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**pediatric**  
**dermatology** SINCE 1975

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Resort at Squaw Creek  
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May 29, 2018

Thomas J. Nasca, MD, MACP  
President and Chief Executive Officer, ACGME and President and Chief Executive  
Officer of ACGME International  
ACGME - Suite 2000  
401 North Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Dr. Nasca,

I am writing on behalf of the Executive Board and full membership of the Society for Pediatric Dermatology, the Pediatric Dermatology Fellowship Program Directors Committee, and the American Board of Dermatology to ask you, on behalf of the ACGME, to accredit the subspecialty of Pediatric Dermatology. Currently, fellowship training programs in Pediatric Dermatology are approved and accredited by the American Board of Dermatology (ABD). As our specialty has grown and the number of accredited fellowship programs currently stands at 35, the ABD and the SPD have decided together that it is time to apply for ACGME oversight and accreditation. We have worked very closely with Eileen Anthony who has generously offered her expertise, judgment and guidance, to create the attached proposal.

The proposal herein will provide evidence that the subspecialty of Pediatric Dermatology will improve the clinical care of patients and their safety through ACGME accreditation of training in this discipline. Specifically, this proposal will provide documentation on the professional and scientific status of pediatric dermatology. Thank you for considering this request.

Respectfully,

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## **Pediatric Dermatology Proposal for ACGME Accreditation May 2018**

This proposal is based on the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Document, Structure and Function, Page 66, Section 11.20: *Criteria for Designation of a Subspecialty or Sub-Subspecialty for which Accreditation will be Offered*. Effective 9/23/2017.

This proposal will provide evidence that the sub-subspecialty of pediatric dermatology will improve the clinical care of patients and their safety through accreditation of training in this discipline. Specifically, this proposal will provide documentation on the professional and scientific status of the new subspecialty of pediatric dermatology, including at minimum, evidence of the following:

### **A. The history of the sub-specialty and the assertion that the clinical care and safety of patients will be improved through the recognition of the discipline.**

Pediatric dermatology as a subspecialty gained momentum in the 1970s and 80s with the first formal fellowships in the field developed in the mid-1980s. By the early 1990's, pediatric dermatologists began to consider the need for Board certification as a sub-specialty for reasons that had to do with optimization of clinical care and recognition of their special expertise. For example, third party payers (e.g. HMO's) did not recognize the special expertise of pediatric dermatologists in the care of complex and rare skin disorders and pediatric dermatologists were omitted from insurance panels that covered large numbers of children. This, combined with the expansion of knowledge in the field including a journal devoted to Pediatric Dermatology, growth in a specialty society, and an increased knowledge base including care for children with complex birthmarks, genetic skin diseases, severe inflammatory diseases such as atopic dermatitis and psoriasis, and other important skin diseases, led to movement toward the formalization of the subspecialty.

With the support of the Society for Pediatric Dermatology and the American Board of Dermatology, a group of pediatric dermatologists went to COCERT and proposed Board Certification in Pediatric Dermatology. Criteria for sitting for this Board examination, including credentialing for those who had not been fellowship trained but could be "grandfathered in," were created. With virtually no opposition, this was approved by COCERT and a committee was created to write an examination in Pediatric Dermatology. The first such exam was given in 2004. The formalization of Board Certification was a powerful impetus for formalizing fellowship training, because after an initial "grandfathering" period of 5 years, all taking the exam would have had to have been fellowship-trained. The number of fellowships offered in 2004 was relatively small, and the ABD took on the responsibility of overseeing these fellowships, including establishing criteria for curriculum and evaluations. In the ensuing 14 years, however, the number of formal pediatric dermatology fellowships has grown (see below), and the ABD decided that – given its core mission to certify diplomates rather than fellowships – the time had come for other oversight and formal recognition, leading to the current ACGME application. In response to this, the Pediatric Dermatology Fellowship Directors group met and decided via formal vote to apply for ACGME fellowship accreditation.

Formalizing the specialty through the ACGME will create full recognition of the specialty while preserving the designation of “pediatric dermatologist” for only those who have traversed the formally established training pathway and have been certified accordingly by the ACGME. Recognition of the discipline of pediatric dermatology by the ACGME will promote, improve, and ideally optimize the clinical care and safety of pediatric patients with skin disease. The demand for pediatric dermatologists has outstripped the supply for years. Establishing a formalized, certified ACGME pathway will help general dermatology training programs and pediatric dermatology fellowships meet the needs of this population of patients by working to ensure that there are enough physicians with subspecialty training in pediatric dermatology to care for this group of patients in a consistent, competent and comprehensive manner.

**B. The existence of a body of scientific medical knowledge underlying the subspecialty that is in large part distinct from or more detailed than that of other areas in which accreditation is already offered, and, this body of knowledge is sufficient for educating individuals in a clinical field, and not simply in one or more techniques.**

Pediatric Dermatology encompasses the special body of knowledge and skills required of dermatologists to diagnose, treat and manage the congenital and acquired skin and skin-related medical, structural, vascular, autoimmune, metabolic, neoplastic, inflammatory and genetic diseases arising in pediatric patients from age birth to 18 years as well as transitional care of these diseases into adulthood. The existence of this scientific and clinical body of knowledge is related to, but unique and distinct from, the body of science and medical knowledge of general dermatology. Evidence of pediatric dermatology’s dedicated body of science, knowledge and skills is reflected by the presence of a dedicated specialty journal and several dedicated textbooks, reference texts and atlases. These, together with pediatric dermatology faculty in training programs, are sufficient for educating individuals in the field of pediatric dermatology as whole, and not simply in one or more techniques.

a. The journal, *Pediatric Dermatology*, currently published by Wiley, began as a publication in 1983 and is published 6 times per year. The journal covers the scope of pediatric dermatology including rare and unusual presentations of childhood diseases, neonatal medicine, and therapeutic advances.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15251470>

In addition, the major Dermatology journals including *JAMA Dermatology*, *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, and the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* among others regularly feature articles focused on or directly relevant to pediatric dermatology. These journals all have assistant or associate editors with pediatric dermatology expertise.

b. Neonatal and Infant Dermatology, currently in its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

c. Hurwitz Clinical Pediatric Dermatology: A Textbook of Skin Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence, currently in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

- d. Harper's Textbook of Pediatric Dermatology, currently in its 4<sup>th</sup> edition.
- e. Pediatric Dermatology, Schachner and Hansen, currently in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition.
- f. Weinberg's Color Atlas of Pediatric Dermatology, currently in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition.
- g. Pediatric Dermatology: A Quick Reference Guide, 3rd Edition. American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Dermatology; Edited by Anthony J. Mancini, MD, FAAP, and Daniel P. Krowchuk, MD, FAAP.

There are significant differences between the practice of pediatric and adult dermatology in terms of the breadth and scope of the diseases encountered and the importance of understanding and incorporating age of the patient, developmental status, genetic, psychosocial and environmental influences on the presence, expression and natural history of skin diseases. This specialty knowledge translates into implementation of a specialized knowledge base, care principles and approaches, research findings and therapeutics. Pediatric dermatology encompasses principles of general and procedural (surgical and laser) dermatology but captures an entire specialty subset of skills and knowledge needed to care for pediatric patients across the age spectrum from birth, childhood, adolescence and young adulthood. Examples of this include specialty care for children with birthmarks and hamartomas, those with systemic diseases with prominent skin manifestations, genetic skin disorders, and children under treatment for immunodeficiency syndromes or cancer who have skin-related sequelae from therapies or bone-marrow transplantation, just to name a few.

**C. The existence of a sufficiently large group of physicians who concentrate their practice in the proposed subspecialty, including the number of physicians, the annual rate of increase in the past decade in the number of such physicians, and their present geographic distribution.**

In 2004, the American Board of Dermatology (ABD) first offered sub-specialty certification in pediatric dermatology via a formal exam that is offered every 2 years. Ninety (90) pediatric dermatologists were certified with the inaugural exam offering. At present, there are 326 ABD-certified pediatric dermatologists in the United States and Canada. Membership in the Society for Pediatric Dermatology (SPD), comprised of board certified pediatric dermatologists, adult dermatologists who see children, pediatricians, pediatric dermatology fellows and dermatology residents, has increased dramatically over the past decade as well. In January 2008, the SPD had 556 members worldwide (496 active, 57 resident/fellow, 2 associate and 1 life member). As of March 1, 2018, the SPD is comprised of 1,240 members (845 active, 342 resident/fellow, 41 associate, 10 retired, 2 life members) - an increase of nearly 125%.

**D. The existence of national medical societies with a principal interest in the proposed subspecialty, including the number of peer-reviewed journals published in the subspecialty area, as well as how many national and regional meetings are held annually.**

The Society for Pediatric Dermatology (SPD) was established in 1975 and currently has a membership of over 1,200 worldwide. It is the only national organization in the United States specifically dedicated to the field of Pediatric Dermatology. The SPD's mission is to advance the

specialty through education and research, to develop new means of treatment, and to provide advocacy in support of pediatric patients with skin, hair and nail disorders. The SPD has demonstrated stable growth over the past several decades. Active membership is comprised of ABD-board certified pediatric dermatologists, general dermatologists and pediatricians. 93% of pediatric dermatologists currently certified by the American Board of Dermatology are active SPD members.

The SPD hosts national meetings on a biannual basis. The Annual Meeting takes place each summer for 3 days, offers up to 15 CME credits and attracts 400-500 attendees. The SPD also holds a “Pre-AAD” meeting on the day prior to the start of American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Annual Meeting. This program offers up to 5 CME credits and attracts over 300 member and non-member physicians, physician extenders and trainees.

The International Society of Pediatric Dermatology (ISPD) is a worldwide, non-profit, scientific organization formed by professionals interested in promoting Pediatric Dermatology. It aims to facilitate collaborative efforts to improve the practice of Pediatric Dermatology for the general health of children and adolescents. It was formed in 1973 and hosts international pediatric dermatology meetings every four years. The last meeting, the 13th World Congress of Pediatric Dermatology, was hosted by the SPD in July 2017 in Chicago and had 1,200 individuals in attendance. An evolving organization, the ISPD reaches pediatric dermatologists and trainees internationally, especially those who do not have continental organizations such as the SPD or ESPD (European Society of Pediatric Dermatology). The ISPD offers regional meetings as well as a growing amount of educational content on its website.

The SPD’s flagship journal, *Pediatric Dermatology*, is a peer-reviewed scientific publication affiliated with our subspecialty and has a current impact factor of 0.99. In addition, pediatric dermatology subspecialty content is regularly published in other national dermatology journals such as the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, *JAMA Dermatology*, and the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* among others.

The Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance (PeDRA) is the SPD’s research arm, specifically dedicated to advancing collaborative research related to Pediatric Dermatology with the ultimate goal of better understanding and curing skin diseases in children. PeDRA was founded in 2012 and has 230 active members. 55% of ABD board certified pediatric dermatologists are current PeDRA members. Numerous grant and other research opportunities for the subspecialty are offered within this organization, and a dedicated annual meeting provides a forum for networking, research training, and promoting collaborative research. Pediatric Dermatology and PeDRA is also represented at the annual Society for Investigative Dermatology meeting, with a program dedicated to research advances in pediatric dermatology.

**E. The regular presence in academic units and health care organizations of educational programs, research activities, and clinical services such that the subspecialty is broadly available nationally and sufficient to improve the quality of healthcare by providing high standards of medical education.**

Pediatric dermatology is well established within the fields of both dermatology and pediatrics, and pediatric dermatologists are an integral component to provision of high quality healthcare and medical education. Nearly two-thirds (86/138) of dermatology residency programs in the U.S have at least one board-certified pediatric dermatologist on faculty; the majority of those that do not are actively recruiting pediatric dermatologists to join, or initiate, pediatric dermatology programs. There are currently 35 pediatric dermatology fellowships approved by the American Board of Dermatology, some of which are based at free-standing children's hospitals. Most major pediatric hospitals have pediatric dermatologists on staff. Most pediatric dermatology training programs are in departments with active dermatology residency programs and the pediatric dermatology fellows have the opportunity to attend educational sessions such as Grand Rounds.

Pediatric dermatologists at academic centers, within children's hospitals, and in community-based practices contribute actively to medical education about pediatric dermatology within dermatology and pediatrics training programs, medical school curricula, and at local, regional and national educational forums for physicians and other health care providers. Such venues include local Grand Rounds, residency and medical school curricula, regional and society meetings, and national meetings of the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Pediatric dermatology research has been advanced by the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance (PeDRA) which was founded in 2012. PeDRA's mission is to promote and facilitate high-quality, collaborative, multi-site clinical research with the ultimate goal of improving health outcomes for children affected by skin disease. Since 2013, PeDRA has offered an annual conference with education and mentoring activities, webinars and discussion sessions to facilitate new and ongoing research. Both PeDRA and the Society for Pediatric Dermatology fund investigators in pediatric dermatology through pilot and career development grants.

**F. The growth of the subspecialty to the extent that the projected number of programs to be accredited will be sufficient to assure that accreditation is a cost-effective method of quality evaluation.**

In 2006, there were 11 pediatric dermatology fellowship training programs that were approved by the American Board of Dermatology (ABD). As of August 2017, there are 35 approved programs, a **218% increase**.

( <http://pedsderm.net/training/fellowships/abd-approved-pediatric-dermatology-fellowship-programs/> )

In 2009, the Society for Pediatric Dermatology (SPD) established a formal pediatric dermatology match program (<http://pedsderm.net/training/fellowships/pediatric-dermatology-fellowship-matching-program/>) to coordinate the processing, distribution and review of applicants for post-graduate pediatric dermatology training programs. Since 2010, 251 fellowship positions have been offered through the match program and 149 positions filled (a 59% success rate).

Pediatric Dermatology Fellowship Training Match Data 2010-2017

Match Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Registered programs	21	21	22	26	29	28	27	29
Participating programs	18	16	20	22	27	24	22	22
Matched programs	13	11	15	16	21	19	19	19
Unmatched programs	9	6	5	6	6	13	14	14
Positions offered	28	24	28	31	38	35	34	33
Positions filled	18	17	21	16	21	19	19	18
Post-match vacancy positions	10	7	7	15	17	16	15	15
Registered applicants	19	22	23	18	23	25	21	25
Applicant withdrawals	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1
Participating applicants	18	18	22	16	21	22	19	18
Matched applicants	18	17	15	16	21	19	19	18
Unmatched applicants	1	1	7	0	0	3	0	0

**G. The duration of the fellowship program is at least one year beyond the education in the core specialty; and, the education program is primarily clinical.**

The requirements for fellowship training in pediatric dermatology are currently well established by the American Board of Dermatology. Fellowship training requires completing 12 months of continuous full-time training in the specialty and is primarily clinical. All applicants for fellowship training in Pediatric Dermatology must have satisfactorily completed the residency requirements for general Dermatology and be certified by or be eligible for certification by the American Board of Dermatology (ABD). Candidates who successfully complete their training in pediatric dermatology are then eligible to sit for the subspecialty certification examination in Pediatric Dermatology.