For Immediate Release

THE ADDICTION MEDICINE FOUNDATION ACCREDITS FOUR MORE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS, BRINGING TOTAL ACCREDITED PROGRAMS TO 40

Announcement Comes Following Landmark Recognition of Addiction Medicine by ABMS

Bethesda, Maryland – April 4, 2016 – The Addiction Medicine Foundation (formerly The ABAM Foundation) today announced the accreditation of four additional fellowship programs to train addiction medicine physicians. The Addiction Medicine Foundation has supported the establishment of 40 addiction medicine fellowship training programs to date, based at major medical schools and hospitals across North America, and is committed to establishing a total of 125 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education-accredited addiction medicine fellowship programs by 2025.

This news comes on the heels of the announcement by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) that it has recognized Addiction Medicine as a multispecialty subspecialty. ABMS recognition opens the door for the Foundation’s fellowship programs to apply for accreditation through the ACGME, a process already underway.

“We welcome these four new programs at this time of transformation and great promise for expansion of the field of addiction medicine,” said Robert J. Sokol, MD, President of The Addiction Medicine Foundation and American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM). “These programs will help meet the need to train the nation’s future addiction medicine leaders in providing evidence-based care.”

The new fellowship programs are Boston Children’s Hospital Pediatric Addiction Medicine Fellowship (Boston Children’s Hospital, Boston, MA), Howard University Addiction Medicine Fellowship (Howard University Hospital and Howard University College of Medicine, Washington, DC), University of Tennessee Addiction Medicine Program (University of Tennessee College of Medicine, Memphis, TN), and Willingway Addiction Medicine Fellowship (Medical Center of Central Georgia/NavicentHealth, Statesboro and Macon, GA).

Addiction medicine is defined as the prevention of the risky use of substances, including nicotine, alcohol, prescription medications and other licit and illicit drugs, and the evaluation, diagnosis, treatment and management of the disease of addiction and related health conditions. Physicians specializing in this field also help family members whose health and functioning are affected by a loved one’s substance use or addiction.

Sixteen percent of the non-institutionalized U.S. population age 12 and over – more than 40 million Americans – meets medical criteria for addiction involving nicotine, alcohol or other drugs. This is more than the number of Americans with cancer, diabetes or heart conditions. In 2014, 22.5 million people in the United States needed treatment for addiction involving alcohol or drugs other than nicotine, but only 11.6 percent received any form of inpatient, residential, or outpatient treatment. Of those who do receive treatment, few receive evidence-based care. (There is no information available on how many individuals receive treatment for addiction involving nicotine.)
Risky substance use and untreated addiction account for one-third of inpatient hospital costs and 20 percent of all deaths in the United States each year, and cause or contribute to more than 100 other conditions requiring medical care, as well as vehicular crashes, other fatal and non-fatal injuries, overdose deaths, suicides, homicides, domestic discord, the highest incarceration rate in the world and many other costly social consequences. The economic cost to society is greater than the cost of diabetes and all cancers combined. Despite these startling statistics on the prevalence and costs of addiction, few physicians have been trained to prevent or treat it.

To address this vast unmet need, The Addiction Medicine Foundation and ABAM are committed to building the addiction medicine workforce. To date, 3,902 physicians have been certified by ABAM. The fellowship programs are modeled on the Foundation’s national guidelines, *Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Addiction Medicine*.

The Addiction Medicine Foundation fellowship programs provide one year of subspecialty training, which is offered to physicians already trained and certified in primary care specialties (internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics & gynecology) and other specialties, such as preventive medicine and emergency medicine. Accrediting these training programs will help to assure the American public that addiction physician specialists have the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize and treat addiction. It will also help ensure that trained physicians are available to address common medical or psychiatric conditions related to the use of addictive substances. While there are also addiction psychiatry fellowship programs that address the need for treatment within the specialty of psychiatry, there is a profound need for knowledge in addressing this disease and its prevention and treatment across primary care and in many areas of specialty care practice beyond psychiatry.

The American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM), a Member Board of ABMS, sponsored the application for the field of Addiction Medicine to be an ABMS-recognized multispecialty subspecialty – meaning that physicians certified by any Member Board of the ABMS can become certified in Addiction Medicine. The ABMS subspecialty recognition of Addiction Medicine has been championed by ABAM, which has established a certification examination and Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process for addiction medicine physicians.

Recognition of Addiction Medicine by ABMS identifies Addiction Medicine as a specialized field of medical practice for which physicians may gain the highest level of certification and credentialing, commensurate with that of over 100 other medical specialties and subspecialties that are recognized by ABMS. By Addiction Medicine officially entering the ABMS “House of Medicine,” opportunities for physicians to practice in this field, and for patients to receive care from them, will be integrated into medical education and training, health care systems, payment structures and the broad practice of medicine. Thus, the transition from independent board status to recognition of ADM within ABMS signals the integration of the prevention of and care for unhealthy substance use and addiction into mainstream medicine and health care.

The Addiction Medicine Foundation’s purpose is to establish and accredit addiction medicine training programs and support the advancement of the field and care of patients. The Foundation is governed by 18 distinguished physicians from a range of medical specialties. For more information, visit [www.abamfoundation.org](http://www.abamfoundation.org), call (301) 656-3880 or email email@abamfoundation.org.