



## Examination Specifications Pharmacotherapy Board of Pharmacy Specialties

<b>Name of Credential</b>	BPS Board-Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist
<b>Certification-Issuing Body</b>	Board of Pharmacy Specialties
<b>Designation Awarded</b>	BCPS
<b>Level of Proficiency</b>	Specialty Certification
<b>Target Population</b>	Pharmacists who ensure the safe, appropriate, and economical use of medications as part of interprofessional treatment teams in a variety of settings
<b>Program Purpose</b>	To validate that the pharmacist has the advanced knowledge and experience to improve patient outcomes by evaluating, implementing, monitoring, and optimizing of pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic therapy; providing patient-centered, evidence-based therapeutic interventions and information; functioning as a member of an interprofessional team providing direct patient care; and collaborating within an interprofessional team to improve quality and safety
<b>Eligibility Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graduation from a pharmacy program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) or a program outside the United States that qualifies the individual to practice in the jurisdiction</li><li>• Current, active license or registration to practice pharmacy in the United States or another jurisdiction</li><li>• One of the following, within the past 7 years:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ At least 3 years of specialty area practice with at least 50% of time spent in the scope defined by the exam content outline</li><li>○ Completion of PGY1 pharmacy residency</li></ul></li></ul> <p><i>Residency programs must be accredited by or deemed candidate status by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) for PGY1, and International Pharmacy Practice Residency Programs, or accredited by the Canadian Pharmacy Residency Board (CPRB) for year-1 programs.</i></p>
<b>ECO Creation Date</b>	August 2019

**This document serves as examination specifications and certification scheme according to the respective requirements of the NCCA 2021 and ISO-IEC 17024:2012 standards.**

**For more information about the BCPS examination program, please refer to the BPS website and candidate's guide: [www.bpsweb.org/specialty-exams/candidates-guide/](http://www.bpsweb.org/specialty-exams/candidates-guide/).**

## Examination Content Outline

<b>1</b>	<b>Patient-Centered Pharmacotherapy</b>
1.1	Develop patient-centered, evidence-based pharmacotherapy plans
1.1.1	Anatomy and physiology
1.1.2	Disease processes, including drug-induced disease and comorbidities
1.1.3	Practice guidelines, literature, and standards of care
1.1.4	Public health initiatives
1.1.5	Transitions-of-care
1.1.6	Patient-specific data (e.g., exam chart review, labs, allergies, history of drug intolerance)
1.1.7	Social determinants of health
1.1.8	Pharmacology and toxicology (e.g., side effects and adverse drug reactions)
1.1.9	Access to care, including cost, telehealth, and availability
1.1.10	Drug interactions
1.1.11	Pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics
1.1.12	Pharmacogenomics
1.1.13	Non-prescriptive options (e.g., over the counter options, herbal supplements)
1.1.14	Preventative care
1.1.15	Non-pharmacologic interventions (e.g., lifestyle, diet, devices)
1.1.16	Prioritization of patient-specific goals
1.1.17	Principles of shared decision-making
1.2	Monitor the patient to ensure safe and effective pharmacotherapy
1.2.1	Goals of therapy
1.2.2	Response to therapy
1.2.3	Patient adherence
1.2.4	Changes in clinical status
1.3	Modify pharmacotherapy plans through ongoing patient assessment
1.3.1	Principles for escalation, de-escalation, and maintenance
1.3.2	Alternate therapies
1.3.3	Goals of therapy
1.3.4	Response to therapy
1.3.5	Changes in clinical status
1.3.6	Barriers to care
1.3.7	Principles of shared decision-making
1.4	Communicate pharmacotherapy plans to patients, caregivers, and interprofessional team
1.4.1	Effective communication techniques
1.4.2	Health literacy
1.4.3	Cultural competency
1.4.4	Documentation methods
1.5	Educate patients and caregivers on the safe and appropriate use of pharmacotherapy
1.5.1	Health literacy
1.5.2	Educational techniques (e.g., teach-back, show-me)
1.5.3	Barriers to education
1.5.4	Delivery modalities (e.g., handouts, presentations)
1.5.5	Education effectiveness assessment
<b>2</b>	<b>Application of Evidence to Practice and Education</b>
2.1	Retrieve relevant information that addresses pharmacotherapy-related inquiries

2.1.1	Key question identification
2.1.2	Related questions to be considered
2.1.3	Search strategies (e.g., Medline)
2.1.4	Relevance of drug information resources and databases
2.1.5	Levels of evidence
2.1.6	Web-based health information
2.1.7	Primary, secondary, and tertiary literature
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Evaluate pharmacotherapy-related literature and health information</b>
2.2.1	Implications of study design on applicability to patient care
2.2.2	Power effect on study outcomes
2.2.3	Practice guideline interpretation
2.2.4	Disease-oriented versus patient-oriented outcomes
2.2.5	Primary and secondary outcome differentiation
2.2.6	Combined outcome interpretation
2.2.7	Trial limitations
2.2.8	Bias
2.2.9	Statistical versus clinical significance
2.2.10	Efficacy versus effectiveness
2.2.11	Validity
2.2.12	Statistics interpretation (e.g., RRR, ARR, NNT, NNH, CI, HR, p-values)
2.2.13	Pharmacoeconomics (e.g., cost-minimization, cost-efficacy, QALYs)
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Disseminate pharmacotherapy-related information to educate healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers</b>
2.3.1	Tailored content
2.3.2	Effective verbal and written communication techniques
2.3.3	Education effectiveness assessment
2.3.4	Health literacy and cultural competence
2.3.5	Active learning techniques
<b>3</b>	<b>Healthcare Systems and Population Health</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Implement safe and effective medication use systems to improve healthcare system and population-based outcomes</b>
3.1.1	Medication use evaluation
3.1.2	Adverse events/medication error reporting
3.1.3	Surveillance reports (e.g., antimicrobial stewardship)
3.1.4	Local guideline and protocol development
3.1.5	Formulary management (including drug shortage/recalls)
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Utilize technology to promote safe and effective medication use</b>
3.2.1	Medication administration (e.g., insulin pumps, infusion devices)
3.2.2	Management devices (e.g., reminder/adherence applications)
3.2.3	Monitoring devices and point of care tests
3.2.4	Clinical decision support
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Incorporate public health initiatives to improve population health</b>
3.3.1	Immunizations/vaccinations
3.3.2	Preventative health initiatives
3.3.3	Disease surveillance
3.3.4	Emergency preparedness
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Support implementation of pharmacotherapy-related quality improvement projects to foster the safe, effective, and economical use of medications</b>

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| 3.4.1 | Process improvement tools (e.g., process mapping, failure mode effects analysis, plan-do-study-act, root cause analysis) |
| 3.4.2 | Population health management   |
| 3.4.3 | Principles of quality improvement  |
| 3.4.4 | Metrics for evaluating quality, safety, service, and cost  |

**The examination content outline is a product of a job analysis (aka role delineation study) that includes facilitation of discussions with a representative panel of 15-20 subject matter experts who identify competencies required for safe and effective pharmacy practice in this specialty area as well as a validation survey soliciting endorsement of the identified competencies from certified pharmacists in this specialty area. The job analysis process is conducted every 5 years to help ensure that the competencies in the examination content outline reflect current pharmacy practice in the specialty area.**

## Examination Administration and Scoring

<u>Number of Examination Items</u>		Certification Exam	Recertification Exam
1	Patient-Centered Pharmacotherapy	114	65
2	Application of Evidence to Practice and Education	44	25
3	Healthcare Systems and Population Health	17	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>

	Certification Exam	Recertification Exam
<b>Exam Administration Time</b>	4 hours 23 minutes	2 hours 30 minutes
<b>Minimum Score</b>	200	200
<b>Minimum Passing Score</b>	500	500
<b>Maximum Score</b>	800	800

The certification examination is split into two parts with an optional break (up to 30 minutes) in between. Part 1 consists of 100 items (2 hours 30 minutes) and Part 2 consists of 75 items (1 hour 53 minutes).

## Maintenance of Certification

<b>Recertification Requirements</b>	<p>Pharmacists who earn the BCPS designation will be required to maintain their certification over a 7-year period by completing one of the following recertification pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving a passing score on the BCPS recertification examination in their seventh year following initial certification</li> <li>• Earning 120 hours of BPS-approved continuing pharmacy education (CPE) credit provided by the professional development programs offered by the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP).</li> </ul> <p><i>The Pharmacotherapy Preparatory Review and Recertification Course offered by either of the approved providers may only be completed for recertification credit up to two times, in nonconsecutive years, during the 7-year recertification cycle.</i></p> <p><i>Beginning in January 2024, the required number of hours of CPE credit changes from 120 to 100.</i></p>
<b>Ethics and Professionalism</b>	<p>The Board of Pharmacy Specialties ascribes to the belief that certification carries an obligation for ethical behavior and professionalism necessary in all conduct. Candidates or certificants who are found to have exhibited unethical behavior or lack of professionalism may be prevented from pursuing certification or may be subject to suspension or withdrawal of certification, at the discretion of the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.</p> <p>Please refer to the BPS Ethics and Professionalism Policy:  <a href="https://www.bpsweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ethics.pdf">https://www.bpsweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ethics.pdf</a></p>