

Drones Help Shape the Future of Rural Hospital Services

Because time and distance are so crucial during medical emergencies, hospitals in rural Kansas, North Dakota, and other states are working with private industry and government officials and agencies to clear a path that would allow drones to autonomously deliver critical medical supplies, equipment, and medicine to rural communities more quickly.

Kelly Hills, a drone technology business in northeast Kansas, is looking for ways to use unmanned aerial systems to help critical industries such as healthcare, public safety, and agriculture. Its CEO, Lukas Koch, contacted Community HealthCare System (CHCS) to gauge interest in collaborating on a long-range drone test flight to deliver medical equipment.

CHCS agreed to participate and collaborated with Kelly Hills and drone manufacturer Pyka, along with the Kansas Department of Transportation, to successfully plan and complete an unmanned, autonomous test flight of an unmanned aerial vehicle carrying medical equipment from Seneca to Onaga, Kansas.

Further information is available at <https://www.agdaily.com/technology/drones-shape-future-rural-hospital-services/>

Phase One of USMLE Service Transition Complete

Phase one of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) Service Transition is now complete. All USMLE Step exam services for students and graduates of international medical schools (IMGs), including exam registration, score report delivery, and USMLE customer service, are now managed by USMLE co-sponsor the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) through its USMLE portal.

The USMLE Service Transition simplifies the examinee journey and creates a more consistent and efficient process for examinees. To do this, all Step exam services will be combined under the USMLE co-sponsors, FSMB and NBME, in two phases.

In phase two of the USMLE Service Transition, Step 3 services currently provided to students and graduates of US medical schools by FSMB transitioned to NBME on January 26, 2026. Once the transition is complete, all USMLE Step exam services for students and graduates of US medical schools will be managed by NBME. The USMLE program will release additional information on phase two in the coming weeks.

Further information is available at <https://www.usmle.org/phase-one-usmle-service-transition-complete-all-usmle-step-exam-services-imgs-now-managed-fsmb>



Number of ABMS Member Board Certified Doctors Reaches New Record

According to a newly released report, a record one million-plus physicians and medical specialists (diplomates) are certified by an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Member Board. ABMS board certification, a voluntary process following the completion of a residency or fellowship, provides an independent evaluation of a physician or medical specialist's knowledge and skills, serving as a trusted credential patients can rely upon when selecting a provider for their health care needs.

"Reaching more than one million board certified physicians and medical specialists is a remarkable milestone for ABMS and its 24 Member Boards," said Richard E. Hawkins, MD, ABMS President and Chief Executive Officer. "It represents the value of board certification as a trusted credential and reflects our diplomates' ongoing commitment to meeting the rigorous standards essential to providing high-quality patient care."

The ABMS Board Certification Report 2024-2025 shows that a record 1,025,104 diplomates are actively certified by an ABMS Member Board. This represents an increase of more than 27,000 diplomates compared with the previous year. This data is current as of June 30, 2025.

The new report offers updated, interesting facts about the ABMS board certification landscape and diplomates, including:

- The 24 ABMS Member Boards awarded 34,619 new specialty certificates and 17,528 new subspecialty certificates.
- The median age of an ABMS diplomate is 53 years, and the mean age is 56 years.
- 34.3 percent of all active diplomates are women, while 59.4 percent are men, with approximately 6.2 percent of diplomates' genders unknown.
- Diplomates within the age ranges of 35-44 years old are nearly evenly distributed between men (46.5 percent) and women (43.7 percent), with approximately 10 percent of those diplomates' genders unknown.

The full report is available at <https://www.abms.org/abms-board-certification-data/#report>