

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CREDENTIALING OF PHARMACISTS PRACTICING IN PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CARE:

A REPORT FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SUMMIT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CARE PHARMACY

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Introduction

Currently education of pharmacists and pharmacy students on pain and palliative care is inconsistent in both general practice, as well as the curriculum of professional degree programs. Over the past 20 years, pharmacists' involvement in the provision of care to patients requiring pain and symptom management has grown considerably. Demonstration of expertise in this area of health care through credentialing is difficult for pharmacists due to limited availability of profession-specific boarding opportunities.

About the Summit

The Strategic Planning Summit for the Advancement of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacy was held October 1st and 2nd, 2009 at the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in Edwardsville, Illinois. Made possible by a generous, multi-year grant from the **Mayday Fund of New York**, this meeting sought to bring stakeholders in pain and palliative care (PPC) together in order to reach consensus on training and credentialing of pharmacists in this area of practice. Invitees were identified either individually as thought leaders in the field of PPC or as representatives of interested professional organizations including pharmacy, nursing, medicine, as well as those representing multi-disciplinary pain and palliative care health professionals.

In order to facilitate open discourse and productivity, the summit consisted of six concurrent working groups each charged with separate goals and objectives are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Breakouts, facilitators, goals, and objectives.

Workgroup	Facilitator	Corresponding Summit Goal	Workgroup Objective
Standards and Assessment	Rebecca Finley, PharmD, MS	Increase didactic and experiential exposure to pain and palliative care	Review and recommend standards and assessment methods via ACPE, AACP, and NABP
Curriculum	Mary Lynn McPherson, PharmD, BCPS, CPE	Increase didactic and experiential exposure to pain and palliative care	Review current International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) curricular recommendations as they apply to didactic and experiential education
Post-graduate Residency Standards	David Craig, PharmD, BCPS, CPE	Develop / review standards of PGY-1 & PGY-2 residencies as they relate to pain and palliative care	Develop core and elective standards for PGY-1 and overlapping PGY-2 residencies. Review current ASHP PGY-2 pain and palliative care residency standards
Core Content, Certificate Program	Suzanne Nesbit, PharmD, BCPS, CPE	Improve skills, attitudes, and knowledge base of practicing licensed pharmacists regarding pain and palliative care	Develop core content for EPEC / ELNEC style training program
Specialized Content, Certificate Program	Scott Strassels, PharmD, PhD, BCPS	Improve skills, attitudes, and knowledge base of practicing licensed pharmacists regarding pain and palliative care	Develop sub-group content for EPEC / ELNEC style training program for specific practice settings (i.e. hospital, community, LTCF, clinic based practice)
Credentialing	Lee Kral, PharmD, BCPS	Reach consensus on credentialing for pharmacists with pain and palliative care therapeutic expertise	Review currently available credentialing opportunities for pharmacists and processes for collaboration for Board of Pharmaceutical Specialty petitioning

Current Credentialing Opportunities

The credentialing of pharmacists in specialized practice settings is largely overseen by the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties (BPS). Current profession-specific boarding opportunities are limited to Pharmacotherapy (general practice), Nutrition, Oncology, Psychiatry, and soon Ambulatory Care. Added qualifications to these credentialing areas also include Infectious Disease and Cardiology (a separate examination is not required). Although not offered through the BPS, a board exam for geriatrics also exists. In order to add a new specialty board exam to those offered by BPS, a petition must be submitted from an organization or organizations after which a needs assessment study is conducted.

Two multi-disciplinary credentialing examinations are currently offered which pharmacists may apply to sit for. The first is offered by the American Academy of Pain Management. Upon achieving a passing score the professional is provided Diplomate status within that organization (DAAPM). Recently, a second multi-disciplinary examination has been established available for pharmacists by the American Society of Pain Educators. Successful candidates sitting for this examination results in being certified as a pain educator (Certified Pain Educator, or CPE).

Summit Recommendations

- Petition the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties for primary recognition of Pain and Palliative Care as a distinct area of practice
 - Create a coalition of interested organizations to co-sponsor a petition for the addition of a Pain and Palliative Care Specialty Examination. Organizations to be invited would include American Pharmacists Association, American Society of Health-Systems Pharmacy, American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, American Pain Society, American College of Clinical Pharmacy, and the American Academy of Pain Medicine
 - Identify a primary sponsoring organization for petition submission
 - Identify funding opportunities for role delineation study
 - Commission profession-wide survey to determine interest in taking exam for pain and palliative care and determine critical mass
- Form independent Pharmacy Pain and Palliative Care Coalition
 - Modeled after such groups as Pediatric Pharmacy Advocacy Group and College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists
 - Serve to facilitate creation and maintenance of examination board
 - Development and ongoing provision of BPS licensing examination preparatory courses and materials
 - Petition sponsorship should primary organization not be identified
 - Increased flexibility and responsiveness to needs specific to pharmacists as relates to patient, professional, and public needs