

Credentialing and Privileging Requirements For Hyperbaric Medicine Physicians

Principles Intrinsic to Ensuring Patient Access to Safe, High-Quality Hyperbaric Oxygen (HBO₂) Therapy

HBO₂ therapy entails medical risks and should be provided only by physicians with specialized training in hyperbaric medicine and facilities properly equipped and maintained to do so. For physicians, experience in both routine and emergent HBO₂ treatment situations is expected. For facilities, formal accreditation through the UHMS accreditation program a facility accreditation program recognized by the Joint Commission, is expected. A 5-year transition period is recommended to enable all hyperbaric medicine physicians and facilities to meet these certification, privileging and accreditation guidelines. However, during this transition period, patient access to HBO₂ therapy for approved indications should not be limited.

Minimum Physician Training, Experience and Certification

Hyperbaric medicine physicians must possess:

- An unrestricted medical license as required for the location of their hyperbaric medicine practice
- Board Certification in a primary discipline of medicine that reflects local medical staff standards
- Current certification in Advanced Cardiac Life Support
- For each of the following specified categories of practice, advanced training and experience in hyperbaric medicine as evidenced by:
 - **For Supervised and Proctored Practice:** The minimum requirement is one or both of the following:
 - UHMS-Approved Hyperbaric Medicine Introductory Course completion (a minimum of 40 hours on-site)
 - Current participation in an accredited Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine (UHM) Fellowship or UHMS Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ)
 - NOTE:** This is a restricted form of practice. It is expected that physicians in this category will advance in their formal education toward independent practice within five years.
 - **For Independent Practice:** the following certifications are acceptable:
 - **Board Certification or Board eligibility in UHM** conferred by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or the UHM CAQ conferred to Osteopathic Physicians by the American Osteopathic Board of Preventive Medicine.
 - **UHMS CAQ - Hyperbaric Physician** as independently accredited and conferred by Stellenbosch University.
 - **For Medical Directorship:** This category requires the hyperbaric medicine physician's experience and credentials be commensurate with the capabilities and practice patterns of the hyperbaric facility for which they have responsibility. Accordingly, the following certifications are acceptable for these two categories of practice:
 - **Monoplace only facility with practice restricted to non-emergent indications and stable patients without the need for life support or physiologic monitoring.**
 - **Board Certification in UHM** conferred by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or the UHM CAQ conferred to Osteopathic Physicians by the American Osteopathic Board of Preventive Medicine.
 - **UHMS CAQ – Graduate Hyperbaric Physician** as independently accredited and conferred by Stellenbosch University.
 - **Multiplace and/or Monoplace facility with non-restricted practice treating emergent indications with complex, critically ill, ventilated, adult, and/or pediatric patients having the need for life support or physiologic monitoring.**
 - **Board Certification in UHM** conferred by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or the UHM CAQ conferred to Osteopathic Physicians by the American Osteopathic Board of Preventive Medicine.

Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Reappointment

For initial appointment or reappointment, hyperbaric medicine physicians must complete a minimum of either 12 hours of hyperbaric medicine specific category 1 CME each year or a total of 36 hours of CME within the preceding 3-year period. If local requirements or the requirements of certification agencies exceed these standards, the CME requirements of the physician's certification and privileging agencies should be followed.