American Board of Otolaryngology Committees

The American Board of Otolaryngology consists of eighteen Directors who meet twice a year, once after the Oral Exams and once in the fall. The ABOto makes decisions and sets policy through a variety of committees composed of Directors which develop proposals for the full board to review on the last day of the meeting. In addition, some of the committees also meet by conference call throughout the year.

The committees include:

- Exam/Group Leaders
- Examiner Selection
- Maintenance of Certification
- Credentials and Ethics
- Finance
- Information and Liaison
- Nominating
- Strategic Planning
- Education

Strategic and Long-Range Planning (SLRP)

A Strategic and Long-Range Planning (SLRP) process is undertaken and updated by the American Board of Otolaryngology about every 5 years. The most recent update was performed by the entire Board of Directors over two days during the Board’s two meetings in 2012. The Board used the prior SLRP as a baseline from which to work. Several issues were addressed, and the recommendations were made to the appropriate ABOto committees, which are summarized below.

The Certification process – both Primary and Maintenance of Certification – is of course the major function of the Board. After reviewing the current status of the examination process, several recommendations were made to the Exam committee. These include consideration of adjusting the scoring and examiner scheduling based on historical examiner severity, and improving examiner training and standardization. The certification exams primarily address two of the core competencies: Medical Knowledge and Patient Care. Moving forward, the Exam committee will explore new ways to assess other core competencies such as communication and professionalism. In addition, the ABOto strives to optimize the pool of oral examiners, and we will work with sponsoring societies on the nomination process.

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Since its introduction several years ago, Maintenance of Certification has been very successful and the ABOto will continue to work with the American Board of Medical Specialties to evolve the process, particularly related to the assessment of Performance in Practice (Part IV). The partnership of the ABOto with the subspecialty and senior societies has been very fruitful, with the development of many educational modules and other content. This will need to continue and actually increase as MOC evolves, and the MOC committee will address that. Maintenance of Licensure is a State function and not a Board function, but it is quite probable that many states may use MOC as a proxy for a separate state-mandated process (Maintenance of Licensure), so MOC might become more important even for Diplomates with time-unlimited certificates. The ABOto will continue to monitor this process.

A major partner for the Board is the Program Director, since it is the Program Director who verifies that a candidate has successfully completed all aspects of training and is approved for the Primary Certification exam. To that end, the ABOto already provides administrative support for the Otolaryngology Program Directors Organization and has regular communications with that important group. Going forward, the ABOto will enhance their communications with individual Program Directors as well, and ensure that new Program Directors are provided with appropriate orientation and assistance.

We spent some time discussing Communication strategies for the ABOto, and the consensus view was the more venues for communication, the better. Part of that strategy includes regular reports from Board committees to the widely-read periodical ENT Today, as well as other otolaryngology publications. The ABOto website has had a major upgrade and is an excellent source of information. In addition, the Information and Liaison committee will work toward creating a regular ABOto electronic newsletter.

The Strategic and Long-Range Planning process is a continuous one, and the Directors will regularly monitor progress toward our goals over the next few years.

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Chair, Strategic and Long-Range Planning Committee