

# **PETITIONER INFORMATION**

**For**

## **ADDED QUALIFICATIONS**

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### **Board of Pharmacy Specialties**

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## **BOARD OF PHARMACY SPECIALTIES ADDED QUALIFICATIONS**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS) is pleased to provide this information to those interested in petitioning the Board to recognize an area of Added Qualifications within one of the Board's established specialties. BPS wishes to provide every prospective petitioner with as much information and background as possible to assist in preparing a petition. Questions may be referred to the Executive Director, BPS, 2215 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20037.

BPS was established in 1976 to recognize specialties in pharmacy and to certify pharmacists who have demonstrated their knowledge and skills in those specialty practice areas. To date, almost 3,000 pharmacists have been certified in five specialties: nuclear pharmacy, nutrition support pharmacy, oncology pharmacy, pharmacotherapy, and psychiatric pharmacy.

The Board and its Specialty Councils have explored, with the profession, how best to handle further differentiation *within* recognized specialties, in view of the growing complexity of the profession and the needs of the health care system. The Board has purposely avoided the term "subspecialty", believing that, in most situations, pharmacy does not presently require, nor could it support, formal subspecialty recognition incorporating separate board examinations, as does the medical profession. Added Qualifications, however, is a designation well established in other health professions which can provide the type of recognition needed by the pharmacy profession in a rigorous, economically feasible way.

### **II. DEFINITIONS AND BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The term "Added Qualifications" is used by BPS to denote the demonstration of an enhanced level of training and experience within one segment of a specialty practice area recognized by the Board. Currently the six specialties so recognized are nuclear pharmacy, nutrition support pharmacy, oncology pharmacy, pharmacotherapy, psychiatric pharmacy and ambulatory care pharmacy. The Board perceives the recognition of Added Qualifications to be a logical, developmental step for a potential specialty in some cases. However, recognition of Added Qualifications does not create a "junior specialty" nor is it a "fast track" to specialty recognition. Specific guidance and examples concerning those areas appropriate for Added Qualifications are provided below.

Attainment of the Added Qualifications designation is a multi-step process, beginning with the submission of a petition to BPS on behalf of a group of at least 25 pharmacists. All of these pharmacists must be currently certified in the same

BPS-recognized specialty. This petition, described in detail below, must provide justification for recognition of Added Qualifications within the specialty.

Appropriate areas for Added Qualifications are those in which practitioners focus on specific diseases or patient populations. Examples include infectious diseases within Pharmacotherapy or geriatrics within Psychiatric Pharmacy. A specific area of Added Qualifications may be requested for more than one specialty when appropriate (for example, pediatrics within Nutrition Support and/or Pharmacotherapy), and there is no limit on the number of Added Qualifications areas within a single specialty. A specialist may be recognized for more than one area of Added Qualifications, provided that those areas have been approved for the specialty in which he/she is certified. Petitions focusing on practice sites or technologies will not be reviewed. Requests for recognition of Added Qualifications in one specialty, for an area of practice that has already received BPS recognition as a separate specialty, will not be considered (e.g., requesting recognition of Added Qualifications in nutrition support for Board Certified Oncology Pharmacists).

If the petition is approved, BPS-certified pharmacists in the specialty will be invited to submit portfolios, which document their enhanced training and experience in the area of Added Qualifications. These portfolios will be reviewed by a committee of the respective Specialty Council in accordance with the specific content requirements and rating scales approved by the Council and the Board as part of the petition review process. Candidates whose portfolios meet the established requirements will be recognized with the issuance of a new BPS Certificate, denoting their status as a “Board Certified \_\_\_\_\_, with Added Qualifications in \_\_\_\_\_.”

### III. CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES TO JUSTIFY RECOGNITION OF ADDED QUALIFICATIONS

The Board of Pharmacy Specialties adopted these criteria in 1996. Following each criterion is a set of guidelines to assist petitioners in addressing that criterion. These guidelines identify specific information, assessments, and documentation which BPS considers necessary to its deliberations.

## **CRITERION 1**

**Describe the benefits society and the profession will receive if this area of Added Qualifications within the specialty is recognized.**

Guidelines for petitioners:

- a. Identify specific public health and/or patient care needs which are being met currently by pharmacists in the proposed area.
- b. Describe, and document with references, how the public's health and welfare may be at risk if the services of practitioners in the proposed area are not provided.

## **CRITERION 2**

**Document how the area of Added Qualifications is sufficiently distinct within the specialty practice area.**

Guidelines for Petitioners:

- a. List the residencies and fellowships currently available in the proposed area.
- b. List other types of currently available training programs or seminars in the proposed area.
- c. List research grants that have been available in the proposed area for the past five years.
- d. Identify specific professional associations (e.g., Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists) or groups within an association (e.g., PRNs within ACCP) which directly serve the needs of practitioners in the proposed area.
- e. Identify journals and other periodicals dealing specifically with the proposed area.

## **CRITERION 3**

**Provide documented estimates for the current and future numbers of practitioners within the proposed area of Added Qualifications, and of the number of these pharmacists who are likely to apply for the Added Qualifications designation.**

Guidelines for Petitioners:

- a. Provide a documented estimate of the number of pharmacists currently practicing in the proposed area of Added Qualifications. Identify the types of practice settings for these pharmacists (e.g. academic, hospital, managed health care, etc.)
- b. Estimate the number of BPS-certified pharmacist specialists who would likely seek Added Qualifications in the area during the first five years in which this designation would be available. Provide supporting documentation.

**CRITERION 4**

**Propose the specific elements of a portfolio review by which an applicant would be screened for conferral of Added Qualifications (e.g., pertinent training and education; practice experience and activities; scholarship/education; professional achievement and recognition).**

Guidelines for Petitioners:

- a. Explain how each element of the proposed portfolio review will discriminate between applicants who have Added Qualifications and other pharmacist specialists.
- b. Propose a rating scale for each element.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERING PETITIONS

The following sequence is a procedural outline, with approximate time frames, for BPS' consideration of petitions for recognition of Added Qualifications.

- A. Petition is logged in and preliminarily screened by BPS staff for completeness. (Within 10 days of receipt of petition in BPS office)
- B. Petition is referred to the appropriate BPS Specialty Council. The Specialty Council Chair appoints a minimum of two Specialty Council members to an ad-hoc petition review committee, which is charged with reviewing the proposal and advising the Specialty Council on its merits. The committee may contact the sponsor of the petition if significant issues arise during its review which require clarification or revision. (Within 60 days of receipt of complete petition in BPS office)

- C. If the Specialty Council favorably reviews the petition, the ad hoc petition review committee, augmented by a minimum of two representatives appointed by the petitioner's sponsor(s), finalizes the proposed portfolio review criteria.
- D. If the Specialty Council does not favorably review the petition, it is returned to the petitioner with explanation and an opportunity for revision and resubmission. (Within 120 days of receipt of complete petition in BPS office)
- E. If the portfolio review criteria are approved by the Specialty Council, the council forwards the petition and the portfolio review criteria to the Board of Pharmacy Specialties. (Within 120 days of receipt of complete petition in BPS office; this and subsequent timeframes may be extended if significant issues arise which require clarification or revision of the petition)
- F. If the Board approves the petition and the portfolio review process, notice of this approval is conveyed to the petitioner and publicly announced. (Within 180 days of receipt of complete petition in BPS office) BPS-certified specialists will also be notified directly and provided with information on the process of applying for Added Qualifications.
- G. If the Board does not approve the petition or the portfolio review criteria, reasons are provided, and the package is referred back to the Specialty Council for appropriate follow-up with the petitioner. (Within 180 days of receipt of complete petition in the BPS office)
- H. Revision of the petition and/or the portfolio review criteria in response to disapproval by the Specialty Council or the Board must be completed by the petitioner, and the revised package resubmitted to the Specialty Council within one year of notification of disapproval. Beyond that date, the petition will be considered to have been withdrawn.
- I. The Specialty Council or the Board shall take action on any resubmitted package within 60 days of receipt of the revised package.
- J. A petitioner whose petition is not favorably reviewed by the Specialty Council or the Board may invoke the BPS appeals process, after opportunities for revision and resubmission are exhausted. (Appeal must be filed within 60 days of notification of final disapproval.)

## V. INSTRUCTIONS TO PETITIONERS

### A. Who may petition

Any group of 25 or more individuals, who are Board certified in the same specialty, may petition BPS to recognize an area of Added Qualifications within a specialty

that BPS has already recognized. Appropriate areas for Added Qualifications are those in which practitioners focus on specific diseases or patient populations. Petitions focusing on practice sites or technologies will not be reviewed. Requests for recognition of Added Qualifications in one specialty, for an area of practice that has already received BPS recognition as a separate specialty, will not be considered (e.g., requesting recognition of Added Qualifications in nutrition support for Board Certified Oncology Pharmacists).

Any group interested in filing a petition with BPS is encouraged to communicate with others in the proposed area who may have an interest in filing a similar petition, to consolidate resources and coordinate information so that one complete and comprehensive petition is submitted for the proposed area of Added Qualifications.

In the event that more than one petition is submitted to BPS for the same area of Added Qualifications, BPS will accept the first complete petition received as the “petition of record”. BPS will refer all subsequent petitioners to the originator of the “petition of record” for support, coordination, and any necessary modification.

#### B. Structure of Petition

The petition should be organized to address each of the Criteria and associated guidelines in the order outlined in Section III. The petition should clearly demonstrate to BPS that the proposed area of Added Qualifications meets the criteria. Petitioners are encouraged to submit all documentation thought to be pertinent to the petition, even if not formally requested. When data are lacking or not available, petitioners should specify when such information might become available. The Procedures and Instructions listed in this document should also be followed. An Executive Summary must be provided as part of the petition.

#### C. Signatures

The petition must be accompanied by no fewer than twenty-five (25) signatures or letters of support from individuals practicing in the proposed area of Added Qualifications. All of these individuals must also be BPS-certified, in good standing, in the specialty under which the Added Qualifications are requested. Provision of signatures indicates each signer’s commitment to applying for this recognition as soon as the petition is approved by BPS. Each signature must also appear in printed format and be identified by position title and mailing address.

#### D. Definitions and Affiliation for the Proposed area of Added Qualifications

1. The petitioner shall include the following as part of the petition:
  - a. Name for the proposed area of Added Qualifications
  - b. Definition of the proposed area of Added Qualifications

2. In submitting a petition, the petitioner agrees to:
  - a. Appoint at least two (and more if deemed necessary by the Specialty council) members to the *ad hoc petition review committee* of the Specialty Council, to assist in development of portfolio review criteria
  - b. Appoint member(s), as requested, to a *portfolio review committee* of the Specialty Council. This committee will be established by the Specialty Council Chair to review portfolios submitted in response to the approval of an area of Added Qualifications and solicitation of applications from qualified specialists.
  - c. Act as the lead agency in promoting and publicizing the availability and value of Added Qualifications in the area.

#### E. Copies of the Petition

The Petitioner shall submit twenty-five (25) copies of the petition to the Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS). The petitioner shall also be responsible for providing copies of the petition and/or an executive summary to all other interested parties, if so requested.

#### F. Costs

1. There will be no filing fee assessed by BPS for submission of a petition for recognition of Added Qualifications.
2. All costs associated with the development and submission of the petition will be borne by the petitioner.
3. All costs associated with producing and providing copies of the petition to BPS and interested parties will be borne by the petitioner.

#### G. Mailing of Petitions

Send completed petition packages to: Executive Director  
Board of Pharmacy Specialties  
2215 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20037

#### H. Further Information

Potential petitioners are invited to contact the Board office with any questions or requests for clarifications of information in this document. The Board's hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am-5:00 pm, eastern time.