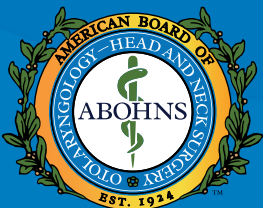


# FOCUS 2030

Building Our Future



*American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery  
Strategic Plan 2023-2030*

## Reflections from the Executive Director

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (ABOHNS), I am proud to introduce this executive summary of our strategic plan. The title *Focus 2030: Building Our Future* accurately reflects the product of an innovative, generative approach to strategic planning that will position ABOHNS to continue providing value to the public and the profession through 2030 and beyond.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder we live in an unpredictable world. To navigate the many uncertainties we may face, plausible future scenarios served as tools to formulate strategies, which were then clustered into five distinct themes. Strategic objectives and needs aligning with each theme were articulated and imperatives became evident. These include certification programs, engagement, professionalism, diversity/equity/inclusion, and innovation. Each of these imperatives spans several strategic themes.

Successfully executing our strategic plan will depend on multiple factors, including deliberate prioritization and intentional sequencing. Acknowledging that the expansive scope of this plan was greater than the typical 5-year duration, the timeline was appropriately extended to the end of this decade.

This was the first time that a scenario-based strategic planning approach was used by ABOHNS. As a learning organization, we discovered several opportunities throughout the process that led to new actions. For instance, interviews with a diverse and inclusive group of external stakeholders provided invaluable perspectives on ABOHNS and board certification. A vision statement was created along with a commitment to organizational values. A summary of the strategic plan was created, widely communicated, and made easily available. These few examples do not fully encompass all the measurable and intangible ways ABOHNS has grown and become a better organization because of our collective experience with this process. We expect implementation will provide further opportunities for organizational growth.

Many thanks and kudos to all who contributed, and especially for being committed to and trusting of the strategic planning process. As a result, ABOHNS will be best positioned for whatever future awaits.

Sincerely,



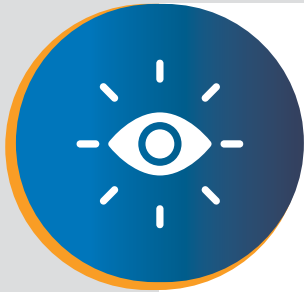
Brian Nussenbaum, MD, MHCM  
Executive Director





## MISSION

*The American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery serves the public by assuring that diplomates meet our standards of training, knowledge and professionalism through initial and continuing certification.*



## VISION

*Elevating Standards.  
Enhancing Patient Care.  
Inspiring Trust.*



## VALUES

### ***Excellence***

*We are committed to promoting the highest standards of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery care.*

### ***Professionalism***

*We are dedicated to ethics, competence, and altruism in addressing the needs of the public.*

### ***Equity***

*We strive for fairness and justice in all that we do.*

### ***Integrity***

*We are accountable to the public and the medical profession for their trust in our certification processes.*

# STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR A COMPLEX AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE

The practice of medicine is at the nexus of powerful and uncertain forces for change – demographic, social, technological, economic, political, environmental, and cultural. How these forces play out in the future and influence the practice of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery is impossible to predict. But they are important to consider, both as background to more immediate decisions facing the American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery as well as for insights into future challenge and opportunity.

For this reason, the Board embraced an innovative approach to strategy development called scenario-based planning. Whereas traditional strategic planning relies on probabilistic assumptions about the future, scenario planning makes no bet on a single, “most likely” future state. Instead, planners consider a set of alternative future operating environments – scenarios – that cover the range of uncertainty they are facing. Planners then forge sustainable, “robust” strategies that promise to deliver meaningful, achievable results no matter how the future turns out. The Board retained the services of a strategy advisory firm called Futures Strategy Group (FSG) to lead it through the process.

The ABOHNS strategic planning process formally launched in May 2022. Several months of intense project work followed, involving the ABOHNS Board of Directors, the Strategic Long Range Planning (SLRP) committee, and FSG. The primary tasks included:

- Interviews with 91 individuals representing the ABOHNS Board, staff and external stakeholders to inform the Board’s 2023-2030 strategic agenda. External stakeholders included (in alphabetical order) the AAOA, AAFPRS, AAO-HNS, ABMS and other Member Boards, ACGME, AHNS, ALA, AOS, ARS, ASPO, AADO, FSMB, Harry Barnes Medical Society, OPDO, Public Members of the ABMS Board of Directors, Society of Military Otolaryngologists, SUO, and Triological Society.
- A two-day strategy retreat in which Board members explored a set of scenarios<sup>1</sup> describing future conditions in health care and medicine. This step yielded an initial set of 39 draft strategies for ABOHNS consideration.
- A workshop “stress-test” in which draft strategies and a set of 10 current ABOHNS initiatives were quantitatively evaluated across alternative scenario contexts.
- Reconsideration of the Board’s mission and vision considering future challenges and opportunities in the ABOHNS operating space.
- Post-workshop, a series of meetings in which the highest scoring, robust strategies were carefully blended and refined.
- Voting on strategy prioritization according to their importance and the relative ease of implementation. This narrowed the set of strategies under consideration from 25 to 13.
- Approval of the final set of 13 strategies in March, 2023.
- Committee work detailing tactics, metrics, and implementation considerations for each of the approved strategies.

Final approval of the ABOHNS 2023-2030 strategic planning executive summary in October 2023 is the culmination of 18 months of focused and intense project work. From start to finish, it has been an expansive, rigorous, and highly collaborative undertaking, the product of which will provide direction and insights to ABOHNS on how to best continue to fulfill its Mission of serving the public to the end of this decade and beyond.

1. The Board wishes to acknowledge the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education for allowing use of its proprietary health care scenarios for purposes of the ABOHNS strategic plan.

# ABOHNS STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2030





## OBJECTIVE #1: EVOLVING ASSESSMENTS

*Assessments are core to the Board’s operations and activities. As ABOHNS contemplates the coming decade and beyond, we expect the evolution of assessments to adapt to public expectations, changes in patient needs, technological advances, and changes in physicians’ scope of practice and practice settings. These developments will challenge us to be proactive in how we carry out our mission – including initial, subspecialty, and continuing certification – and how we define and assess professionalism.*

**To meet this objective, ABOHNS will develop these strategies during the remaining decade:**

### STRATEGY 1

Determine the intention, process, performance standards, competencies, and optimal timing for each assessment in initial certification.

### STRATEGY 2

Develop assessments of professionalism for trainees and diplomates aligned with Principles of Professionalism.

### STRATEGY 3

Explore advanced technologies to improve assessment of technical and cognitive components of surgical skills in the context of initial and continuing certification.





## OBJECTIVE #2: DEVELOPING EVALUATIONS THAT REINFORCE PUBLIC TRUST

*The Board serves the public by developing evaluations that engender public trust in our certification processes. The training of residents and fellows is constantly evolving and becoming more complex. Using formative and summative assessments, the Board will measure the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate skills, knowledge and professionalism beginning in early training and continuing throughout a diplomate's career. Among other things, this would include providing feedback and creating tools for program directors and diplomates to support professional development goals and learning needs.*

**To meet this objective, ABOHNS will develop these strategies during the remaining decade:**

### STRATEGY 1

Evaluate and investigate objective assessment tools to assure appropriate acquisition of skills, knowledge, and professionalism throughout training and readiness for Board Eligibility.

### STRATEGY 2

Establish goals, performance benchmarks and outcomes for continuing certification.

### STRATEGY 3

Identify knowledge gaps and share feedback to enhance performance at the trainee, diplomate, and group/aggregate levels.



## OBJECTIVE #3: ENSURING RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE

*Changes are constantly occurring that necessitate ongoing evaluation of best governance practices. ABOHNS will continue to embrace a governance framework that enables the organization to effectively deliver upon its responsibility to the public and the profession, in a manner that is consistent with our values and endures over time.*

**To meet this objective, ABOHNS will develop these strategies during the remaining decade:**

### STRATEGY 1

Evaluate governance and operations to ensure the ability to recruit, train, and retain diverse, inclusive, and committed volunteers to advance the mission of the Board through leadership development initiatives and demonstrating the value of volunteerism.

### STRATEGY 2

Establish a standing committee to develop and implement consistent standards, policies, and expectations for subcertification and focused practice designation, and provide recommendations to the Board of Directors on sub-specialization.

### STRATEGY 3

Establish a coalition to construct a Quality Agenda for the specialty and incorporate quality improvement into Continuing Certification.

### STRATEGY 4

Determine level of appropriate financial reserves and determine available amount for strategic initiatives.





## OBJECTIVE #4: STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT THROUGH SELF-REGULATION

*We need to continuously earn trust from the public to maintain the privilege of professional self-regulation. We earn this privilege by staying focused on what our patients and society expect from us. To best serve the public, we must be culturally competent in recognizing the diverse populations and needs of those we serve. This will be apparent in our expressed values as an organization and all we do including our standards, assessments, staffing, communications, and relationships with trainees and diplomates.*

**To meet this objective, ABOHNS will develop these strategies during the remaining decade:**

### STRATEGY 1

Engage with the public and develop public-facing systems that demonstrate the Board’s performance in delivering on its core mission to serve the public, and that each of its diplomates is meeting its standards.

### STRATEGY 2

Reinforce our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the benefit of the public.



## OBJECTIVE #5: ADDRESSING THE ROLE OF ABOHNS IN NON-PHYSICIAN CARE

*Increasingly, non-physician providers are engaged in the practice of caring for patients that traditionally have been the exclusive purview of physicians. We will explore the evolving landscape to determine whether the Board has a role in supporting the initial training, lifelong learning, assessment needs, and skills required for effective supervision of non-physician providers.*

**To meet this objective, ABOHNS will develop these strategies during the remaining decade:**

### STRATEGY 1

Explore the needs for assessment and certification of non-physician providers of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery care.

### STRATEGY 2

Explore the assessment needs of physicians providing supervision to non-physicians.

# THANK YOU

*The American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery would like to offer sincere gratitude to the dedicated members of our Board of Directors whose commitment and contributions played a significant role in the development of our strategic plan:*

*Jeffrey M. Bumpous, MD*

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*Kathleen C. Y. Sie, MD*

*Timothy L. Smith, MD, MPH*

*Travis Tollefson, MD, MPH*

*Gregory J. Wiet, MD*

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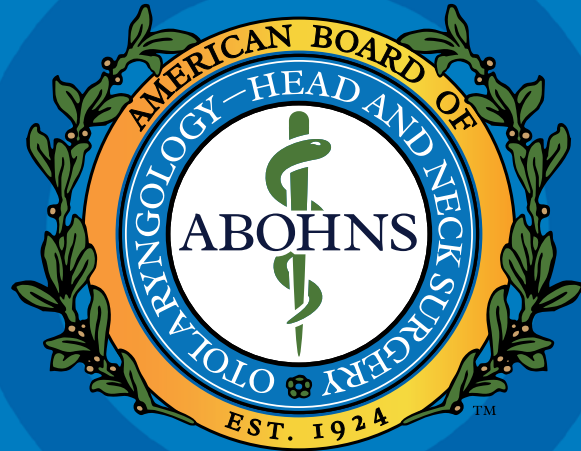
*We would also like to give special recognition to the ABOHNS Strategic Long Range Planning Committee Chairpersons for their leadership throughout our planning process:*

*Jeffrey M. Bumpous, MD*

*Gregory J. Wiet, MD*

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*And special thanks from the ABOHNS Directors and staff to Futures Strategy Group and its Managing Principals Peter Kennedy and Gerard Smith, whose professional experience and innovative approach guided us toward a strategic plan that is responsive to the unpredictability of the future.*



American Board of Otolaryngology –  
Head and Neck Surgery

[www.abohns.org](http://www.abohns.org)