

### Pharmacy Education and Practice in India – A Profession in Transition\*

Bhojraj Suresh, MPharm, Ph.D., D.Sc.  
Vice Chancellor, JSS University, India  
President, Pharmacy Council of India, New Delhi, India

Madhan Ramesh, MPharm, Ph.D., DipClinPharm, FICP  
Professor, JSS College of Pharmacy, Mysore, India

Pharmacy education in India has undergone a paradigm shift in the past 2 decades. Before this country's independence in 1947, a formal pharmacy education—a 3-year bachelor's of pharmacy degree—was offered by only three institutions (first in Banaras Hindu University in 1937<sup>1</sup>), and there were no legal restrictions on the practice of pharmacy.<sup>2</sup> Only after India's independence was the concept of pharmacy practice realized. In 1948, the Pharmacy Act was enacted to set standards and regulate pharmacy education, the pharmacy profession, and the practice of pharmacy in India. The provisions of the Pharmacy Act are implemented through the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI), a statutory body established in 1949.<sup>3</sup>

Currently, to meet the varying needs of the profession at different levels, several pharmacy programs are offered by more than 1500 institutions in India.<sup>3</sup> Until only about 1 decade ago, however, pharmacy graduates were involved mostly in the manufacturing of medicines. The traditional dispensing of medicines and the other patient care services offered were supported through pharmacists who had a 2-year diploma in pharmacy qualification. Although India attained tremendous growth and innovation in the pharma industry, leading to its realization as a global pharma destination, the country failed to gain societal recognition of the pharmacy profession. In India, the concept of patient-oriented pharmacy practice was realized in 1995, after the introduction of practice-based and patient-focused postgraduate courses (master's of pharmacy in pharmacy practice) in two pharmacy institutions (JSS Colleges of Pharmacy, Mysore and Ooty). Thereafter, the pharmacy profession and practice in India underwent a transition. However, only in 2008 did India make rapid progression in practice-based pharmacy education after PCI introduced a practice-based 6-year "doctor of pharmacy (Pharm.D.)" degree course.<sup>4</sup> A major breakthrough in the history of pharmacy education in India, this multifaceted course redefined the role of pharmacists in the Indian health care system. A paradigm shift occurred, resulting in (1) an increased number of student pharmacists working in the wards of hundreds of hospitals and (2) the increased capabilities of pharmacists in providing patient care services.

Another breakthrough initiative taken by PCI is the provision of an opportunity to upgrade the qualification of existing diploma holders to graduate levels through 2-year blended-mode education. Moreover, the Pharmacovigilance Program of India has brought into focus the importance of the safe and quality use of medicines. These initiatives not only help create job opportunities for pharmacy graduates, but also bring a greater recognition to the pharmacy profession.

During the past decade, the pharmacy profession has expanded significantly in the implementation of need-based educational programs and professional practice. However, the future of the pharmacy profession rests on (1) developing well-qualified, knowledgeable, skilled, and competent human resources; (2) providing high-quality pharmaceutical care services in the health care system; and (3) fulfilling the other professional obligations/responsibilities on the basis of societal need. These are achievable only through changes in the legislative framework that improve and maintain the high standards of the pharmacy profession in both educational and practice settings.

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*\*Opinions, judgments, and data expressed or implied in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the policy or position of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy, and the American College of Clinical Pharmacy provides no warranty regarding their accuracy or reliability.*

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## Responding to the Professional Needs of International Practitioners: Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice and Specialty Certification



Participants of ACCP's Pharmacotherapy Review Program for Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

As pharmacist services shift to more patient-focused, clinically oriented services, ongoing professional development programs that are intended to enhance pharmacists' knowledge and skills in providing these services are of great importance. The American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) collaborates with key national entities to provide pharmacists engaged in clinical pharmacy practice and education with high-quality professional development programming that meets their professional needs.

One such program is ACCP's Pharmacotherapy Review Program for Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice. This highly interactive, 3-day program is intended for pharmacist practitioners preparing to sit for the pharmacy specialty board certification examination offered by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties as well as for seasoned practitioners seeking the most up-to-date review and refresher on pharmacotherapeutics and clinical skills. Tailored to the needs of the inviting entity, the program is designed to provide updates on pharmacotherapeutic topics employing various learning activities and case scenarios that facilitate discussions of the topics. Program goals are to:

1. present a high-quality, up-to-date overview of pharmacotherapeutics;
2. provide a framework to help participants prepare for the pharmacotherapy specialty certification examination; and
3. engage participants in an interactive, case-based learning experience to advance the clinical judgment and problem-solving skills required in clinical practice.

The international program was first held in 2011 in Hong Kong in collaboration with the Hong Kong Hospital Authority Chief Pharmacist's Office. Most recently in March of this year, the program was offered in collaboration with the Ministry of Health Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where there were more than 100 pharmacist participants.

This program, as well as others intended to meet the professional needs of clinical pharmacy practitioners and educators, is developed in keeping with ACCP's mission to provide leadership, professional development, advocacy, and resources that enable clinical pharmacists to achieve excellence in practice, research, and education and ACCP's priority to promote the professional development of clinical pharmacists by increasing practitioner access to specialist certification, recertification, and other means of ensuring maintenance of competence.

### Call for Papers

Individuals are invited to submit articles for publication in future issues of the newsletter on the following departments:

- Clinical Pharmacy Practice
- Clinical Pharmacist or Clinical Practice Profile
- Patient Care
- Research and Practice
- Pharmacy Education
- Continuing Professional Development

For more information and to submit an article, see

[www.accp.com/docs/international/InformationForAuthors.pdf](http://www.accp.com/docs/international/InformationForAuthors.pdf).

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Announcements of quality educational programs, conferences, or products and position listings of interest to the international audience may be published in *ACCP International Clinical Pharmacist*.

To obtain more information and submit an advertisement, see Advertising Rate Card at [www.accp.com/docs/international/RateCard.pdf](http://www.accp.com/docs/international/RateCard.pdf).

### Mark Your Calendar



## Book Highlights

### Neurology and Psychiatry Pharmacotherapy Self-Assessment Program, Seventh Edition

an **accp** Publication

ACCP's popular Pharmacotherapy Self-Assessment Program, seventh edition (PSAP-VII), provides pertinent pharmacotherapeutic updates to enhance and assess the practice skills of clinical pharmacists. The program, composed of 11 books, is approved by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties for the recertification of Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialists (BCPSs).

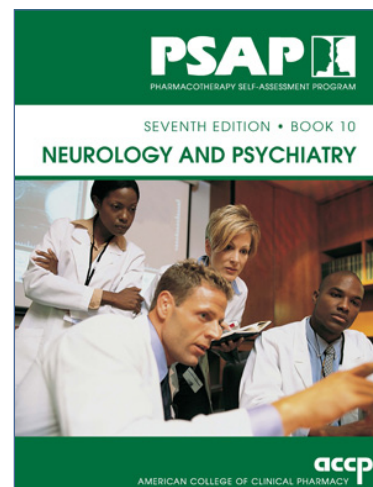
*Neurology and Psychiatry* provides recent evidence-based information on the management of several mental health and neurologic disorders. The book includes nine chapters divided into three learning modules:

- Module I
  - Major Depressive Disorder
  - Bipolar Disorder
  - Schizophrenia and Other Psychoses
- Module II
  - Management of Acute Ischemic Stroke and Transient Ischemic Attack
  - Dementias and Related Neuropsychiatric Issues
  - Parkinson Disease
- Module III
  - Management of Acute Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Inflammatory Neuropathies
  - Rating Scales in Psychiatric Disorders

As with other PSAP-VII books, each chapter has an extensive annotated bibliography that identifies key research articles, clinical practice guidelines, texts, and Web sites relevant to recent developments in that particular area of pharmacotherapy. Self-assessment questions provided at the end of each chapter may be used by the BCPS to earn credit toward board recertification and by clinical pharmacists to earn continuing pharmacy education credit.

Other books in the seventh edition are *Cardiology, Critical and Urgent Care, Women's and Men's Health, Pediatrics, Chronic Illnesses, Oncology, Geriatrics, Science and Practice of Pharmacotherapy, Infectious Diseases, and Gastroenterology and Nutrition* (to be released July 16, 2012).

All PSAP-VII books are available in both print and online formats and as either single books or the full series (11 books). More information on the full schedule of books with release dates, tables of contents, learning objectives, sample chapters, deadlines for submitting online posttests, and recertification credit hours for each is available at <http://www.accp.com/bookstore/psap7.aspx>.



## A Message from the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

This issue of *ACCP International Clinical Pharmacist* features a key article that describes a major paradigm shift in pharmacy education and practice in India. The article on "Pharmacy Education and Practice in India – A Profession in Transition" recounts the major changes in pharmacy education since the bachelor's of pharmacy degree was first offered in 1937, followed by the enactment of the Pharmacy Act in 1948, and then the introduction of the Pharm.D. degree by the Pharmacy Council of India in 2008. The article goes on to describe the impact of this most recent shift in focus on student pharmacist experiences and pharmacist roles and concludes by highlighting the importance of legislative work in driving these changes and maintaining high professional standards.

As pharmacist roles change to embrace clinical roles, lifelong professional development and credentialing become

essential to ensure and maintain professional competence. Moreover, professional development programs intended to advance knowledge and clinical skills become an essential part of the professional development of clinical pharmacists. The article on "Responding to the Professional Needs of International Practitioners: Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice and Specialty Certification" describes one such international program.

*ACCP International Clinical Pharmacist* editorial staff invite pharmacy leaders, policy-makers, educators, and practitioners to voice their opinions and share their work with the international pharmacy community.

Sincerely,

Wafa Y. Dahdal, Pharm.D., BCPS (AQ Cardiology)