

Frequently Asked Questions Geriatric Pharmacy Credential Transition to the Board of Pharmacy Specialties

Last updated: September 25, 2017

NEWS:

--During the week of September 18, 2017, the website at www.cggp.org was redirected to the geriatric pharmacy credential page at www.bps.org. The deadline for registration of the final test window in 2017 has passed. New applicants will now have to wait for the Spring 2018 test window of the Board of Pharmacy Specialties to take the geriatric pharmacy examination if not already registered for the October/November 2017 test window.

--All candidates who registered for the geriatric pharmacy examination in 2017 must complete the examination during the October/November test window in 2017. Candidates who do not complete the examination by that deadline will be required to complete a new application and meet the eligibility guidelines that are in effect in 2018 under the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.

--On July 12, 2017, the Board of Pharmacy Specialties voted to make a change in the eligibility criteria for Board certification in geriatric pharmacy practice. This change brings the geriatric program criteria in alignment with other BPS programs. The number of years of experience remains the same at two years. The new language is highlighted in yellow below:

- Graduation from a pharmacy program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) or a program outside the U.S. that qualifies the individual to practice in the jurisdiction.
- Current, active license to practice pharmacy in the U.S. or another jurisdiction.
- Completion of two (2) years of practice experience (post-pharmacist licensure) with at least 50% of time spent in geriatric pharmacy activities as defined by the Geriatric Pharmacy Content Outline. **Practice experience should be from within the past seven years prior to the application date.

Introduction

The Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy dissolved at the end of December 2016 and transferred the Certified Geriatric Pharmacist credential to the portfolio of pharmacist certifications of the Board of Pharmacy Specialties. The transition is still in progress. As information becomes available, this Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated to provide the most current news.

1. What is the timeline for the transition?

The year of 2017 is a transition year with the geriatric certification examination still being administered through test centers of AMP/PSI, the company used by CCGP. Four test windows were available in 2017 for administration of the geriatric examination. The geriatric

examination will continue to be the 150-item examination used by CCGP through the end of 2017.

Pharmacists who become initially certified in 2017 will not pay the Certification Administration Fee in 2017. Instead, this fee will be billed on an annual basis beginning in May 2018 according to the normal schedule used by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties. The certificates issued to pharmacists who become certified in 2017 will come from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties and will have a seven-year certification cycle. The expiration date will be December 31, 2024 for all pharmacists initially certified in 2017, regardless of which test window is used for taking the geriatric examination.

Pharmacists who become newly certified in geriatrics in 2017, and those who renew their geriatric credential in 2017, will not be able to begin accumulating continuing education credits toward recertification for the next cycle until January 1, 2018. The BPS certification cycle is seven years in length. BPS uses December 31 as the expiration date for all credentials, regardless of the initial date of certification. The extra months prior to January 1 of the official beginning of the cycle cannot be used to accumulate continuing education credits for the next cycle.

By 2018, the geriatric examination should be fully integrated into the BPS structure. The geriatric examination will be administered under the BPS structure with the BPS test company, using the two test windows (Spring and Fall) in which BPS examinations are administered. The geriatric examination will be 175 items, with four-option multiple-choice format. The role delineation study (job analysis) for the geriatric examination was conducted in 2017, so the 2018 examination will have a new content outline derived from the 2017 job analysis. The BPS Geriatric Specialty Council was appointed in June 2017 and will begin work in early 2018.

2. What will the geriatric credential be called?

The Certified Geriatric Pharmacist (CGP) credential became the Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacist (BCGP) credential on January 1, 2017. Effective immediately, Certified Geriatric Pharmacists can use the BCGP designation. Either designation (CGP or BCGP) can be used until January 1, 2018 as supplies of business cards, etc. are consumed.

Pharmacists who certify or recertify after January 1, 2017 will receive a certificate from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties with the designation "Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacist." All pharmacists who earned the CGP credential prior to January 2017 will receive a BPS certificate in early 2018 when the integration of the geriatric credential is complete.

3. How many hours of continuing education will be needed for recertification after the transition to BPS?

The Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy required 75 credit hours of professional development over the five-year certification cycle for recertification through the Professional

Development Program. This amounted to 15 credit hours per year. The Board of Pharmacy Specialties has a seven-year certification cycle. The same equivalent annual amount of continuing education would be 105 credit hours over the seven-year certification cycle. This is being rounded to 100 hours per seven years to be consistent with other BPS certification programs, but the amount of continuing education will be essentially equivalent.

4. Will the same continuing education providers be used after the transition to BPS?

Yes. The American Society of Consultant Pharmacists and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists will both continue to serve as continuing education providers for recertification through the professional development program for geriatric certification. Agreements are in place for them to continue through May 2021.

5. How will the CCGP five-year certification cycle and the BPS seven-year certification cycle be reconciled for existing certified pharmacists?

The transition is expected to be fairly seamless. Certified Geriatric Pharmacists should continue to recertify in the same way as before, either by taking the CGP examination or by completing the credit hours of continuing education for the Professional Development Program. Pharmacists who became certified or recertified before the end of 2016 will keep their same expiration date and remain on a five-year certification cycle. These pharmacists are expected to complete 75 credit hours over the five-year period before they recertify if they recertify by the Professional Development Program (PDP).

Certified Geriatric Pharmacists with an expiration date in 2017 may also recertify by examination or by PDP. Those who recertify in 2017 should pay the \$400 recertification fee and will be placed on a seven-year certification cycle. All pharmacists who renew successfully in 2017 will receive a certificate with an expiration date of December 31, 2024.

6. The Certification Administration Fees are different for CCGP and BPS. How will these be reconciled for existing certified pharmacists?

CCGP charged a Certification Administration Fee of \$250 per five-year cycle (average \$50/year). BPS charges a Certification Administration Fee of \$125 per year for six out of seven years of the certification cycle (average \$107 per year). However, BPS only charges one Administration Fee regardless of the number of credentials a pharmacist holds. Someone who has another BPS credential plus BCGP would pay only one Administration Fee instead of two separate fees.

Pharmacists who hold two or more credentials, therefore, will save money overall with the consolidation of CCGP and BPS. In addition, although BPS has a higher Administration Fee, they charge the \$400 renewal fee only once every 7 years instead of every 5 years. So the renewal fee works out to \$57 per year instead of \$80 per year. For pharmacists with a single geriatric credential, the net difference per year is only slightly higher overall with the transition to BPS.

The Board of Pharmacy Specialties bills their certified pharmacists for the Certification Administration Fee on an annual basis each May. Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacists will be included in this annual billing beginning in May 2018. Pharmacists who become initially certified in 2017 will pay the normal fee of \$125 per year beginning in 2018.

Pharmacists who are due for renewal of their geriatric credential on or after September 1, 2017 will pay the \$400 renewal fee, but will not pay any Certification Administration Fee until May 2018. They will then pay the normal fee of \$125 per year beginning in 2018.

Pharmacists who are currently certified and have pre-paid Certification Administration Fees will be credited for these prepaid funds. Instead of \$125 per year, a lower amount per year may be charged until these prepaid funds are consumed.

7. How do I get information or assistance with questions about the geriatric examination or recertification?

E-mail:

E-mail inquiries about geriatric certification should be directed to: info@bpsweb.org

FAX:

The former CCGP FAX number is no longer functional. The FAX number for issues related to the geriatric examination or recertification is: 202-429-6304.

Website:

The CCGP website is no longer functional. Information about the geriatric examination and recertification is now available on the BPS website at:

<https://www.bpsweb.org/bps-specialties/geriatric-pharmacy/>

Telephone:

Telephone calls may be made to BPS at 202-429-7591 and then will be routed to the appropriate person.

Thomas R. Clark, RPh, MHS, BCGP
Senior Director, Geriatric Certification
Phone: 202-558-2724

BPS Contact Info:

Board of Pharmacy Specialties
2215 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20037-2985
Phone: 202-429-7591
FAX: 202-429-6304
Web: www.bpsweb.org
Contact: <http://www.bpsweb.org/contact/>