NUCLEAR PHARMACY
FACT SHEET

Nuclear Pharmacy seeks to improve and promote public health through the safe and effective use of radioactive drugs for diagnosis and therapy. Currently there are more than 400 BPS Board Certified Nuclear Pharmacists.

The BPS Board Certified Nuclear Pharmacist®:

- Has the advanced knowledge and expertise required for the procurement, compounding, quality control testing, dispensing, distribution and monitoring of highly toxic radiopharmaceuticals used for PET scans and other diagnostic procedures
- Prepares medications, troubleshoots problems with scans, and consults on health and safety issues concerning radiopharmaceuticals, as well as the use of non-radioactive drugs and patient care
- Plays an important role in quality control and cost management by thoroughly testing each product before delivery, minimizing error and patient exposure to radiation, and identifying whether a patient is on any interfering medications

To become a BPS Board Certified Nuclear Pharmacist® (BCNP), a pharmacist must:

- Graduate from a pharmacy program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) or a program outside the U.S. that qualifies that individual to practice in that jurisdiction (foreign-trained pharmacists must pass the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee examination); and
- Maintain a current, active license to practice pharmacy in the U.S. or another jurisdiction; and
- Complete up to 4,000 hours of experience in nuclear pharmacy, including a residency accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP); an internship to satisfy requirements of state boards of pharmacy; and experience in a nuclear practice in a licensed nuclear pharmacy or health care facility (up to 2,000 of the 4,000 required hours can be academic hours, including undergraduate or graduate courses in Nuclear Pharmacy, an MS or PhD program in Nuclear Pharmacy, and/or successful completion of the Nuclear Pharmacy Certificate Program); and
- Achieve a passing score on the BPS Nuclear Pharmacy Certification Examination.
BCNP’s are required to maintain their certification over a seven-year period by completing one of the following professional development activities:

- Achieving a passing score on the BPS Nuclear Pharmacy Recertification Examination; or
- Completing 100 hours of continuing education provided by Purdue University’s Nuclear Pharmacy Programs. There are no restrictions as to which lessons in which years may be used to obtain the required number of hours.

Any BCNP seeking recertification must have a current active license to practice pharmacy; and is required to certify that they are not currently under suspension by either the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission or a State Radiation Control Organization.

Becoming BPS board certified enables pharmacists to:

- Provide more comprehensive and complex patient care
- Be prepared to step into pharmacy’s evolving position on the multidisciplinary treatment team
- Improve their standing in a competitive employment market
- Be recognized for their expertise by other healthcare professionals, employers, patients and insurers

Board certification through the Board of Pharmacy Specialties® is the gold standard for determining which pharmacists are qualified to contribute at advanced practice levels. Through the rigorous examination standards mandated by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties®, the BPS board certified pharmacist is uniquely trained and educated to meet the continually expanding expectations of other healthcare team members and the specialized needs of the patients they serve.