



THE AMERICAN BOARD *of* PEDIATRICS

111 Silver Cedar Court, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514-1513
Phone: 919-929-0461 • Fax: 919-929-9255 • abpeds@abpeds.org • www.abp.org

2021 Board of Directors

H. Stacy Nicholson, MD, MPH
Chair

Stephanie D. Davis, MD
Chair-Elect

Victoria F. Norwood, MD
Immediate Past Chair

DeWayne M. Pursley, MD, MPH
Secretary-Treasurer

David G. Nichols, MD, MBA
President and CEO

Suzanne K. Woods, MD
Executive Vice President

John A. Barnard, MD
Mary K. Bissell, JD
James F. Chmiel, MD, MPH
Priyanka Kaul, MD
Diane M. Pickles
Ricardo A. Quiñonez, MD
Pamela J. Simms-Mackey, MD
Robin H. Steinhorn, MD
Brad C. Weselman, MD

Vice Presidents

Linda A. Althouse, PhD
Sandra W. Gainey
Ann E. Hazinski, MBA, CPA
Laurel K. Leslie, MD, MPH
Keith J. Mann, MD, MEd
David A. Turner, MD
Michele J. Wall, MA
Dongming Zhang, MS, MLS

TO: Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
General Pediatric and Internal Medicine-Pediatric Program Directors
Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO) Leaders
American Board of Medical Specialties Leadership
Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Leadership

RE: Competency Expectations for Eligibility to the American Board of Pediatrics
Initial Certifying Examination

DATE: September 7, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

The ongoing behavioral and mental health (BMH) crisis continues to threaten children, adolescents, and young adults (hereafter, children) and is a major strategic priority for the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), and others have also charged the pediatric and mental health care communities to better care for children's BMH needs. The COVID-19 pandemic shed an even greater light on this devastating issue.

We are writing to you today to inform you about the ABP's commitment and efforts to assure that pediatricians certified by the ABP are trained and equipped for this critical component of pediatric health care. Ongoing efforts include:

- Inclusion of BMH content in our content outlines for general pediatrics and all 15 subspecialties;
- Development of continuing certification content focused on the prevention, identification, and treatment of mental health conditions;
- Dissemination of the [Roadmap project](#) that highlights the BMH needs of children with chronic medical conditions and their families; and
- [Collaborations](#) with other organizations and researchers to identify and address BMH training gaps among U.S. pediatric residents and fellows.

We also are committed to catalyzing change in the graduate medical education environment, given [recently published data](#) that only slightly over half of graduates completing pediatrics residency training were deemed ready for unsupervised practice in the area of BMH using entrustable professional activity (EPA) based assessment. We are working closely with leaders from the Association of Pediatric



THE AMERICAN BOARD *of* PEDIATRICS

111 Silver Cedar Court, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514-1513
Phone: 919-929-0461 • Fax: 919-929-9255 • abpeds@abpeds.org • www.abp.org

2021 Board of Directors

H. Stacy Nicholson, MD, MPH
Chair

Stephanie D. Davis, MD
Chair-Elect

Victoria F. Norwood, MD
Immediate Past Chair

DeWayne M. Pursley, MD, MPH
Secretary-Treasurer

David G. Nichols, MD, MBA
President and CEO

Suzanne K. Woods, MD
Executive Vice President

John A. Barnard, MD
Mary K. Bissell, JD
James F. Chmiel, MD, MPH
Priyanka Kaul, MD
Diane M. Pickles
Ricardo A. Quiñonez, MD
Pamela J. Simms-Mackey, MD
Robin H. Steinhorn, MD
Brad C. Weselman, MD

Vice Presidents

Linda A. Althouse, PhD
Sandra W. Gainey
Ann E. Hazinski, MBA, CPA
Laurel K. Leslie, MD, MPH
Keith J. Mann, MD, MEd
David A. Turner, MD
Michele J. Wall, MA
Dongming Zhang, MS, MLS

Program Directors (APPD) and other organizations as they develop and implement BMH curricula across residency programs.

One way the ABP will catalyze change is to use the [BMH EPA](#) as one of a core set of [EPAs](#) that will become part of the eligibility criteria for initial certification in general pediatrics by the ABP in the coming years. The implementation of this requirement will occur in phases, beginning with multi-center trials, learning networks, and non-consequential data collection before the Board attempts to collect EPA data that will have consequences for an individual's board eligibility in general pediatrics.

EPAs provide an evidence-based framework for assessing trainee competency. While many training programs already have robust existing curricula to prepare their graduates for practice and address most of the EPA framework, we believe BMH will require intentional focus and effort, given the current gaps in this area. We are committed to working with the pediatric community on implementation strategies and will share additional information regularly as the work on BMH and EPAs progresses.

Addressing the BMH crisis will not be easy, but we are committed to doing our part and supporting training programs throughout their journey. Together, we can improve the preparation and competency of graduating residents to care for the mental health of America's children.

Sincerely,

David G. Nichols, MD, MBA
President and CEO

H. Stacy Nicholson, MD, MPH
Chair of the Board of Directors