



Historical Perspective of the ABR

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Trustee – Therapy Medical Physics



Learning Objectives

- To understand the motivation for the development of professional certification.
- To learn about the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).
- To learn about the early days of the ABR certification of Medical Physicists.

Early Path to Certification

from “The History of Medical Physics Certification” by G.D. Frey, The Beam, March 2020:
<https://www.theabr.org/beam/focus-on-mp-march>

- American Medical Association (AMA) formed in 1847
 - “to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health”
 - have states develop a licensing requirement to keep nonqualified physicians from practicing
 - Federation of State Medical Boards formed in 1912
 - by 1915 most states had good licensing schemes

Development of the Certification Board Process

- Movement to insure quality within the medical specialties
- Driven by quality and patient protection
 - ✓ Not controlled by AMA
 - ✓ Not controlled by specialty societies
 - ✓ Independent of state and national government
 - ✓ Define skills necessary to practice the specialty

American Board of Ophthalmology was First – 1917





1917



Founding Boards 1933

American Board of Dermatology
American Board of Obstetrics and
Gynecology
American Board of Ophthalmology
American Board of Otolaryngology
– Head and Neck Surgery



**American Board
of Medical Specialties**

Higher standards. Better care.®

Development of the ABMS

- Formed in 1933
- To support professional development of physicians by setting standards
- To verify through Board certification that a physician meets these standards
- To provide information to the general public that a physician meets these standards

Development of the ABR

- Arthur C. Christie, President of the ACR, stated the desirability of creating an organization to certify physicians as specialists in Radiology
- 4 major national radiology societies (ARRS, RSNA, ARS, ACR) and the AMA Section on Radiology sponsored the ABR incorporation in January 1934
- Primary charge to provide exams and certify physicians as Radiologists

ABR – MISSION

- ABR mission is to certify that their diplomates demonstrate the requisite knowledge, skill, and understanding of their disciplines to the benefit of patients.
- ABR was founded to protect the public by assessing and certifying doctors who meet specific educational, training, and professional requirements.



Where does *MP* fit
into this?

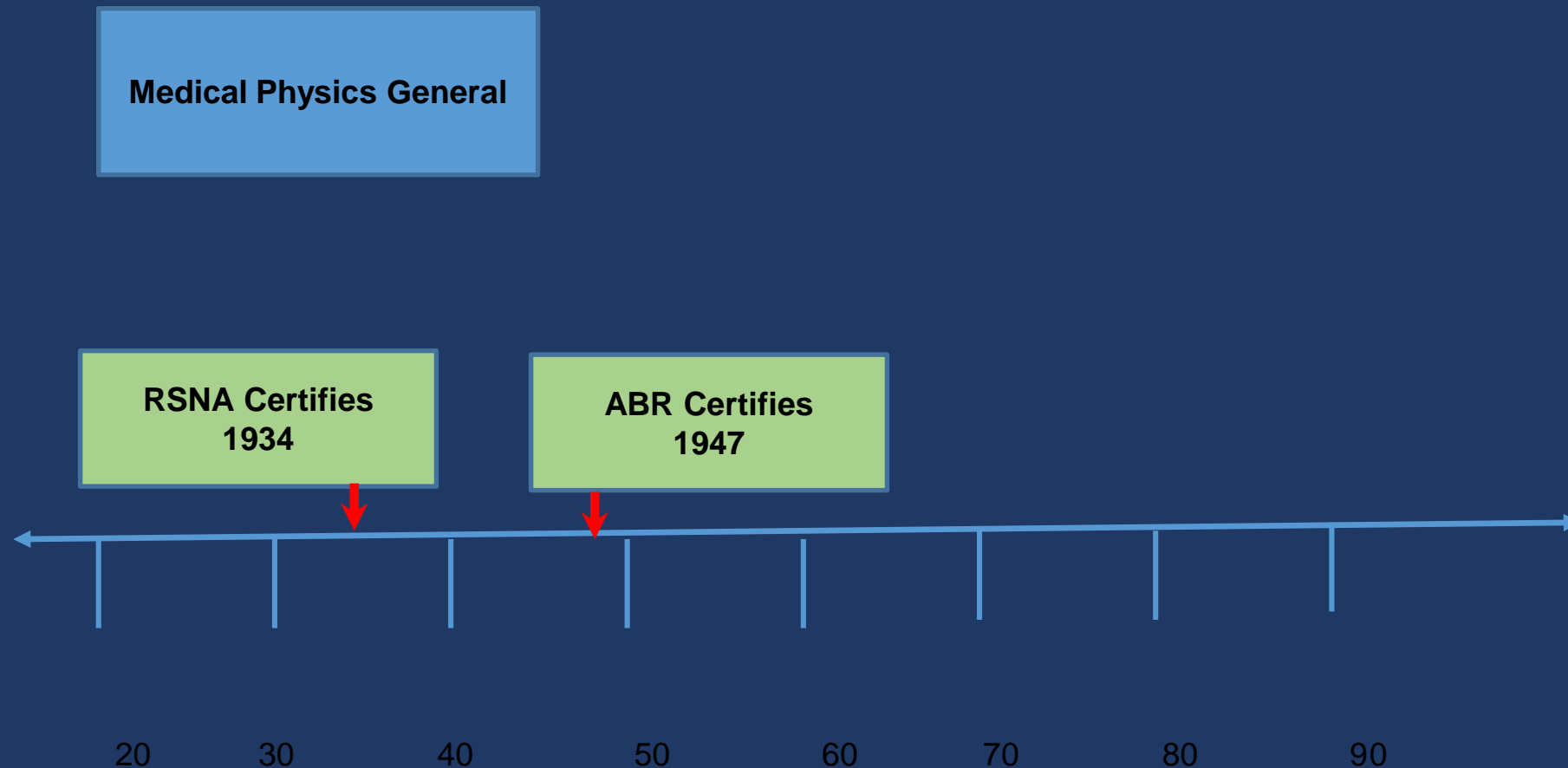


Original Certification by RSNA – 1934

- Need to certify physicists was seen
 - ✓ Critical need for calibration for radiation therapy
 - Teletherapy & Brachytherapy
- Same year ABR was formed
- No AAPM so RSNA undertook the role
- Around 1940 a consensus that certification naturally should be with the ABR
 - ✓ WW II delayed things but in 1947 certification was transferred to the ABR

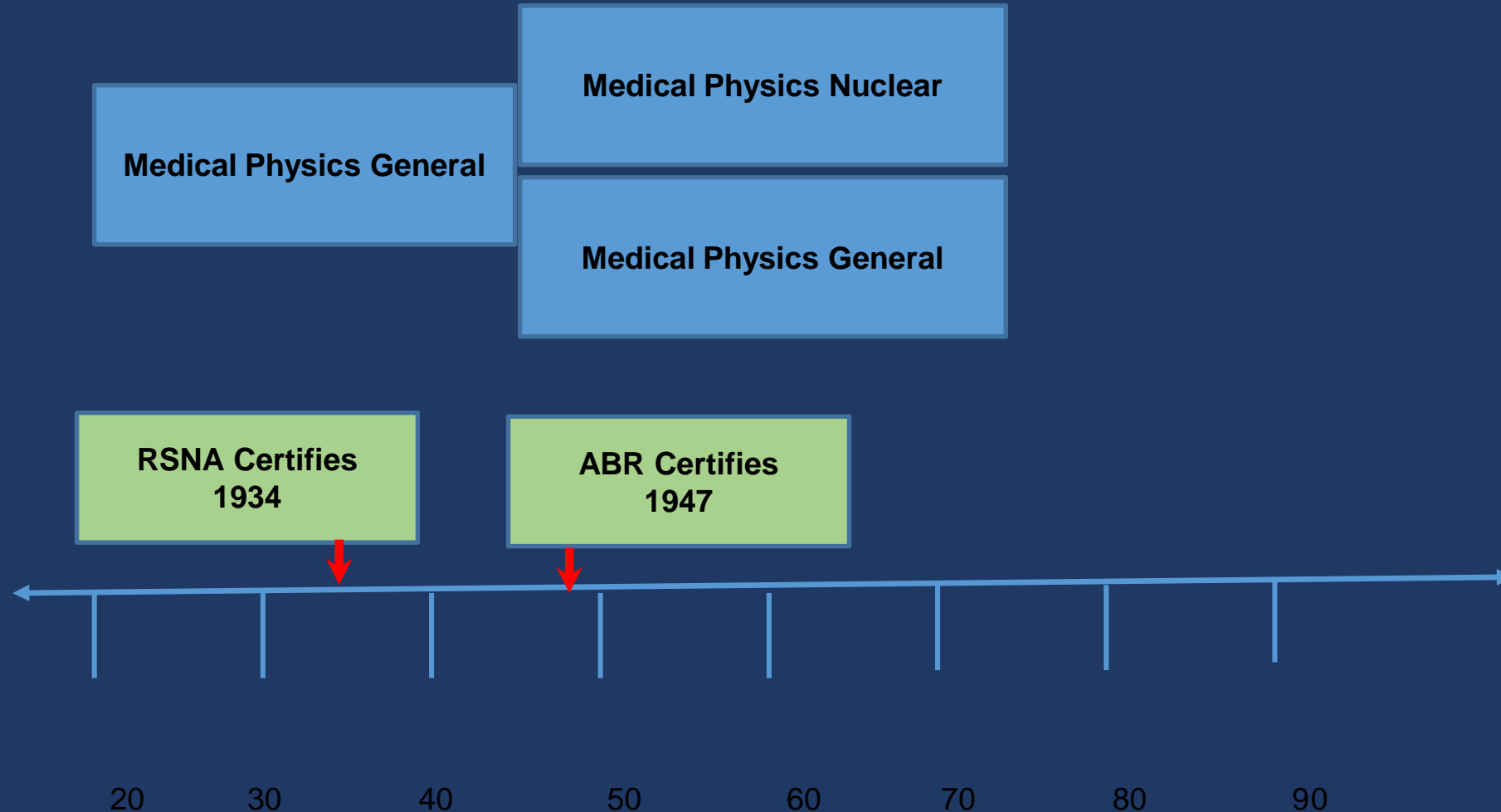
History

In the earliest days physicists were needed for dose calculations in therapy



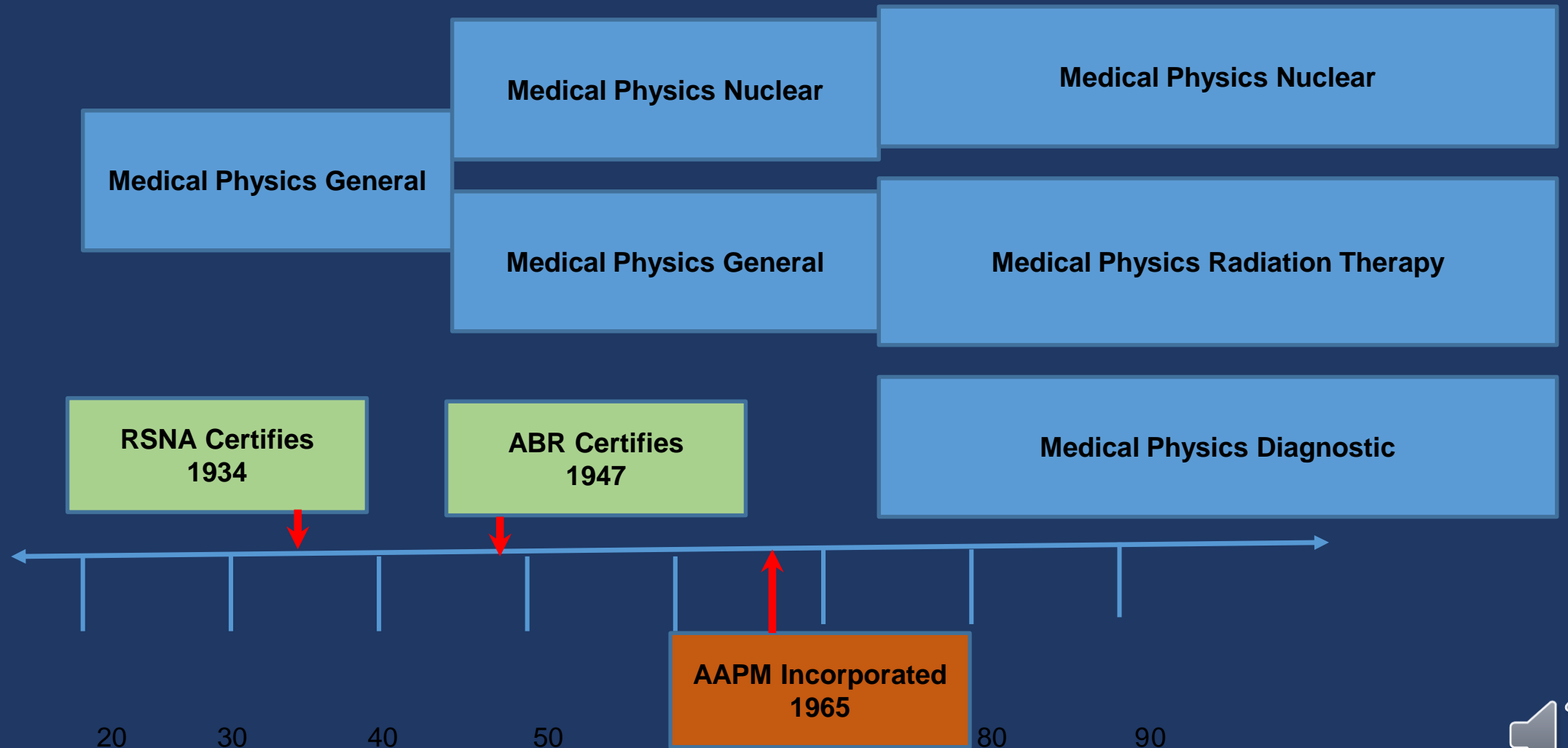
History

After WW II the availability of radioactive material caused NMP to split off



History

In the mid-70's, as both DX and RO became more complex physicists began to specialize in TMP-only or DMP-only



First Medical Physicists certified

November 24, 1947

Certified in 'Medical Physics'

- P0001: Paul Abersold
- P0002: Karl Morgan
- P0003: Marvin Williams

- P0017: Edith Quimby

ABR certifies

- Diagnostic Radiologists
- Interventional Radiologists
- **Medical Physicists**
 - Diagnostic Medical Physicists (DMP)
 - Nuclear Medical Physicists (NMP)
 - Therapeutic Medical Physicists (TMP)
- Radiation Oncologists

In Medical Physics
80% TMP
16% DMP
4% NMP

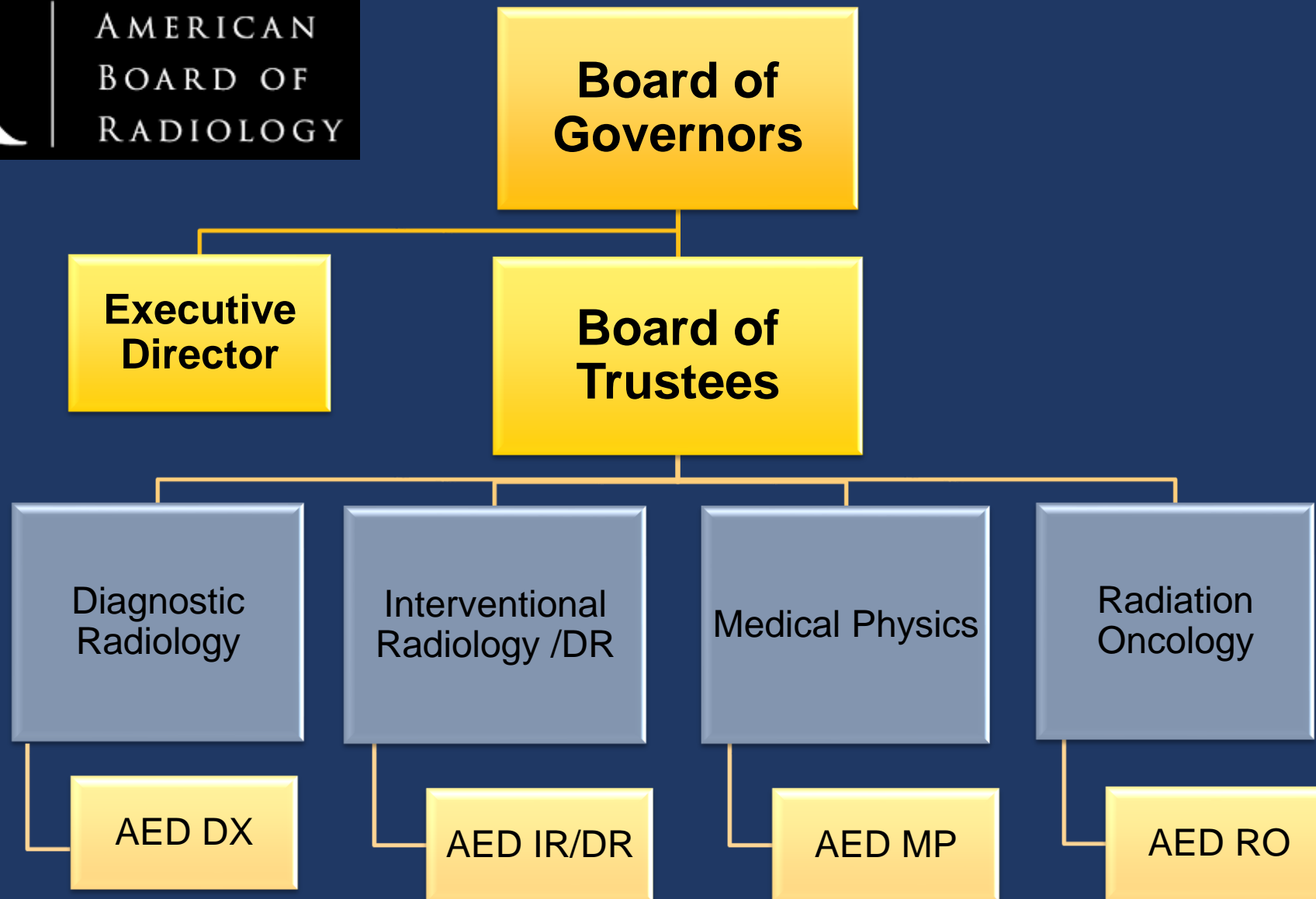
Medical Physics Certificates

- Lifetime <2002
- Time-Limited 2002-2012
- Continuous >2012



Overview and Organization of the ABR





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 - ✓ Oral exam planning
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 - ✓ Internal (e.g., changes that don't affect Diplomates, but help ABR operations, committees, etc.), DR Core, DR Cert
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 - ✓ Presentations: Chapter meetings, RSNA, AAPM meetings, Board meetings
- Review applications for Part 2
- Operational issues (item writing software, modified score sheets)
- Review policies



QUESTIONS?

Please contact an ABR Certification Manager at:

information@theABR.org

or

(520) 790-2900

