Credentialing and Recognition of Pharmacy Specializations: The Lebanese Order of Pharmacists Initiative

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The term credential is derived from the Latin word credere, which means “to trust.” The purpose of a credentialing process is to “document and demonstrate that the health care professional being evaluated has attained the credentials and qualifications to provide the scope of care expected for patient care services in a particular setting.”¹ The purpose of a privileging process is to guarantee investors that the health care professional being considered for certain privileges has the specific competencies and experience for the specific services the organization provides and/or supports. Processes for the credentialing and privileging of health professionals, including pharmacists, are of increasing importance worldwide, and efforts are continuously aimed at providing and rewarding higher-quality health care services.²

Lebanon is a small, developing country in the Middle East with a population of around 6.1 million.³ To be allowed to practice, all Lebanese pharmacists must be registered at the Order of Pharmacists of Lebanon (OPL) after obtaining a license to practice from the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH). The MOPH is responsible for recognizing and validating pharmacy diplomas. Despite the constant evolution and the diversification of pharmacists’ roles, Lebanese pharmacists are still under-recognized. Pharmacists now have new opportunities to perform functions and provide new services outside their traditional roles.⁴ To date, the only two diplomas recognized by the MOPH are “pharmacist” (no matter the degree earned) and “medical laboratory pharmacist.” As such, holders of a Ph.D. or master’s degree are recognized and remunerated similar to holders of a B.S. degree in pharmacy, without regard for their extra knowledge and competencies. The only sector in which postgraduate degrees are recognized and required is academia (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Map of pharmacy tracks and degrees.

Notes:
1. Clinical and professional track pharmacists may join the academic track when this meets the academic institution’s rules and regulations.
2. All degrees should be from recognized universities/institutions.

BS = Bachelor of Science; DBA = Doctor of Business Administration; DES = Diplôme d’Études Spécialisées; DIS = Diplôme Interuniversitaire de Spécialité; DU = University Diploma; HDR = Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches; PGY1 = Postgraduate Year One; PGY2 = Postgraduate Year Two; PhD = Doctor of Philosophy; R1 = Residency Year One.
The OPL is the official pharmacists’ association in Lebanon and the legal partner of the MOPH. The OPL’s mission is to apply the laws, defend the rights of pharmacists, and advance the level of pharmacy practice while fostering the development of scientific competencies. Therefore, because an official credentialing system is lacking in Lebanon, and to align with international standards, the OPL formed a Specialty Committee, which took the initiative of suggesting a decree of specializations and titles in the pharmacy profession (Table 1).

This official recognition, expected in 2020, will definitely encourage pharmacists to pursue postgraduate education and positively affect the profession by increasing the employability of specialized pharmacists, thus filling out job positions with pharmacists having the appropriate qualifications. In the long run, this recognition is expected to have positive outcomes on patient care.

Table 1. Pharmacy Titles and Specialties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Specialty/Level</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Minimum No. of Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacist/Pharmacien</td>
<td>None – Entry Level</td>
<td>B.S. Pharmacya</td>
<td>5 years currently (equivalent to a minimum of 160 U.S. credits or 300 ECTS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Pharmacy/Docteur en Pharmacie</td>
<td>None – Entry Level</td>
<td>Pharm.D./Doctorat d’Exerciceb</td>
<td>6 years currently (equivalent to a minimum of 200 U.S. credits or 360 ECTS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Pharmacist/Pharmacien Avancé</td>
<td></td>
<td>Master (Research or Professional) or DU/ Certificate</td>
<td>Minimum of 1 year post-Pharm.D. (equivalent to a minimum of 36 U.S. credits or 60 ECTS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Pharmacist/Pharmacien Clinicien</td>
<td>Hospital or Clinical Residency</td>
<td>PGY1/R1/DU de Pharmacie Clinique et Hospitalière</td>
<td>Minimum of 1 year post-Pharm.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Clinical Pharmacist/Pharmacien Clinicien Spécialisé</td>
<td>Specialized Clinical Residency</td>
<td>PGY2</td>
<td>Minimum of 2 years post-Pharm.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Pharmacist/Pharmacien Spécialisé</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ph.D./DBA/Fellowship</td>
<td>Minimum of 4 years post-pharmacy (1 + 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Pharmacist/Pharmacien Hospitalier</td>
<td>Hospital Pharmacy</td>
<td>DES/DIS</td>
<td>Minimum of 3 years post-pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Pharmacist/Pharmacien Industriel</td>
<td>Industrial Pharmacy</td>
<td>DES/DIS</td>
<td>Minimum of 3 years post-pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Biologist/Biologiste Médical</td>
<td>Medical Laboratory</td>
<td>DES/DIS</td>
<td>Minimum of 4 years post-pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Pharmacist/Pharmacien Chercheur</td>
<td></td>
<td>HDR or Academic Professor Rank</td>
<td>Minimum of 3 years post-Ph.D. or post-DBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aIn case of a non-completed number of academic years/credits, additional educational training and/or studies will be necessary to reach the requirements as decided by the OPL Specialty Committee to be established. Title will remain Pharmacist.
bIn case of a non-completed number of credits, additional educational training and/or studies will be necessary to reach the requirements as decided by the OPL Specialty Committee. Title will remain Doctor of Pharmacy.

B.S. = Bachelor of Science; DBA = Doctor of Business Administration; DES = Diplôme d’Études Spécialisées; DIS = Diplôme Interuniversitaire de Spécialité; DU = University Diploma; ECTS = European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; HDR = Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches; PGY1 = Postgraduate Year One; PGY2 = Postgraduate Year Two; Ph.D. = Doctor of Philosophy; R1 = Residency Year 1.

Infection Critical Care

Infectious diseases is the focus of the first book released in the 2019–2021 edition of the Critical Care Self-Assessment Program (CCSAP). Released March 15, 2019, Infection Critical Care provides expert appraisal of the most up-to-date scientific and clinical evidence on assessing and managing various infectious diseases and contemporary strategies to optimize antibiotic use, including dosing in patients with augmented renal clearance and antimicrobial stewardship in the critical care setting.

The book is divided into three learning modules and offers a total of 16.5 hours of continuing pharmacy education (CPE) credits. Chapters contained in each module are as follows:

- Infection Critical Care I (4.5 CPE credit hours)
  - Sepsis Management
  - CNS Infections

- Infection Critical Care II (7.0 CPE credit hours)
  - Microbiome Dysbiosis
  - HIV-1 Infection in the Critically Ill Patient
  - Rapid Diagnostic Testing and Biomarkers

- Infection Critical Care III (5.0 CPE credit hours, e-module)
  - Antibiotic Dosing Issues (interactive case)
  - Antimicrobial Stewardship in Critical Care (interactive case)

Using a case-based, interactive format, the e-module affords learners unique opportunities to perform targeted, formative assessments of their own knowledge and patient care skills relevant to the subject matter and to actively engage in the learning experience.

Board Certified Critical Care Pharmacists (BCCCPs) seeking specialty recertification credit must successfully complete the requirements for the learning activities by September 16, 2019. Pharmacists seeking CPE credit must successfully complete the activities by March 14, 2022.

Titles and release dates for each 2019–2021 CCSAP book are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infection Critical Care</td>
<td>March 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical Patients in the ICU</td>
<td>September 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular Critical Care</td>
<td>March 16, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues in Critical Care Practice</td>
<td>September 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulmonary and Endocrinology</td>
<td>March 15, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Organ Dysfunction and Special Populations</td>
<td>September 15, 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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JACCP Call for Papers: Clinical Pharmacy Practice Around the World

The Journal of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (JACCP) invites submissions to a themed issue devoted to clinical pharmacy practice around the world.

The issue will address education and training, global health policies, and innovative clinical pharmacy practices, including, but not limited to, sustainable educational approaches to improve clinical pharmacy training; interventions to improve the quality of care through clinical pharmacy; proposed strategies to incorporate clinical pharmacy into the broader health care system; applications of practice model design and evaluation and collaborative practice models; types of economic analyses; contributions to adherence and patient safety; and evaluations of innovations that improve patient care.


Mark Your Calendar

**Antimicrobial Resistance – From Pathogenesis to Patient Care**

2019 ACCP International Symposium
September 13, 2019
London, UK

**ACCP Annual Meeting**
October 26–29, 2019
New York Hilton Midtown
New York, New York
A Message from the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

The featured article in this issue of *ACCP International Clinical Pharmacist*, “Credentialing and Recognition of Pharmacy Specializations: The Lebanese Order of Pharmacists Initiative,” highlights one country’s strategy for advancing postgraduate training and pharmacist specialization in order to expand pharmacists’ roles. A decree published by the Order, the only national professional organization representing all pharmacists practicing in the country, calls and outlines the requirements for recognizing, among other professional titles, clinical pharmacists and specialized clinical pharmacists. This represents an important step toward advancing clinical pharmacy training, specialization, and practice in Lebanon.

The Book Highlights department of this issue features *Infection Critical Care*, the first of six books to be released in the 2019–2021 edition of the Critical Care Self-Assessment Program (CCSAP). Designed by and for Board Certified Critical Care Pharmacists (BCCCPs), this series offers high-quality, application-based educational activities that focus on the latest scientific evidence and tackle the unique clinical challenges faced in caring for patients in the critical care setting.

Also included in this issue is a call for papers to be considered for publication in the *Journal of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy* (JACCP) in a themed issue on international pharmacy education and practice. The submission deadline is January 15, 2020.

Finally, make sure to save the date for the 2019 ACCP International Symposium. This year’s program, “Antimicrobial Resistance – From Pathogenesis to Patient Care,” will be held September 13, 2019, in London.

Sincerely,

Wafa Y. Dahdal, Pharm.D.