

Dr. Charles Mason sees his board certification as a 10-year extension to practice orthodontics

Dr. Charles Mason of Kalispell, MT, has been practicing orthodontics since 1973. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, he settled in Georgia. A few years later, he moved his practice to Montana. Because of the transition and other factors, board certification eluded him through the years.

“Becoming board-certified was always something I wish I had done,” Dr. Mason said. “But the circumstances never seemed right.”

When the American Board of Orthodontics (ABO) introduced the Gateway Offer, Dr. Mason took the opportunity to become board certified. Earlier this year, he completed the Gateway Certification Examination. He encourages other orthodontists, even those who are nearing retirement like himself, to become board-certified.

“They (the ABO) have made the process more user-friendly,” he said. “If you have ever had the desire to become board-certified, just do it. Once you make the commitment, you’ll find it is not as daunting a task as you may have thought.

“I really enjoyed the challenge. It forces you to look really closely at finished cases.”

Dr. Mason has noticed that he is more critical of his cases and records now. “I learned how important it is to keep good records.”

Dr. Mason enjoys his practice and is able to work half time. “The practice is more fun than work,” he said. However, he is not sure if he will pursue recertification in 10 years as he will be 77 years old then. “Chances are my wife, Carole, will force me into retirement by then,” he said with a laugh. After becoming recertified earlier this year, though, “I kidded with her that I got a 10-year extension on the practice.”