

HMDCB-certification vs. HPM certification

Difference from ABMS or AOA subspecialty certification in hospice and palliative medicine:

HMDCB certification is complementary to ABMS and AOA certification, but specific to the practice of **hospice medicine**. It assesses additional expertise in the unique competencies to perform the role of a hospice medical director, such as regulatory, administrative, legal, ethical competencies, and clinical skills appropriate for hospice patients.

Hospice Medical Directors (HMDs) or other hospice physicians who provide care are a diverse group of professionals, many of whom have followed varied career paths leading to their affiliation with hospice programs. Thus, some may be unable or choose not to undertake full hospice and palliative medicine subspecialty board certification through ABMS or AOA. These same physicians, however, do desire a formal recognition process that will validate their commitment and provide a solid foundation for their work as HMDs or hospice physicians.

In addition, the knowledge base and competencies required of hospice physicians or physicians who provide hospice care include a unique subset of hospice and palliative medicine that may not be covered fully in broader training in the field. Because the hospice medical director certification is distinct from ABMS and AOA subspecialty certifications, it can serve to **enhance the work of hospice and palliative medicine specialists** who choose to become HMDs or hospice physicians.

HMDCB Certification:

- Offers eligibility through an experiential "practice" pathway not currently offered through the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or the American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
- Validates knowledge and skills of hospice physicians
- Enhances the work of the palliative care specialist
- Helps address the growing workforce and quality issues in the field

Even though I was hospice and palliative medicine fellowship trained and board certified, as a hospice executive and physician being certified as hospice medical director early on was a no brainer. This certification offered me the skill set and the tools to help sharpen my skills and enhance my knowledge in hospice medicine with special recognition of quality and consistency of the practice within hospice.

**-Amjad Riar, MD FACP FFAHPM HMDC CPE, Medical Director,
Potomac Palliative Care Group**



Being HMDCB certified provides me with an impetus to stay up to date on developments with CMS and the medical director role, and gives me access to resources that go beyond the "basics" required for HPM certification. It also serves as proof to my employer and colleagues that I take the role of the HMD seriously enough to seek a certification that isn't required.

**-Glen Varns, MD HMDC, Medical Director, Hospice and Palliative
Care, Allina Health**