



## Examination Specifications Nutrition Support Pharmacy Board of Pharmacy Specialties

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Credential</b>         | BPS Board-Certified Nutrition Support Pharmacist                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Certification-Issuing Body</b> | Board of Pharmacy Specialties                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Designation Awarded</b>        | BCNSP                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Level of Proficiency</b>       | Specialty Certification                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Target Population</b>          | Pharmacists who address the clinical status, nutrition status, and direct care of patients receiving acute and/or chronic nutrition support, including parenteral and enteral nutrition    |
| <b>Program Purpose</b>            | To validate that the pharmacist has the advanced knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to optimize the safety and efficacy of nutrition support and the nutrition status of patients |
| <b>Examination Length</b>         | 150 items, which includes 125 scored items and 25 unscored items                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Administration Time</b>        | 3 Hours and 45 Minutes                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>ECO Creation Date</b>          | August 2023                                                                                                                                                                                |

This document serves as examination specifications and certification scheme according to the respective requirements of the NCCA and ISO-IEC 17024 standards. For more information about the BCNSP examination program, please refer to the candidates guide on the BPS website: [www.bpsweb.org](http://www.bpsweb.org).

## Eligibility Requirements

An individual must meet all three requirements listed:

- Graduation from a pharmacy program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) or a program outside the U.S. that qualifies the individual to practice in the jurisdiction.
- A current, active license/registration to practice pharmacy in the U.S. or another jurisdiction.
- One of the following within the past 7 years:
  - At least 3 years of Nutrition Support Pharmacy practice experience after licensure/registration as a pharmacist<sup>1</sup>, with at least 50% of time spent in the scope defined by the exam content outline
  - Successful completion of PGY2 pharmacy residency<sup>2</sup> in Nutrition Support Pharmacy\*

*\*Eligibility claimed via PGY2 completion will not be accepted after July 31, 2028 due to the sunset of ASHP-accredited PGY2 Nutrition Support pharmacy residencies in 2021.*

*<sup>1</sup>All practice experience must be completed post-licensure/registration as a pharmacist. All applicants intending to demonstrate eligibility for any BPS certification examination utilizing the practice experience pathway must provide an attestation from their employer, on company letterhead, that verifies this experience accurately represents at least 50% of time spent in some or all of the activities defined by the applicable certification content outline. In addition, this practice experience must have occurred within the seven years immediately preceding the application. For more information, [click here](#). A sample employer verification letter is available [here](#).*

*<sup>2</sup>Residency programs must be accredited by or deemed candidate status by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) for PGY1, PGY2, and International Pharmacy Practice Residency Programs, or accredited by the Canadian Pharmacy Residency Board (CPRB) for year-1 programs.*

*The rationale for the appropriateness of the requirements for BPS certification programs are based upon the following:*

- *BPS recognizes individuals who graduate from a recognized school or college of pharmacy within the candidate's jurisdiction. Those jurisdictions recognize and evaluate programs on the extent to which it accomplishes its stated goals and is consistent with the concept that pharmacy is a unique, personal service profession in the health science field. In the United States, the responsibility for recognizing schools and colleges of pharmacy falls to the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE).*
- *The rationale for requiring licensure or registration of pharmacists within their jurisdiction is based upon the fact that for public protection, all pharmacists must be licensed or registered. This is considered a baseline requirement to be a pharmacist specialist. In the United States, BPS recognizes the licensure process administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) aims to ensure the public's health and safety through its pharmacist license transfer and pharmacist competence assessment programs. NABP's member boards of pharmacy are grouped into [eight districts](#) that include all 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Bahamas, and all 10 Canadian provinces.*
- *The experiential component is required to help assure practical application of components of the specialty knowledge being certified. There are multiple pathways to meet the practice experience requirement. The faster eligibility pathways recognize accredited residencies through the American Society of Health System Pharmacists (ASHP). The ASHP residency accreditation program identifies and grants public recognition to practice sites having pharmacy residency training programs that have been evaluated and found to meet the qualifications of one of the ASHP's residency accreditations standards. Thus, accreditation of a pharmacy residency program provides a means of assurance to residency applicants that a program meets certain basic requirements and is, therefore, an acceptable site for postgraduate training in pharmacy practice in organized health care.*
- *Passing the BPS pharmacy specialty examination helps assure knowledge consistent with the validated content outline for the BPS specialty.*

*The appropriateness of the BPS program requirements are consistent with the Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy's Resource Paper titled: Scope of Contemporary Pharmacy Practice: Roles, Responsibilities, and Functions of Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians.*

## Examination Content Outline

|          |                                                                                                                       |            |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Nutrition Support</b>                                                                                              | <b>21%</b> |
| 1A       | Normal and Abnormal Nutrition                                                                                         | 12%        |
| 1A1      | Physiology and Pathophysiology of Nutrition (e.g., ingestion, digestion, absorption, metabolism, excretion, appetite) |            |
| 1A2      | Fluid, Electrolyte, and Acid-Base Homeostasis and Disorders                                                           |            |
| 1A3      | Nutrition Requirements throughout the Lifecycle (e.g., pregnancy, pediatric, older adults)                            |            |
| 1A4      | Nutrition Deficiencies and Toxicities                                                                                 |            |
| 1A5      | Malnutrition                                                                                                          |            |
| 1B       | Nutrition Support Formulations and Delivery                                                                           | 9%         |
| 1B1      | Parenteral Nutrition Sterile Compounding (e.g., USP <797>)                                                            |            |
| 1B2      | Enteral Nutrition Formulations                                                                                        |            |
| 1B3      | Nutrition Support Delivery Technology and Devices                                                                     |            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Therapeutics and Patient Management</b>                                                                            | <b>53%</b> |
| 2A       | Treatment Planning                                                                                                    | 18%        |
| 2A1      | Nutrition Assessment                                                                                                  |            |
| 2A2      | Clinical Assessment (e.g., functional, cognitive, physical, laboratory analysis, diagnostic testing)                  |            |
| 2A3      | Pharmacodynamics, Pharmacokinetics, and Pharmacogenomics                                                              |            |
| 2A4      | Shared Decision-Making and Goals of Care                                                                              |            |
| 2A5      | Goals of Treatment (e.g., risk vs. benefit, time to benefit)                                                          |            |
| 2A6      | Social Determinants of Health (e.g., health literacy, access to care)                                                 |            |
| 2A7      | Practice Settings (e.g., critical/acute care, home healthcare, alternate care sites)                                  |            |
| 2B       | Therapeutic Implementation                                                                                            | 17%        |
| 2B1      | Enteral Nutrition                                                                                                     |            |
| 2B2      | Parenteral Nutrition                                                                                                  |            |
| 2B3      | Oral Nutrition                                                                                                        |            |
| 2B4      | Pharmacotherapy                                                                                                       |            |
| 2B5      | Non-Pharmacologic Treatments and Lifestyle Modification                                                               |            |
| 2B6      | Interprofessional Care Coordination                                                                                   |            |
| 2B7      | Patient and Caregiver Education and Counseling                                                                        |            |
| 2C       | Treatment Outcomes and Monitoring                                                                                     | 18%        |
| 2C1      | Therapeutic Targets and Endpoints                                                                                     |            |
| 2C2      | Nutrition Status Monitoring                                                                                           |            |
| 2C3      | Clinical Status Monitoring                                                                                            |            |
| 2C4      | Adverse Events and Complications                                                                                      |            |
| 2C5      | Drug-Drug, Nutrient-Nutrient, and Drug-Nutrient Interactions                                                          |            |
| 2C6      | Adherence to Diet and Nutrition Support                                                                               |            |
| 2C7      | Medication Reconciliation and Optimization                                                                            |            |

|          |                                                                                        |            |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>3</b> | <b>Professional Practice</b>                                                           | <b>26%</b> |
| 3A       | Quality of Care                                                                        | 12%        |
| 3A1      | Public Health and Preventative Care                                                    |            |
| 3A2      | Continuity of Care (e.g., transitions of care, phases of care)                         |            |
| 3A3      | Clinical Practice Guidelines (e.g., ASPEN, SCCM)                                       |            |
| 3A4      | Medication Safety and Safe Practices for Nutrition Support                             |            |
| 3A5      | Ethics and Patient Advocacy                                                            |            |
| 3B       | Practice Management                                                                    | 14%        |
| 3B1      | Professional Practice Standards, Guidelines, Competencies, and Regulations             |            |
| 3B2      | Quality Management and Process Improvement                                             |            |
| 3B3      | Clinical Informatics (e.g., clinical decision support, CPOE, EHR-ACD interoperability) |            |
| 3B4      | Pharmacoeconomics (e.g., reimbursement)                                                |            |
| 3B5      | Research Methods and Statistics                                                        |            |
| 3B6      | Nutrition Information Resources (e.g., Oley Foundation, ASPEN, FDA, ASHP)              |            |

**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.**

## Maintenance of Certification

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Recertification Requirements</b> | <p>Credential-holders will be required to maintain their certification over a 7-year period by completing one of the following recertification pathways:</p> <p><b><u>Option One: Recertification Examination</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>BCNSP with certification cycle beginning January 1, 2023 or earlier:</u><br/>Achieve a passing score on the examination</li> <li>• <u>BCNSP with certification cycle beginning January 1, 2024 or later:</u><br/>Achieve a passing score on the specialty certification examination and report 20 units of continuing professional development (CPD) (assessed CPE can also satisfy this requirement) by the end of the 7-year recertification cycle</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Option Two: Professional Development Program</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>BCNSP with certification cycle beginning January 1, 2023 or earlier:</u><br/>Complete 100 units of BPS-approved, assessed continuing pharmacy education (CPE) provided by the professional development programs offered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Until December 31, 2026:</u> BCNSP must self-report 5-15 per year towards 100 total, with more information available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>○ <u>After January 1, 2027:</u> CEImpact</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>BCNSP with certification cycle beginning January 1, 2024 or later:</u> Earn 100 units, comprised of at least 80 units of assessed CPE from BPS-approved professional development programs and up to 20 units of self-reported CPD (assessed CPE can also satisfy this requirement), by the end of the 7-year recertification cycle. Assessed CPE is provided by the professional development programs offered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Until December 31, 2026:</u> BCNSP must self-report 5-15 per year towards 100 total and up to 20 self-reported CPD units, more information available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>○ <u>After January 1, 2027:</u> CEImpact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>To maintain an active certification in good standing, a minimum of two units of BPS-approved, assessed CPE or self-reported CPD must be reported each year. Credential-holders may participate in recertification from any BPS-approved programs identified for the credential.</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:<br/> <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>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |