Continuing Pharmacy Education (CPE) versus
Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS)-approved Professional Development Program (PDP)

BPS Professional Development Programs
Initial BPS certification is time limited. Recertification may be accomplished by:
  • Successfully passing the recertification examination; or
  • Successfully completing the designated number of credit hours of BPS-approved professional
development program (PDP) continuing education.

The purpose of recertification is to provide a process to assure patients and other stakeholders that a
pharmacist maintains current professional competencies. This is true whether the recertification is
accomplished through examination or professional development program (PDP). BPS has criteria in place
for organizations to become approved PDP providers and regularly monitors PDP providers for
compliance.

BPS periodically issues a request for proposals for organizations to be considered for and approved by BPS
as PDP providers for one or more specialty area recertification programs. The BPS Board of Directors and
Specialty Councils review the proposals to make a final decision on approved PDP provider(s) for each of
the BPS certification programs. The PDP contract period is generally for seven years, and the PDP providers
use a curricular approach to ensure the complete content outline for the specialty is covered over the
seven-year period.

Pharmacist CPE versus BPS PDP
The professional development program used for BPS recertification is significantly different from the
typical CPE credit achieved by a pharmacist for license renewal. While BPS PDP credit is also approved by
the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) and is suitable for use for license renewal in all
U.S. jurisdictions, the BPS PDP is subject to more stringent requirements. See Table 1 below for
comparative information.

Specific requirements for recertification for each BPS specialty, including numbers of credit hours required
for recertification by PDP, are available at this link:

https://www.bpsweb.org/recertification/recertification-by-continuing-education/

A general overview of BPS recertification is available at this link:

https://www.bpsweb.org/recertification/overview-of-recertification/
Table 1. BPS Professional Development Program vs. Pharmacist Continuing Pharmacist Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>BPS-approved PDP</th>
<th>Pharmacist CPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A pharmacist who is board certified must complete approved PDP credits that align with the BPS content outline for a particular specialty.</td>
<td>A pharmacist may claim CPE on any topic; although, some states have specific topic requirements (e.g., jurisprudence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
<td>A pharmacist must use PDP provider approved by BPS and accredited by ACPE</td>
<td>A pharmacist may use any ACPE accredited program provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigor and Quality of CE</td>
<td>PDP providers must meet criteria of BPS and are monitored by BPS</td>
<td>CPE quality and rigor highly variable with multiplicity of providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CE Assessment</td>
<td>Education specialists and in some cases psychometric consultants are involved in development of assessments for PDP program</td>
<td>Often written by faculty with little oversight or expertise in test development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live CE Programs</td>
<td>Assessment required after completion to get credit</td>
<td>No quiz required for CPE – can simply attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability - participant</td>
<td>A participant has only one chance to pass assessment for credit; a second attempt may be offered if a new assessment is administered</td>
<td>A participant may get multiple chances to pass the same quiz for credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability - provider</td>
<td>Credit for program is time limited (6-12 months) to reduce risk of assessment exposure</td>
<td>CPE credit is available for up to three years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>