

**Contact:** Dana Bostrom  
202.741.6450  
[bostrom@mydatacommons.org](mailto:bostrom@mydatacommons.org)

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 9:00 AM EDT, APRIL 10, 2013:**

## **Innovative New Online Tool to Improve Access to Physician Data**

*'Data Commons' will make it possible to gather information from multiple organizations simultaneously*

**Washington, D.C., April 10, 2013**—Several leading national physician education and assessment organizations announced today their partnership to launch the Data Commons, LLC, an information-sharing company and its new system that will allow them to make selected information from their individual databases available via a data hub. The new system, which is expected to be operational during the third quarter of 2013, will save significant time and expense for researchers, policy makers, analysts and others who seek data about the nation's physicians – while facilitating new ways of combining and analyzing data-sets.

The six organizations, which include the American Board of Family Medicine, the American Board of Pediatrics, the Association of American Medical Colleges<sup>®</sup>, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates, the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Board of Medical Examiners<sup>®</sup>, have joined together to form the Data Commons, LLC, a joint partnership that will administer the new system.

Information about the new organization and its services is available at [www.MyDataCommons.org](http://www.MyDataCommons.org).

Available data will include the professional characteristics of physicians and other health professionals – ranging from basic demographics to educational background, training, credentialing, and practice specialty. The security, integrity and custodianship of the data will be retained by each of the individual partner organizations, but will be made available via a shared space, or “commons.”

“The six partner organizations are critically important to the education, assessment, and development of physicians and other health professionals, and they serve as stewards of health care workforce information,” said Data Commons Board of Directors Chair Jim Stockman, MD. “Each organization already provides access to data, but our new collaboration now will make these data much more accessible and impactful for research and analysis.”

“This efficient mode of access to data, and the ability to combine data-sets in new ways, have the potential to advance scientific research, enhance patient safety, and improve medical quality,” he said.

The core of the Data Commons is a data hub that allows multiple organizations to provide selected information about health professionals, consistent with their respective privacy policies, in a highly secure environment. Users of the system will retrieve information from the various organizational databases through the hub, using customized “apps” – the internet-based applications that have revolutionized the use of data in smart phones and other devices. Fees will vary according to the app used for access and to the service requested. Users will be able to gather information in one transaction that previously would have required multiple transactions and fees spread across multiple organizations.

“In an era of ever-increasing complexity in health care, the need for accurate, accessible data about health professionals is critical,” Dr. Stockman said. “A wide spectrum of organizations and individuals seek information, yet the current system is fragmented and organized in silos that limit the application and usefulness of the data available. Simply put, at a time when the volume of information is growing, its usability and accessibility is not keeping pace – due largely to inefficiencies in the system. The Data Commons addresses this issue.”

The Data Commons will continue to work closely in coming months with app developers to offer a variety of ways of accessing and using the information it makes available.

“A growing movement is underway in the United States to address the current data disconnect between disciplines and sectors, with various organizations beginning to work collaboratively to reduce barriers and open new channels of data-sharing,” Dr. Stockman said. “We’re proud to be a part of this effort, and look forward to offering even more innovations via the Data Commons to help make data more useful and, ultimately, to help improve health care.”

For more information about the Data Commons, or to learn more about using an app in connection with the Data Commons, please visit [www.MyDataCommons.org](http://www.MyDataCommons.org) or contact Dana Bostrom, Executive Director of Data Commons, at 202.741.6450.

### **About the Partner Organizations:**

#### **American Board of Family Medicine**

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) is one of the 24 certifying boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Founded in 1969, it is a voluntary, not-for-profit, private organization whose objective is to encourage excellence in medical care. The ABFM believes that its certified family physicians have successfully demonstrated their ability and have proven their commitment to the public, the specialty of Family Medicine and the profession. Through its certification and maintenance of certification processes, the ABFM seeks to provide patients the assurance that its certified family physicians have completed the necessary training/experience to provide quality care to the individual and the family and that this commitment to excellence is maintained throughout the physician’s years of practice. More information is available at [www.theabfm.org](http://www.theabfm.org).

#### **American Board of Pediatrics**

Founded in 1933, the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) is one of the 24 certifying boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). The ABP is an independent, nonprofit organization whose certificate is recognized throughout the world as a credential signifying a high level of physician competence. The ABP awards certification in General Pediatrics and 14 subspecialty areas. Through the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process, pediatricians not only pursue the improvement of healthcare for children but also demonstrate their advanced knowledge and commitment to lifelong learning. Pediatricians who participate in MOC learn how to measure quality of care and effectively improve their practice. For more information about the ABP, please visit [www.abp.org](http://www.abp.org).

#### **Association of American Medical Colleges®**

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is a non-profit association representing all 141 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 51 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and nearly 90 academic and scientific societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 128,000 faculty members, 75,000 medical students, and 110,000 resident physicians. Additional information about the AAMC and U.S. medical schools and teaching hospitals is available at [www.aamc.org/newsroom](http://www.aamc.org/newsroom).

#### **Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates**

The ECFMG® is a world leader in promoting quality health care—serving physicians, members of the medical education and regulatory communities, health care consumers, and those researching issues in medical education and health workforce planning. The ECFMG evaluates whether international medical graduates (IMGs) are ready to enter U.S. graduate medical education programs and offers a variety of other programs for IMGs and the entities worldwide that educate, train, register/license, and employ them. Established in 1956, the ECFMG is a private, nonprofit organization based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To learn more, please visit [www.ecfmg.org](http://www.ecfmg.org).

#### **Federation of State Medical Boards**

The FSMB is a national non-profit organization representing all medical boards within the United States and its territories that license and discipline allopathic and osteopathic physicians and, in some jurisdictions, other health care professionals. It assists these state and territorial medical boards as they go about their mandate of protecting the public’s health, safety and welfare. The FSMB leads by promoting excellence in medical practice, licensure, and regulation. For more information about the FSMB, please visit [www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org).

#### **National Board of Medical Examiners® (NBME®)**

The NBME is an independent, non-profit organization that provides high-quality assessment information to support decisions about health professionals and institutions. Protection of the health of the public through state of the art assessment of health professionals is the mission of the NBME, along with a major commitment to research and development in evaluation and measurement. The NBME was founded in 1915 because of the need for a voluntary, nationwide examination that medical licensing authorities could accept as the standard by which to judge candidates for medical licensure. Since that time, it has continued without interruption to provide high-quality examinations for this purpose and has become a model and a resource of international stature in assessment methodologies and evaluation in the health professions. More information is available at [www.nbme.org](http://www.nbme.org).