

Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties

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NEW BPS SPECIALTY COUNCIL HOLDS INITIAL MEETING

(Washington, DC) -- The Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties (BPS), an organization whose purpose is to recognize pharmacy specialties and certify pharmacists' knowledge and skills, convened the first meeting of the specialty council charged with developing and implementing its newest specialty, focused on ambulatory care pharmacy practice. The meeting was held at the APhA headquarters building in Washington, DC on November 14 and 15, 2009. The council is composed of nine members, appointed by the three organizations that petitioned BPS to establish this specialty: the American College of Clinical Pharmacy, American Pharmacists Association, and American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. The members are:

Cynthia Brennan, PharmD, MHA, FASHP

Daniel E. Buffington, PharmD, MBA

Rebecca Wheeler Chater, BS, MPH

Douglas F. Covey, PharmD, FCCP, MHA, CDE

Karen Andersen Grace, PharmD, BCPS

Peter G. Koval, PharmD, BCPS

Terry L. Seaton, PharmD, BCPS

Maria Marzella Sulli, PharmD, CGP

Kimberly A. Thrasher, PharmD, BCPS

The council elected Peter Koval as its chair and Douglas Covey as its vice-chair for 2010. During the meeting, the members received their charge from the Chair and staff of BPS. Following

extensive discussion and review of the results of earlier deliberations across the pharmacy profession, the members agreed unanimously to retain the term “Ambulatory Care Pharmacy” as the name of this specialty, and “Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist” as the title of individuals earning this certification.

Ambulatory Care pharmacists, as described in the petition for this new specialty by the three petitioning organizations, include those who:

- maintain access to patients and foster ongoing, long-term relationships;
- manage complex medication regimens in ambulatory patients;
- integrate care of acute illnesses and exacerbations in the context of chronic conditions;
- capably coordinate care among members of the healthcare team and through transitions among venues of care;
- educate patients and engage in health promotion, wellness, and self-management;
- advocate for patients.

The council also worked with BPS’ psychometric consultants from the Professional Examination Service of New York City to finalize the Content Outline for the new specialty examination, based on results of the role delineation study of ambulatory care pharmacists which was conducted in June 2007. The format of the new specialty examination will follow that of the other BPS specialties, which consist of 200 4-option multiple choice questions divided into morning and afternoon sessions. The council planned an intense item or question development process that will roll out over the coming months with the goal of producing a bank of high quality questions that will test the knowledge and skills reflected in the Content Outline. They will soon be recruiting experts in ambulatory care pharmacy to serve as item writers.

The council's goal is to have a psychometrically sound, legally defensible specialty examination in BPS' sixth specialty, Ambulatory Care Pharmacy, ready for administration in October 2011.

Additional details of this process will be released as they become available.

The **Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties (BPS)** is an autonomous Division of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), founded in January 1976 to recognize specialties and certify pharmacists in specialized areas of pharmacy practice. Six specialties are currently recognized by BPS: 1) nuclear pharmacy, since 1978; 2) nutrition support pharmacy, since 1988; 3) pharmacotherapy, since 1988; 4) psychiatric pharmacy, since 1992; and 5) oncology pharmacy, since 1996. The latest BPS specialty, focused on ambulatory care pharmacy, was approved in June 2009, and is scheduled for its first examination in 2011. More than 9000 pharmacist specialists are currently certified by BPS.
