



Policy on Research

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) Research Policy is to guide the development, conduct, and publication of research associated with ABEM examinations and other activities.

POLICY

Definition of Research

For the purpose of this policy, research is defined as any study that will require peer review. This includes any study that is intended to be published in a peer-reviewed journal, placed on the ABEM website after BOD member review and approval, or presented at a conference subject to approval by the sponsoring organization. Other studies to carry on the work of the Board, such as standard setting studies, practice analyses, and predictive validity studies do not fall under this definition.

Eligibility

Three groups of people could potentially conduct research studies using ABEM data: ABEM directors, outside organizations (defined as not-for-profit EM or research organizations, or individuals associated with these organizations), and ABEM staff. Each group has different levels of and channels to data access as defined in the ABEM Research Plan. In the case of competing priorities, the Research Committee will determine the order of resources committed to particular projects.

ABEM shall consider research with the following purposes, in order of priority:

- Validate existing programs
- Make decisions
- Provide information to the medical community and public

Although these priorities will guide the process, ABEM reserves the right to set priorities on areas of research interest.

Submission of a Proposal

When an eligible researcher wishes to conduct research using ABEM data, a written proposal containing the following elements must be submitted to the appropriate ABEM committee or task force:

- Lead researcher, including a current curriculum vita and relationship to ABEM
- Collaborating researcher(s), including a current curriculum vita of each researcher, if not an ABEM director or senior director
- Purpose of the research, research questions or hypotheses, and definition of scope
- Design, materials, and methods
- Detailed analysis plan
- Evidence of base institutional approval where appropriate
- Budget, including direct and indirect costs, and funding source(s)

- Any areas of potential conflict of interest for the researcher(s), including any financial involvement in the project
- Detailed specifications of ABEM data or other information needed for the research
- Timetable for the project, including completion date and expected date of manuscript submission
- Intended publication source(s)
- Intended authorship

Research proposals must be comprehensive enough to allow reviewers to understand fully the purpose of the research, as well as how the data and the analysis plan will achieve that purpose.

Academic Authorship

Authors may include ABEM, current ABEM directors and staff and others contributing directly to the research and publication or presentation.

Copyright

Research requested by an ABEM committee or task force, and research clearly on behalf of ABEM, which is completed by ABEM staff will be considered work-for-hire, and the copyright will be held by ABEM. In all other cases, copyright will be held by the actual author(s) of each written publication and presentation.

Approval

Research proposals guided by this policy will first be reviewed by the Research Committee. The Committee can approve some projects based on the security level of the data. Projects involving data with higher security levels are prioritized and approved by the Committee and recommended to the Board of Directors for their approval.

The rights to approve, deny, or withdraw support of any proposed research rests entirely with the Board of Directors, and are solely at their discretion. Researchers will be given written notice of approval or denial of their proposal within 30 days of the Board of Directors meeting at which the proposal is considered.

Confidentiality and Ownership of Data

ABEM will never share data that could be used to identify individual residents, training programs, applicants, candidates, diplomates, former diplomates, or other study participants.

All researchers involved in an approved proposal must sign and uphold a confidentiality and ownership agreement containing the following elements:

1. All data released for approved research are considered confidential. Only individuals named in the proposal may receive copies of the data, and none of the data may be shared with other individuals or otherwise transferred to another party.
2. ABEM maintains permanent ownership of the data sent to researcher(s). The results of unique analyses of the data will be the property of the copyright holder.
3. Attribution of responsibility for the proposed research and results will be to the researchers named in the proposal, and will not be presented in any way as ABEM policy or information. Publications of the results of the research must include the following statement:

Data for this research was supplied by the American Board of Emergency Medicine. No information was provided that would identify individual residents, training programs, applicants, candidates, diplomates, former diplomates, or other study participants.

The research design, analysis, and conclusions presented here are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily constitute the opinions or policy of the American Board of Emergency Medicine.

4. The Board of Directors understands the dynamic nature of true research and allows for minor variations in stated analyses and design plan. The purposes and scope of the research stated in the proposal, however, must be adhered to and constitute a contract for use of the data.
5. ABEM supplied data files must be destroyed or returned to ABEM within 30 days of the completion of the project or at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
6. The Board of Directors may withdraw support of the research when it perceives a violation of the confidentiality and ownership of data agreement. Upon withdrawal of support, the researchers forfeit all rights to report results from analysis of the data provided.
7. A director may retain ABEM data beyond their term on the Board with annual review and approval by the Board of Directors, if they remain the lead researcher in the ABEM-approved project,.

A data set will be constructed by ABEM with the specific elements requested by the researcher in their proposal.

PROCEDURES

Eligible researchers should submit proposals to the Evaluation and Research Associate Director by March of each year.

ABEM reserves the right to select the formats available for transmission of the data to the lead researcher.

EXCEPTIONS

Ongoing, internal ABEM research activities are exempt from this policy. This includes examination development, quality control activities, and routine Longitudinal Study research activities.

For research completed by staff, the proposal should indicate whether the project is an independently initiated project or work-for-hire.

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