

May 16, 2016

Dear Fellow ABMGG Diplomate:

We are fortunate to be living in an era of transformative progress in diagnostic technologies that allow all of us to provide ever more rapid and accurate diagnoses to so many individuals. Various technological advances, such as array comparative genomic hybridization (aCGH) and next generation sequencing methods (NGS) have vastly increased the diagnostic rate for individuals with constitutional disorders and for those affected by cancer, aCGH and NGS hold the promise to significantly improve outcomes through precision medicine. Similarly, couples planning a family have available to them unprecedented testing to make informed, reproductive decisions.

The challenge for our profession is that with these changes, the traditional fields of clinical cytogenetics and clinical molecular genetics increasingly employ similar techniques to assess for single nucleotide variants (SNVs), copy number variants (CNVs), aneuploidies and absence of heterozygosity (AOH). Over the past five years the ABMGG has surveyed diplomates and laboratory training program directors regarding these rapid changes in genetic testing. It is clear that we are at a critical juncture where we must ensure that those who graduate from fellowship programs are able to effectively utilize, integrate and accurately interpret data from these new techniques. Toward this end, the ABMGG has decided to merge the training of cytogenetics and molecular genetics into a single specialty named “**Laboratory Genetics & Genomics**” (LGG). A proposal for LGG was submitted to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and recently received unanimous approval from the Committee on Certification and Training and will be presented to the ABMS Board of Directors in June for final approval.

LGG training will be 24 months in duration (with no allotted time for research) and both traditional and new cytogenetic and molecular techniques will be integrated throughout the training. The Learning Guide for LGG has now been posted on the ABMGG website at [http://www.abmogg.org/pdf/Learning\\_Guide\\_LaboratoryGG\\_May2016.pdf](http://www.abmogg.org/pdf/Learning_Guide_LaboratoryGG_May2016.pdf). We are finalizing the accreditation application for training programs and timing of implementation. We anticipate that by July 2017 all new trainees will enter an LGG fellowship program and not either CGG or MGG individually.

For diplomates certified in either Cytogenetics and Genomics or Molecular Genetics and Genomics, you will still be able to maintain your certification in that specialty throughout your career. We also are evaluating options for those certified in one of these two specialties who wish become certified in LGG. For diplomates who are presently certified in both specialties, there will be the opportunity to transition to MOC for LGG in the near future.

These are exciting times for all of us as we are challenged to keep up with all of the amazing discoveries in genetics and genomics. We look forward to making the successful journey together with you and will continue to provide you updates on training and certification in Laboratory Genetics & Genomics.

Sincerely,



V. Reid Sutton, M.D.  
Chair



Miriam G. Blitzer, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

V. Reid Sutton, MD, *Chair*  
Aysha Ahmad, MD, *Chair-Elect*  
Robert L. Nussbaum, MD, *Treasurer*  
Swaroop Aradhya, PhD, *Secretary*  
Laurie A. Demmer, MD, *Past Chair*

Dennis Bartholomew, MD  
Jessica K. Booker, PhD  
Michael J. Gambello, MD, PhD.  
Fuki Hisama, MD  
Deborah Krakow, MD

Azra H. Ligon, PhD  
Thomas Prior, PhD  
Elaine Spector, PhD  
Joan M. Stoler, MD  
Gopalrao . N. Velagaleti, PhD

Darrel J. Waggoner, MD  
William G. Wilson, MD  
Linda F. Golodner, Public Member  
Miriam G. Blitzer, PhD, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Sharon B. Robinson DelBusso, MS, *Administrator*