



# Becoming Certified in Addiction Medicine

ASAM 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

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Addiction Medicine Sub-Board Chair, ABPM  
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CEO, ABPM



# Disclosure Information

- Michael Weaver MD, DFASAM
  - No Disclosures
- Christopher J. Ondrula, JD
  - No Disclosures

# Objectives



- Describe the pathways to American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) certification.
- List the criteria to be eligible to take the Addiction Medicine certification exam.
- Review the certification exam content and timeline.
- Identify ABPM resources to assist diplomates meet ABPM requirements.

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- **Addiction Medicine**
  - Michael Weaver, MD, DFASAM
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  - Laurie Gesell, MD

# ABPM Specialties & Subspecialties



## Specialties

- Aerospace Medicine
- Occupational and Environmental Medicine
- Public Health and General Preventive Medicine

## Subspecialties

- Addiction Medicine
- Clinical Informatics
- Health Care Administration, Leadership, and Management
- Medical Toxicology
- Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine

# Eligibility Requirements & Pathways to Certification

# Key Eligibility Requirements

## Primary Specialty Certification

American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)  
Member Board  
American Osteopathic Association (AOA)  
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)  
College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)

## Medical License

Current, unrestricted, and valid in US or Canada; no license may be restricted, revoked, suspended, or currently under such notice

## Medical Degree

## Training or Experience in Addiction Medicine

Practice Pathway (through 2025)  
ACGME-Accredited Fellowship in Addiction Medicine



# Practice Pathway

- Eligible physicians have significant Addiction Medicine practice experience or training but have not completed an ACGME-accredited Addiction Medicine fellowship.
- The Practice Pathway is open through the 2025 exam cycle.



# Practice Pathway: Time & Experience

- 1,920 hours of relevant Addiction Medicine practice at the subspecialty level
  - Completed over at least 24 months
  - Must be completed within 60 months immediately preceding June 30, 2025
  - Need not be continuous
- Broad-based, professional activity with significant Addiction Medicine responsibility
  - Comprehensive approach to preventing, diagnosing, and managing patients with various substance use disorders and addictions
  - Minimum 480 hours of direct patient care including prevention and treatment of individuals at risk for substance use disorders
  - May include up to 1,440 hours of teaching, research, and/or administration activities



# ACGME-Accredited Fellowship Pathway

- Successful completion of an ACGME-accredited fellowship program is required.
  - At least 12 months in duration
  - If fellowship is longer than 12 months, physicians must complete all years of training for which the fellowship program is accredited.
- Addiction Medicine fellowship programs began ACGME-accreditation process in 2018.
- Beginning in 2026, the ACGME-Accredited Fellowship Pathway will be the sole pathway to ABPM certification in Addiction Medicine.

# Submitting Your Addiction Medicine Application

- Access the application through the ABPM website  
<https://www.theabpm.org/become-certified/subspecialties/addiction-medicine/>
- Choose the appropriate pathway
- Click “Apply Now”
- You’ll be directed to the application on ABPM’s Physician Portal
  - If you do not yet have a Physician Portal account, you will be prompted to create one before starting your application.

# Application Info & Help

- Find more information on each pathway requirements
- <https://www.theabpm.org/become-certified/certification-overview/>
- <https://www.theabpm.org/become-certified/subspecialties/addiction-medicine/>
- Take the “Am I Eligible?” quiz to determine your readiness to apply for the certification exam
  - <https://www.theabpm.org/am-i-eligible/>



# Examination Content, Questions, & Timeline

# Exam Content



Assesses ability to apply knowledge rather than to recall isolated facts

Focuses on high-frequency and/or high-impact patient problems

Emphasizes clinical situations and decisions arising in the experienced Addiction Medicine specialist's practice

# Core Exam Content Areas



Proportion	Content Areas
25%	01 – Definitions 02 – Genetics 03 – Pharmacokinetic and Pharmacodynamic Principles 04 – Pharmacology 05 – Neurobiology of Addiction
20%	06 – Epidemiological Concepts 07 – Epidemiological Trends of Substance Use Disorders 08 – Prevention
40%	09 – Screening, Assessment, and Brief Intervention 10 – Overview of Addiction Treatment 11 – Management of Inpatient and Outpatient Intoxication and Withdrawal 12 – Pharmacologic Interventions for Addictions 13 – Behavioral Interventions 14 – Co-Occurring and Medical Disorders among Patients with Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Addiction 15 – Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders among Patients with Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Addiction 16 – Pain and Addiction
15%	17 – Ethical, Legal, and Liability Issues in Addiction Practice



# Exam Content by Substance/Addiction

Proportion	Substance/Addiction
15-20%	Alcohol
15-20%	Nicotine
10-15%	Opioids
7-10%	Sedatives
7-10%	Stimulants
7-10%	Cannabinoids
0.5-3%	Hallucinogens
0.5-3%	Dissociatives
0.5-3%	Inhalants
0.5-3%	Anabolic Steroids
1-3%	Other Substances
1-3%	Nonsubstance Addiction
1-5%	General/All Substances Combined

# What's on the Exam?



- Multiple-Choice Questions
  - **Recall** specific important facts
  - **Interpretation**, e.g., identify a fatal study flaw, diagnose a patient
  - **Problem solving**, e.g., judgment about clinical treatment, healthcare design, 2x2 tables, etc.
- Single-Best Answer
- Calculator, drug name list, and normal range values are provided.

# What's NOT on the Exam?



**True/False Questions**

**K-Type Questions**

**Trick Questions**

**Experimental Questions**

# Exam Timeline

**Late October/early November**

All exams administered

**November/December**

All exams scored

**December/January**

Key validation process:

- Each question's performance is reviewed, focusing on low-performing questions
- Questions may be retained, re-keyed, or dropped based on performance
- Finally, each candidate's exam is rescored

**January**

- Board reviews exam results and characteristics
  - Ensures passing standard represents the same level of proficiency year after year
  - Eliminates effects of variance in exam difficulty from year to year

**Late January**

Finalized exam scores sent to examinees



- Attests that a physician has met all requirements of Addiction Medicine certification
- Effective January 1 of the year following the exam
  - Certificate will expire December 31 ten years after issuance
    - e.g., a physician who passes the 2025 certification exam will be certified effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2035.
  - Subject to continuing compliance with Continuing Certification Program (CCP) requirements
- Upon certification, all ABPM diplomates will participate in the CCP, including annual fee payment



# Important Dates

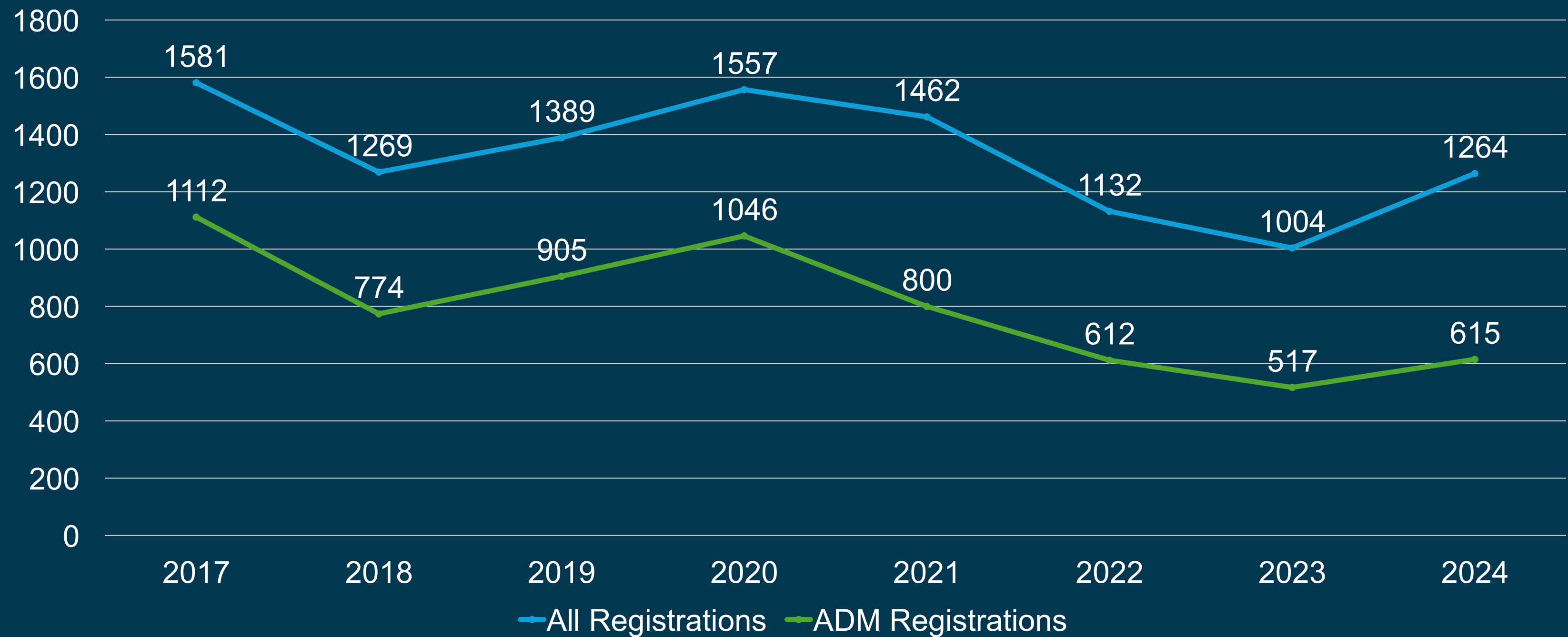
<b>March 31, 2024</b>	Application window opens
<b>May 21, 2025</b>	Exam registration opens
<b>June 30, 2025</b>	Application closes
<b>July 1-15, 2025</b>	Late application period
<b>September 12, 2025</b>	Exam registration closes
<b>October 13 – November 2, 2025</b>	Exams administered at Pearson Vue testing centers
<b>Late January 2026</b>	Exam scores released to examinees



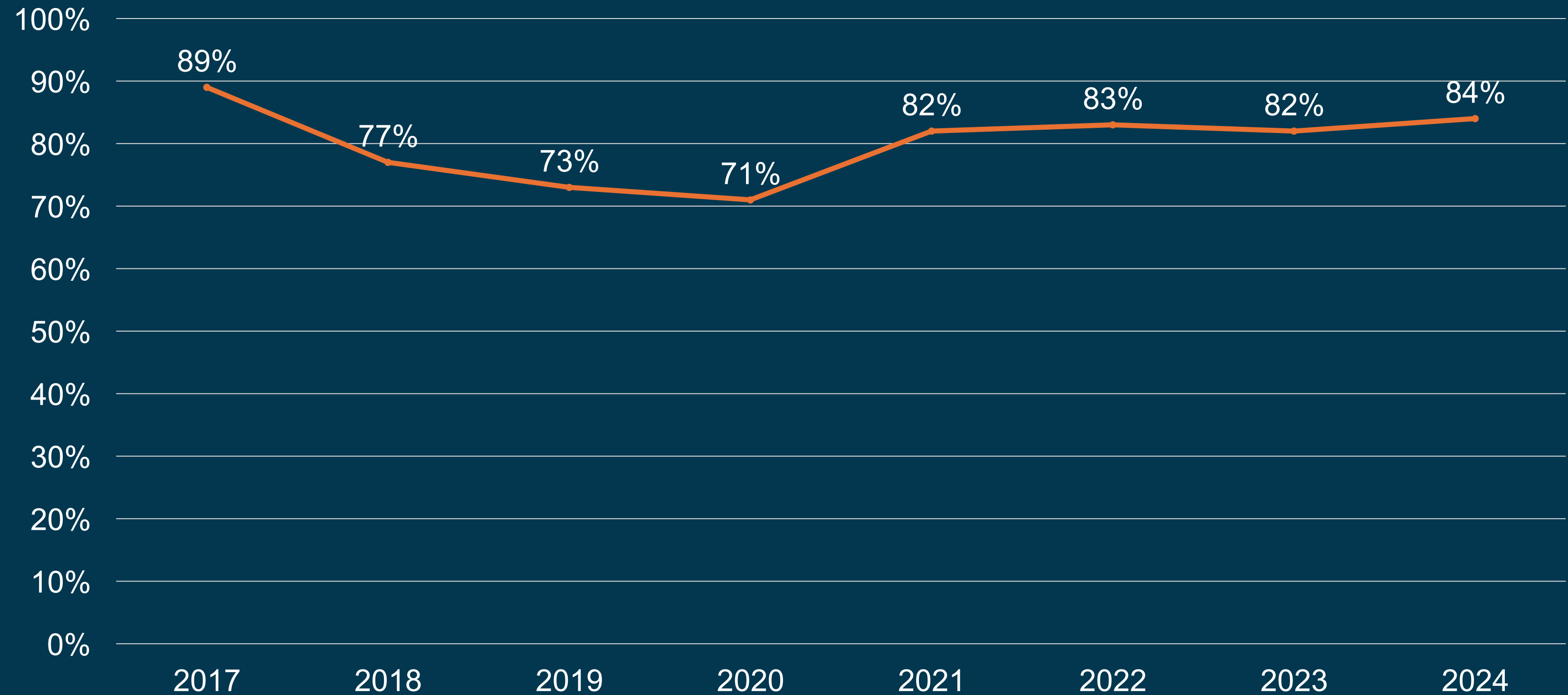


# Review of the 2024 Exam Cycle

# Exam Registrations, 2017-2024



# Addiction Medicine Exam Pass Rates





# Continuing Certification Program

# Three-Phase Implementation



# CCP Requirements

**Learn more:**  
Attend ABPM's  
CCP Q & A  
session

Friday, April 25  
2:30pm

Continuing Certification Program (CCP)	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
<b>Professionalism &amp; Licensure</b> Maintain a full, valid, and unrestricted license to practice medicine.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Annual Fee</b> Pay the annual fee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Lifelong Professional Development</b> 20 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits annually 6 credits must be certificate-specific	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Longitudinal Assessment Program (LAP)</b> Answer 30 LAP questions annually	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Improving Health &amp; Health Care (IHHC)*</b> Complete an activity designed to improve a Diplomate's practice	Not required.				

\*Subject to final approval by ABPM's Continuing Certification Committee



# Questions?

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