

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS DOCTOR'S DILEMMA® COMPETITION

2027 Rules for Competition

COMPETITION STRUCTURE

The competition will consist of three rounds: Elimination, Semi-Final, and Championship.

Eligibility: All team members must be active ACP Resident/Fellow Members paid through June 2027. Players are eligible to participate in the competition if they are currently residents in an ACGME- or AOA-accredited categorical internal medicine residency training program; preliminary residents in a program and transitional residents in their first year of training are also eligible to participate. Residents in combined internal medicine-pediatrics (Meds-Peds) programs or other ACGME- or AOA-approved combined categorical training programs (i.e. internal medicine-emergency medicine) are also eligible to compete.

International internal medicine residents who have completed residency training may participate only if their training has concluded within 120 days of competition.

Chief residents who have completed residency training and fellows in sub-specialty training programs are not eligible to compete. Chief residents in their third year of residency are eligible to compete.

Teams must consist of three players and consider having an additional fourth player who serves as the alternate.

All team members must be registered for the Internal Medicine Meeting 2027.

First Round: Elimination (Thursday, April 15, 2027)

The Elimination round schedule will be announced in mid to late March 2027 through LeaderNet, ACP Online, and via email to participants and representatives.

Each of the up to 50 teams will compete in a game against up to five randomly chosen opponents. These games will be split between two competition rooms.

Twenty teams will advance to the second round. These teams will include the winning team from each of the first-round games, plus the five second place teams from each game in each room.

Second Round: Semi-Final (Friday, April 16, 2027)

The Semi-Final round schedule will be announced on the evening of Thursday, April 15, 2027, through ACP social media, the Internal Medicine 2027 meeting app, and signage at the convention center.

In this round, each of the 20 advancing teams will compete in a game against up to five randomly chosen opponents.

Five teams will advance to the Championship round. The winner of each of the four Semi-Final games and one wildcard team will advance. The wildcard team will be the nonwinning team with the highest overall score in the Semi-Final round and will be announced the evening of Friday, April 16, 2027. In the event of a tie, the scores from both the Elimination and Semi-Final rounds will be combined to determine which team will advance. If the combined scores are also a tie, the advancing team will be determined by a sudden death playoff immediately preceding the Championship round.

Championship Round (Saturday, April 17, 2027)

The Championship game will host the five teams on the afternoon of Saturday, April 17, 2027 (immediately following the highlights session).

GAME REGULATIONS

Arrival - Teams should arrive 15 minutes before the start of the first game each day.

Game Start

ACP Chapters designate their representative team. Teams may not exceed three players during any round. Teams will be assigned seats on the stage. Each team shares one microphone, monitor, and buzzer. Once the teams are seated, the moderator will welcome participants and invite them to introduce themselves. The moderator will then summarize competition rules, and the game categories will be displayed. Each game consists of five categories with five questions in each, for a total of 25 questions plus one final dilemma question. All questions are written by physicians in ACP's Doctor's Dilemma® Question Development Committee. Before being entered into the competition, questions are subjected to multiple reviews, including peer-review by subspecialist physicians.

Before the start of each game, the team selecting the first category will be chosen at random. The moderator will announce the team selected to choose the first category.

Answering Questions

Once a team selects a question by category and amount, the moderator reads the question.

Please note that the buzzers are locked until the moderator reads the question in its entirety and the question is displayed on the screen.

Once the question is read and revealed on the game board screen, any team can buzz in to answer. The team that buzzes in first is recognized by the software, and that team will be identified by the game assistant. Participants may not answer until their team is identified. That team has 15 seconds to answer. Teams answering correctly retain control of the game board and select the next question.

If a team answers incorrectly, the game board grays out that team's name and the point value of that question is deducted from the team's score. The screen will reset to allow remaining teams to buzz in. All remaining teams have 10 seconds to answer the question. This process continues until

the correct answer is given, all teams answer incorrectly, or time runs out. The game assistant will call "time" when 10 seconds has elapsed if no team buzzes in.

While software malfunctions are rare, the moderator/host has the authority to take corrective action caused by game software or any procedural errors. In the rare event when the software malfunctions in recognizing the team that buzzes in first, the moderator/host will call on the team first recognized as buzzing in. If that team answers incorrectly, the second team recognized by the software will have the opportunity to answer the question before it is opened to other teams.

EXAMPLE: After the question is displayed, Team A is recognized by the software as buzzing in first; the software then jumps to recognizing Team B as the team first buzzing in. If this should happen, the moderator will call upon Team A to answer the question. If Team A answers incorrectly, Team B will be given the opportunity to answer. If Team B answers incorrectly, other teams may buzz in to answer.

Game Scoring

Games consist of five categories with five questions in each category, for a total of 25 questions. Question values range from 10 to 50 points in each category.

The team that answers correctly is awarded the point value of the question. The point value of questions answered incorrectly is deducted from the team's score.

Final Dilemma

After the 25-question game board has been played, teams with positive point values are invited to play the "Final Dilemma" question, which is a wager-based question.

Each team is given a wager sheet and a final answer sheet. When the "Final Dilemma" category is announced, teams write down their wager, which can be up to the number of points the team has entering Final Dilemma. Wager sheets are then collected by a game assistant.

After the moderator reads the question and the question is displayed, teams have approximately 35 seconds to write an answer on the final answer sheet. After 35 seconds (the duration of the "Final Dilemma" music), the answer sheets are collected by a game assistant and given to the moderator.

Teams answering the questions correctly will have their wager added to their total score. Teams answering incorrectly will have their wager deducted from their total score.

GAME JUDGES

Each Doctor's Dilemma game will be monitored by a minimum of two judges. Judges are ACP members with substantial medical knowledge who volunteer to serve in this role. Judges will receive the game questions and answers in advance so they can review the content and make informed decisions during the games.

If a team's answer does not exactly match the acceptable answers provided to the moderator on the official answer sheet, the moderator may defer to the game judges. The judges determine if an answer is acceptable. **The judges' decisions are final. In the absence of a judge, the moderator's decision is final.**

PROFESSIONALISM AND SPORTSMANSHIP

Each team invests considerable effort into preparing for this competition and is eager to show their knowledge and excel in the competition. It is important for each team member to always demonstrate civility and professionalism throughout the competition.

Participation in the competition is an honor, and all contestants are expected to treat it as such. The Doctor's Dilemma competition requires all participants and the programs they represent to adhere to high standards of professionalism and conduct, consistent with the expectations of an internal medicine physician. All team members should demonstrate good sportsmanship and avoid any impropriety (or the appearance of impropriety). To ensure this, all participants in the national competition must follow these guidelines:

- Demonstrate respect and civility to fellow participants, moderators, judges, volunteers, and staff throughout the competition.
- No cell phones, flash cards, laptops, or other devices or papers are permitted on the stage during the competition.
- Contestants and program representatives are not permitted to ask for judges to rule on a question or answer, nor may they refer a question/answer to the judges. Questions/answers are referred to the judges at the sole discretion of the moderator.
- Refrain from challenging a ruling or answer during the competition. Contestants and members of their program may not approach or challenge a judge, moderator, or a ruling during the competition.

If participants, or members of their program, fail to comport with these standards, or demonstrate other unprofessional or unsportsmanlike behavior, the involved individuals and/or team may be disqualified from the competition.

Judges may disqualify any team for exhibiting poor sportsmanship or unprofessionalism during the competition. **ALL JUDGES' AND/OR MODERATORS' DECISIONS ARE FINAL.**

Video recording of the competition is **NOT** permitted.

Due to the implementation of new software some changes, amendments, or modifications may occur to the rules below prior to gametime and will be posted.

updated 7-28-2027