



The Credential

First Quarter 2010

The Mark of Excellence in Geriatric Care

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A New Look for The Credential Newsletter

You may notice that The Credential newsletter has a new look for 2010. CCGP has been making operational improvements over recent months. Among these changes is a new capability to develop and format electronic newsletters that can be sent by e-mail to CGPs from our recently updated and improved database. This issue is the first to be sent using this new technology.

CCGP welcomes input on the new format of the newsletter or other comments or questions you may have. Comments can be sent to: info@ccgp.org

Revised Deadlines for CGP Testing Windows

The CGP examination is offered during four testing windows throughout the year: January/February, April/May, July/August, and October/November. In the past, the registration deadline for each testing window was in the middle of the window. The deadline for January/February, for example, was January 31. Many people found this confusing and this confusion generated regular telephone calls to clarify the deadlines.

To simplify and clarify the situation, deadlines for each testing window are now set for the middle of the month prior to the beginning of the test window. The table below shows the testing windows and the new registration deadlines for each testing window. During the transition to the new deadlines, flexibility will be provided to candidates

Reminder: Please notify CCGP of any change in address or name to info@ccgp.org

AARP Conducts Policy Forum on Geriatric Drug Therapy

CGPs Weigh In on "Avoiding the Polypharmacy Peril" at AARP Roundtable

By Lee Rucker, MSPH, AARP Public Policy Institute

CGPs took center stage at AARP to offer their perspectives on "Avoiding the Polypharmacy Peril: When Less is Often Better, Especially as we Age." Hosted by AARP's Public Policy Institute in Washington, DC, the December 2009 roundtable featured presentations by over a dozen clinicians, academics and policy experts, including:

- CCGP Commission Vice-Chair Eldon Armstrong, RPh, CGP
- CCGP Executive Director Tom Clark, RPh, MHS, CGP
- Nicole Brandt, PharmD, BCCP, CGP



Photo caption: From left to right: Tom Clark, Lee Rucker, Eldon Armstrong, Nicole Brandt.

in registration for the examinations. If you are interested in taking the CGP examination during the April/May testing window in 2010, call the office or check the CCGP Web site for an extension of the deadline.

| Testing Window | Deadline |
|------------------|--------------|
| January/February | December 15 |
| April/May | March 15 |
| July/August | June 15 |
| October/November | September 15 |

Plan Now for the CGP Breakfast at the ASCP Midyear Meeting

The ASCP 2010 Midyear Meeting will be held May 26-28 at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge in Phoenix, AZ. The opening general session will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 26, and the CGP Breakfast will be held on Wednesday from 6:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Since this is just prior to the beginning of the meeting, it is important to RSVP for the CGP Breakfast in advance of the meeting.

The CGP breakfast is a great place to bring colleagues who are interested in becoming a CGP. Information about the CGP program will be available at the breakfast. CCGP will also have an exhibit booth in the registration area throughout the meeting.

Let us know you are coming by sending an e-mail to: info@ccgp.org. Please also indicate how many guests you plan to bring.

Recertification Update: Both Live Workshops to be Offered at ASCP Midyear Meeting

The recertification pathway for Certified Geriatric Pharmacists who are due to recertify prior to January 1, 2013 consists of two elements:

- Completion of 50 hours of online continuing education at www.GeriatricPharmacyReview.com
- Completion of two live workshops: Clinical Update for the Senior Care Pharmacist; and Geriatric Assessment for the Senior Care Pharmacist

AARP's President, Jennie Chin Hansen, RN, has made medication safety one of the pillars of her tenure, and presented the Peter P. Lamy lecture at the ASCP Annual Meeting in November 2008. She and AARP Public Policy Institute Senior Vice President Susan Reinhard, PhD, RN, led much of the passionate dialogue on the peril of polypharmacy, and on policy solutions. Eldon Armstrong, a seasoned consultant pharmacist and founder of the Medication Checkup® Center in Chapin, South Carolina, advocated for what he called the "pill-less concept." He recalled that for many nursing home residents suffering from Parkinson's disease and other neurological disorders, prescription drugs were "their only hope; but many of our patients were being cared for by pills, not people!" While hosting for years a weekly radio call-in program, "Your Family Pharmacist," he soon discovered that his callers most often asked about geriatric issues, and that the best way to address them was as a team. Thus, he regularly invited other clinicians to appear as program guests; currently, most of his Center's referrals come from community nurses and dentists "who are looking for objectivity" and expertise.

During an afternoon policy session examining regulations and polypharmacy, Tom Clark, ASCP Director of Clinical Affairs, referenced the federal nursing home requirements for drug regimen review every 30 days, along with development of a guiding comprehensive care plan for each resident. With patients' quality of life "as a principal goal" of these tools, recommending fewer prescriptions may be the best approach for some patients. However, Clark said, "Prescribers are incentivized to add more and more drugs as they follow disease-based clinical practice guidelines!" While it is well known among clinicians that a larger number of concurrent medicines is directly related to increasing patients' risk of drug-drug interactions, less understood by some prescribers is the effect of older adults' reduced renal and hepatic functions on drug metabolism. The prescribing adage, "Start low and go slow," while wise for dosage guidance, is too often overlooked – until complications result. Unfortunately, by then, the "prescribing cascade" – where additional therapies are added to treat symptoms caused by the existing regimen – is well underway. "Lack of coordination among older adults' prescribers, other health professionals, and caregivers" is often at the root of polypharmacy problems, Clark said. He added that CGPs and consultant pharmacists can play a vital role in bridging those gaps.

Nicole Brandt, an Associate Professor of Geriatric Pharmacotherapy, University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore, shared with the panel the growing opportunities for pharmacists addressing

Both of the live workshops are being offered in conjunction with the [ASCP Midyear Meeting](#) in Phoenix, AZ. The geriatric assessment workshop is offered over two full days, May 25 and 26, and provides 15 contact hours of continuing education credit. The clinical update workshop is offered over one full day, on May 27, and also requires home study preparation prior to attending the workshop. A total of 10 contact hours of CE credit is provided for the combination of home study and live program.

For more details about the workshops, and to register, click [here](#).

Certified Geriatric Pharmacists who are due for recertification on or after January 1, 2013 will not be required to take the live workshops. The full 75 hours of credit required for recertification will be available online in sufficient time for these CGPs to complete the recertification requirements without the live workshops.

For more details about recertification, check this [page](#).

Micah J. Sobota Receives 2009 Excellence in Geriatric Pharmacy Practice Award

The CCGP Excellence in Geriatric Pharmacy Practice Award recognizes the board certified geriatric pharmacist who fosters the principles of good pharmacy practice; demonstrates excellence in geriatric patient care; and promotes the value and rigorous standards established by CCGP.

Dr. Micah J. Sobota, PharmD, CGP, is the recipient of this award for 2009. Dr. Sobota earned his doctor of pharmacy degree in 2004 from Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio. He completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Huntington, West Virginia in 2005. He is currently Clinical Pharmacist at St. Rita's Medical Center in Lima, Ohio, an Assistant Clinical Professor with Ohio Northern University and provides consulting services to various agencies in Lima, Ohio.

Dr. Sobota's practice includes direct patient care while rounding on the geriatric-psychiatry inpatient unit and in an ambulatory care setting as a consultant. The ambulatory care clinics involve pharmacists in medication management for anticoagulation, heart failure, diabetes, tobacco cessation, and asthma. Dr. Sobota also participated

polypharmacy by noting the updated Maryland regulations governing review of assisted living (AL) residents' medications, found at:

http://www.dhmd.state.md.us/ohcq/regulated_programs/al_regulations.htm

A pharmacist must conduct an extensive review every six months, but only for residents who are taking at least nine medications (prescription and/or non-prescription medicines, and as-needed medicines). Less comprehensive reviews, required for each new resident within 14 days of entering AL, can be performed by prescribers, a nurse midwife, registered nurse, or a pharmacist. "We have a frail population in assisted living, with multiple prescriptions, and taking lots of high-risk medications," Brandt said. Despite the high bar for direct pharmacist involvement (in terms of minimum number of medicines and twice-annual frequency) set by these regulations, she cautioned, "We can continue to practice in a silo," or we can "break down interdisciplinary barriers and coordinate across care delivery teams."

The University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Pharmacy, as part of a geriatric education consortium, has offered a series of webinars <http://geri-ed.umaryland.edu/> focusing on medication management in assisted living. "We need to heighten awareness of existing policies – such as these Maryland regulations that took effect in December 2008 – and then as policy becomes stagnant, we have to revisit it and continue to advocate for pharmacists' involvement," Brandt said.

Some other speakers who addressed the polypharmacy roundtable included Michael Steinman, MD, UCSF Division of Geriatrics; William Shrank, MD, MSHS, Harvard Medical School; Dorothy Jackson, PhD, RN, Texas Tech University School of Nursing; and Marissa Schlaifer, RPh, MS, Pharmacy Affairs Director at the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy. The program was organized by CCGP Commissioner N. Lee Rucker, MSPH, of AARP's Public Policy Institute. A related policy paper is under development at AARP.

Updated Version of CGP Candidate Handbook is Released

The [Candidate Handbook](#) for pharmacists interested in becoming a Certified Geriatric Pharmacist has been updated and revised. The newly updated handbook can be downloaded from the CCGP Web site.

in establishing an interdisciplinary Parkinson's clinic at St. Rita's Medical Center. He directly credits his board certification in geriatrics as the reason he was selected to work directly with the attending physician, Dr. Mary Ann Myers, in the Parkinson's clinic.

Dr. Sobota was presented with the CCGP Excellence in Geriatric Pharmacy Practice Award during the opening general session of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California. Dr. Thomas Lackner, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of CCGP, presented the award. "Dr. Sobota's contribution to the profession, his devotion to quality senior care for his patients and his dedication to the Commission certainly have earned him this recognition and award," said Lackner.

160 Pharmacists Achieve Board Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy

Between July 1 and December 31, 2009, 160 pharmacists successfully completed the certification examination in geriatric pharmacy for the first time, or recertified by either re-taking the examination or completing the Professional Development Program (PDP).

Congratulations to:

New CGPs

Johnson Abraham
Elena Abramova
Barbara A. Archual
Julia E. Austen
Danielle Backers
Namju Bang
Lauren M. Beam
Manju T. Beier
Min Hui Braden
Karen A. Brainard
Zhiva K. Brown
Luigi Brunetti
Susan A. Brzozowski
Timothy M. Burkart
Colleen C. Cairncross
Alan Carter
Colleen A. Catalano
Brenda N. Chamachourdjian
Suk Luen Cheuk
Chris R. Chilibeck
Timothy W. Cutler
Christie C. DeBruhl
Betty N. Do
Elizabeth Sebranek Evans
Kenneth J. Fabbrini, Jr.

Recertified

Noris D. Babb
Sharon B. Bielenda-Dybic
William A. Bill
Marvin B. Byard
Kimberly A. Cauthon
Creaque V. Charles
Judith A. Chioli
Marko Cichanowsky
Cynthia Cloud
David A. Cousino
Iadelisse Cruz-Gonzalez
Greg D'Amour
Martin G. DeFlorio
Denver A. DeHaven
George G. Demos
Linda G. Donovan
Heather R. Eaton-Erskine
Lisa R. Erwin
Nicole T. Fabre-LaCoste
Kristin M. Fahhoum
Kirsten D. Fanning Parker
Shirley Fender
Sandra J. Fetzer
Tina L. Fiebelkorn
Richard B. Foley

New Geriatric Pharmacotherapy Resource Page on CCGP.org

CCGP has created a Web page with links to a variety of resources related to geriatric drug therapy. This resource should be very helpful for pharmacists interested in learning about geriatric drug therapy or preparing for the CGP examination. Current CGPs may also find these resources helpful in their work. Check out this new [Web page](#) and tell colleagues if you find it useful.

Board Member Spotlight—Jag Khatter, Secretary-Treasurer of CCGP



My name is Jag Khatter and I have been a senior care pharmacist since 1990. I am also proud to be a Certified Geriatric Pharmacist (CGP) since 2003 and have served as a CGP member of the Board of Commissioners for the last two

years. During my pharmacy school years (a long time ago), I was fortunate to do my clinical rotations in the long-term care setting and absolutely fell in love with taking care of seniors. As my career progressed through many pharmacy practice settings, so did my passion for geriatrics.

When I was practicing in an assisted living setting, I was alarmed by the number and types of medications taken by my residents. I was often challenged with complex medication regimens and was looking to enhance my knowledge and expertise in geriatrics. Finally, I took the plunge and became a Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacist.

As pharmacists in every practice setting, we play vital roles in improving clinical, economic and quality of life outcomes for the patients we serve. I believe that having a CGP certification has definitely provided me with greater opportunities to do just that.

Preparing for certification certainly required some effort. A CCGP (Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy) Self Assessment Examination (SAE) was very useful in identifying the areas where I needed additional education. Online courses offered by ASCP at

Erica J. Filby
Richard R. Finley
Cheryl A. Foley
Lauren A. Foyle
Dana R. Frank
Joseph C. Gerber III
Jane Giang
Liancy A. Gomez
Alexander P. Gordon
Debora A. Gysler
Marypat T. Habermas
Emad Ibrahim M. Hammouda
George F. Hample
Ted E. Hancock
Stacy M. Hargrove
D. Elaine Harrington
Florence Henderson
Vanessa K. Hoffman
Alan C. Holladay
Helen Hsiao
Gregory J. Hughes
Karin N. Huston
Anthony S. Jackson
Chetak Jain
Sarah Hwami Jang
Kenneth W. Keever
Aleksandr Khavkin
Diane Klueppel
Nancy I. Lande
Mary Laucka
Alan Lukazewski
Nora L. MacLeod-Glover
Hina Marsonia
Claire L. McCormack
Alana L. McGill
Kim P. Meadows
Michele A. Medina
Manuela Moldovan
Antoinet L. Moore
Michael T. Moore
Gary L. Newman
James K. Oplanick
Rebecca K. Pang
Eliana Parente
Bhairvi A. Patel
Maureen L. Pulliam
Tammy S. Radcliff
Dusty J. Read
Sajal K. Roy
Doreen Rushbrook
Mohamed K. Sadek
Jeffrey H. Schrier
Jennifer Nikki Shaw
Svetlana Starikova
Lisa P. Sterling
David F. Stitt
Brian J. Strang
Wisam Jamal Sweileh
Etemad A. Talaat
Josephine D. Tefferi
Lona C. Thornhill

Shweta Galway
Lucia M. Garcia
Daniel Breeze Gerson
Mark N. Gravdal
Susan Hamel
James C. Hammett
M. Jane Huff
William P. Liu
Robert L. Maher
Gina P. McKnight-Smith
Debbie R. Mulanix
Empsy M.W. Munden
Michelle Munoz Li
Patricia B. Naro
Sharon A. Kennedy-Norris
Christine K. O'Neil
Arin R. Passmore
Jamie L. Pope
Patricia A. Pracsovics
Terry Read
Richard C. Sachan
Richard M. Schutzenhofer
Mary E. Scott
Gregory B. Siegel
William Simonson
Richard L. Smith
Kathryn N. Spinniken
Mark A. Stratton
J. Steven Teal
Steve E. Thomas
Christopher J. Thomas
Ivete Tucker
D. Michaëlle Wolfe Scelfo
Barbara J. Zarowitz

www.geriatricpharmacyreview.com were like having your own personal tutor. Overall the process was relatively simple and well worth it.

On November 9, 2007, I received a letter from Wayne Atkinson RPh, CGP and Chair of CCGP announcing that I had been elected to the CCGP Board of Commissioners. The letter truly made my day and I still have it saved. There is no better privilege in my mind than to serve your profession and your professional organization. The last two years have been full of learning from the other commissioners and from many other inspiring leaders of our organization. I encourage all of you to please get involved with ASCP/CCGP. The time is now and the person who can impact the future is you!

Leadership Transitions at CCGP

Leadership transitions for CCGP took place in November 2009. CCGP offers congratulations to newly elected or appointed leadership members and thanks those who have completed terms of service to CCGP.

Wayne Atkinson rotated off the Board of Commissioners after years of service, including a term as Chairman of the Board. Thomas Lackner moved from the position of Vice-Chair to Chairman of the Board for 2009-2010. M. Jane Huff moved from Chair to Immediate Past Chair. Eldon Armstrong moved from Secretary/Treasurer to Vice-Chair. Jag Khatter was elected by the Board to become the new Secretary/Treasurer.

Sean Jeffrey, who had been the ASCP Board Liaison to the CCGP Board, was replaced by Martha M. Little. Chris Alderman, a CGP from Australia, was appointed as a new member of the CCGP Board.

The Examination Development Committee (EDC) also had changes at the end of 2009. Dianne Tobias ended her term as Committee Chair and rotated off the Committee. Michael Brodeur was appointed as the new Committee Chair. Robin L. Cooke, Monica Mathys, and Teresa L. Sterling completed their terms of service on the Committee.

Lisa Hart, Kristin Higgins, Kristen Meyer, and Tina Thornhill were all appointed by the Board of Commissioners to initial terms on the EDC. Sandra Bollinger, Chad Graue, and Sally Ebsary were all re-appointed by the Board to second terms on the EDC.

In January of 2010, Thomas R. Clark, RPh, MHS, CGP, became the new executive director of CCGP. Trish D'Antonio Mazzuca left CCGP to become the new executive director of the Washington, DC Board of Pharmacy.

Amanda W. Todd
Heather Townsend
Meral Unsoy
Jennifer P. Urso
Yash Vashishta
Dustin R. Wagner
Jennifer J. Weber
Stacy A. Wiegman
Keith B. Williams
Megan K. Wisnowski
Peter P. Yap
Marwah M. Younis
Joan Zawisza

Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy
1321 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-535-3036
Fax: 703-739-1500
<http://www.ccgp.org/>
