and objectives.

*Personal Characteristics and Behaviors:* The Executive Director will possess the following personal characteristics and behaviors:

1. Inclusive, collaborative and responsive in nature, with high standards of excellence and a passion to achieve organizational goals;
2. Understanding of role and responsibilities relative to those of the Board of Directors and volunteers;
3. Clear, concise and articulate in communicating and representing the views of the organization;
4. Confident and poised in dealing with a diverse constituency and competing interests;
5. Ability to build consensus among and form collegial and supportive relationships with staff, board and related organizations;
6. Open-minded and a strong listener, with the ability to facilitate, rather than direct or manipulate, processes and initiatives;
7. Attentive to operational detail and follow-through to maximize service and responsiveness to emergency physicians and volunteers;
8. Organized, focused and skillful at managing time and diverse responsibilities;
9. Able to adapt to changing situations in response to a changing environment; and
10. Demonstration of the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all matters and actions.

### **Measures of Success**

The Executive Director's success in the position will be measured in part by performance evaluations from the Board of Directors, other volunteers and staff, and by demonstrated progress in the following areas:

1. Successful integration into, and understanding of, the community of emergency medicine and its components;
2. Establishment of a positive reputation among other industry leaders and organizations;
3. Actively seeking new ideas and opportunities from a wide range of external stakeholders and, respectful of their decision making responsibilities, explore those concepts with Board leadership and Directors for direction and approval
4. Effective communication, both oral and written, with the Board of Directors, staff and industry leaders;
5. Understanding of the development and administration of certification examinations and process, appropriate to the amount of time in the position;
6. Fostering an internal atmosphere of collegiality, mutual support and respect;
7. Acceptance by senior staff and a supportive, positive relationship with Board of Directors;
8. Responsible management of the organization's financial resources and adherence to the operating budget in accordance with strategic initiatives; and
9. Establishment of consensus and partnerships relative to key initiatives.

The search for the Executive Director of ABEM is being conducted by Pamela Kaul, President, and James Zaniello, Vice President, Association Strategies, Inc., 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Telephone: 703-683-0850; Email: [jim@assnstrategies.com](mailto:jim@assnstrategies.com). Website: [www.assnstrategies.com](http://www.assnstrategies.com).