

field in which doctors must weigh data coming from many sources: written history, test results, patients and family members.

And although paper charts are fraught with hazards, electronic medical records are not an automatic solution if they are not customized to a specific practice, Karsh said.

From what enterprise could health care professionals learn?

"UPS," he said. The shipping company has engineered a business design in which the shipping of packages can be tracked with pinpoint accuracy throughout the world.

And although no one is arguing that patients are like packages, the concept presents an example of using tried-and-true technology.

### Want to Learn More?

The proceedings of the National Ambulatory Primary Care Research and Education Conference on Patient Safety will be published online this winter on the AAFP DCERPS-PC Web site (<http://www.aafp.org/ptsafety.xml>).

Toni Lapp  
AAFP News Department

### Reference

1. Kohn LT, Corrigan JM, Donaldson MS, Eds. *To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System*. Committee on Quality of Health Care in America, Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 1999.



From the American Board  
of Family Practice

### NEWS FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FAMILY PRACTICE

The *Journal of the American Board of Family Practice (JABFP)* Web site (<http://www.jabfp.org>) is now linked from the [Familypractice.com](http://www.familypractice.com) Web site.

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### MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR FAMILY PHYSICIANS (MC-FP)

#### Questions from the American Board of Family Practice (ABFP) Diplomates

By the time this issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine* has been published, the ABFP will have distributed to its Diplomates an overview of the MC-FP and a Frequently Asked Questions supplement. Those Diplomates who have certified/recertified in 2003 will be the first to enter the MC-FP cycle on January 1, 2004. For more information regarding the MC-FP, please visit our Web site at <http://www.abfp.org>.

Since the introduction of the MC-FP, the Board has received a number of questions from family physicians in the field. Below are some of these questions with answers from James C. Puffer, MD, ABFP executive director.

#### From a Process B Diplomate

**Q** I am curious how Process B Diplomates like me will be able to meet the new MC-FP requirements. I originally certified with the ABFP in 1985 and have subsequently gone the Process B route in 1991, in 1997, and again in 2003 because I practice in an occupational medicine setting. Consequently, chart review requirements have made Process B unviable, as I am not actively managing cases, such as breast cancer or hyperthyroidism.

**A** We are developing unique Part IV components (eg, patient safety, systems-based practice) that will give all of our Diplomates who previously certified