BPS Frequently Asked Questions

1.) Why should I obtain BPS certification?

- Gain a ‘competitive edge’ in the job market. BPS specialty certified pharmacists may be eligible for additional job opportunities. Additionally, some employers may require BPS certification for certain positions.

- Demonstrate initiative and commitment to the profession and their area of specialization.

- Perform at the highest level possible. BPS specialty certified pharmacists are prepared to monitor patient therapies in a cost-effective manner that can ensure the best possible outcomes for patients.

- Recognition for specialized knowledge. With more specialization among physicians, pharmacists are often consulted for their specialized knowledge. Additionally, within the profession, BPS specialty certified pharmacists serve as role models and report receiving more requests for consultations and invitations for professional presentations.

2.) What are the benefits of BPS certification?

- Career advancement. Some employers recognize board certification on their career ladder programs.

- Potential for higher pay. This depends on the work environment and healthcare system. In the VA system, board certified specialists may receive a higher pay step.

- Additional privileges. New Mexico and North Carolina Boards of Pharmacy licensed pharmacy certified specialists may apply for specified prescribing privileges.

3.) Do I qualify to sit for BPS examination?

- Graduate of an ACPE accredited school of pharmacy.

- Active license to practice pharmacy.

- 3-4 years pharmacy practice experience (varies by specialty) with at least 50% of time spent on pharmacy activities in your area of specialization (i.e. oncology certification = 50% of time spent on oncology pharmacy activities).

    OR

- Completion of an ASHP accredited PGY-1 or PGY-2 residency (depends on specialty). Some specialties require additional pharmacy experience in an area of specialty after residency.

4.) What BPS exams are available?

- Ambulatory Care Pharmacy (BCACP)

- Critical Care Pharmacy (BCCCP)

- Nuclear Pharmacy (BCNP)
5.) **How do I demonstrate years of practice experience to fulfill eligibility requirements to sit for the BPS examination?**

- The application for examination requires you to list separate twelve-month time periods with a percentage breakdown of the time you spent in each of the domains of the Content Outline for your specialty area.
- The required years of practice experience varies between specialties. For more information, consult the candidate guide (below).

6.) **When are BPS examinations held?**

- Registration/application submission for Spring 2015 examinations will begin January 12th, 2015.
- Exams will be held April 23rd through May 9th (exact exam dates vary based on time of registration). Exam scheduling will begin in mid-March. 2 cycles per year: Spring (mid April – early May) and Fall (mid- September – early October)
  
  i. Spring 2015: April 23 - May 9, 2015
  
  ii. Fall 2015: Dates will be announced

7.) **How much does it cost to take the BPS examination?**

- Certification application fee = $600
- In some institutions this fee is refundable once you pass the exam – make sure to ask your supervisor!

8.) **Where are BPS examinations held?**


9.) **Can I sit for more than one BPS specialty examination?**

- Only one specialty exam per testing cycle
- May be difficult to hold more than a couple of certifications given requirement to have practiced 3-4 years in the specialty.

10.) **What are the requirements for re-certification?**

11.) What else should I know?

- ASHP has developed educational review materials as well as four and ten month study guides to help organize your BCPS preparation. Online practice exams are available from the ASHP website.
  - BCPS 4 month study calendar
  - BCPS 10 month study calendar

12.) Where can I find more information?

- Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS) website: https://www.bpsweb.org/

Information courtesy of BPSweb.org and the ASHP New Practitioner Committee.
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