



***Board Certification Study Timeline:  
BCPS 4-Month Calendar***

## **BCPS Exam 4-Month Study Timeline**

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists New Practitioners Forum (NPF) has developed this guidance document to aid new practitioners in their goal to obtain Board of Pharmacy Specialties Pharmacotherapy certification (BCPS). The purpose of this document is to provide a structured timeline to keep practitioners on track to sit for the BCPS examination. This is not an all-inclusive study guide, although it attempts to mirror the content on the BCPS content outline.

### **ASHP Certification Preparation Resources**

- ASHP has launched a line of educational offerings, review courses, practice exams, and core therapeutic modules, to help you prepare for BPS examinations.
  - **The Practice Exam** is an online compilation of practice questions with the capability to download the correct answer, and link to the reference source, domains, tasks, and knowledge statements. Take the practice exam as many times as you need.
  - **ASHP Core Therapeutic Modules (CTMs)** are designed as a library of modules to customize your own self study program, and serves as a foundation to help fill knowledge gaps in various topics or disease states. The Core Therapeutic Module Review Package consists of 14 activities in which faculty review clinical topics and practice skills using a case-based approach. The activities are designed to assist the learner in identifying knowledge gaps in preparation for a pharmacy specialty board examination. In addition to a recorded presentation, each activity includes links to resources for further self-study and a practice test developed in the same format and rigor as the specialty exam.
  - **ASHP Pharmacotherapy Review Course:** The Review Course includes case-based presentations for application to real-life scenarios, a practice exam along with correct answers, and links to the reference sources, and domains, tasks, and knowledge statements. To help you further prepare, this package includes a compilation of practice questions in the same format and rigor to help you prepare for the BPS Specialty Certification Examination.
  - **ASHP's Review and Recertification Reward Program (RRRP)** provides free board review resources to residents and new practitioners seeking board certification. By signing up for RRRP, you will have access to the CTMs and Pharmacotherapy Review Course. The Pharmacotherapy Review and Recertification Course is case-based, involving application of concepts to patient care, just as in clinical practice and on the exam.
- Utilize ASHP's [Certification Preparation Materials](#)
  - Pharmacotherapy Specialty Review and Recertification Course Package (LIVE)
  - Pharmacotherapy Review Course, Practice Exam, and Core Therapeutic Modules (CTM) Package (ONLINE)
  - Pharmacotherapy Specialty Core Therapeutic Modules (CTM) (ONLINE)
  - Pharmacotherapy Specialty Practice Exam (ONLINE)
  - Review and Recertification Reward Program (RRRP)
- Consider taking [ASHP's Pharmacotherapy Specialty Review Course Practice Exam](#)
  - The exam may be of greatest benefit later in the studying timeline and closer to the exam date.
  - After you take the exam you can print the questions, answers, rationales, citation for correct answer, and cross reference to review course presentation.

- The practice exam could be used to help the individual focus their studies prior to starting and/or in the review process leading up to the several weeks before the exam.

### **Pharmacotherapy Specialist Exam Content Outline (as of 12/31/2018)**

- 55% of the exam is on patient-centered pharmacotherapy.
- 20% of the exam is on system-based standards and population-based pharmacotherapy topics (e.g., formulary management, laws and regulations, accrediting organizations, reimbursement strategies)
- 25% of the exam is on drug information and evidence-based medicine topics (e.g., biostatistics, drug information questions, research study design and methodology, scientific writing, literature interpretation, etc.).
  - [Research Fundamentals](#) is a series of articles published in the *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy (AJHP)* to consider reading to become more well-versed on research-oriented topics.

### **Guidelines to Utilize**

- Since the question validation process takes a significant amount of time, concepts regarding a particular topic are very likely to be based on the guidelines at the time the question was written months prior to the exam.

### **How to Use this Study Timeline:**

- This timeline is a general suggestion based on the pre-specified time period.
- Some topics may take longer or shorter than the time allotted, please adjust as necessary.
- The general topic is in the left-hand column. The corresponding ASHP study materials are in the middle and right-hand columns.
- Not all topics are reviewed in the CTM or Review Modules. If there is an N/A, please look into guidelines about those topic areas to enhance your learning.

### **Study Tips**

- Consider leaving the last week to review materials and take the practice exam.
- Identify a study partner or study group and hold weekly lunch discussions about the week's topics. Assigning group members to each topic (background materials and cases) to prepare and present at each meeting can be helpful. Other group members should review the material and come with questions and clarifications. Group accountability is key!
- Keep a notebook with concise notes as you progress. This way you have a quick and concise reference to review later.
- Consider adapting the study timeline below and tackling topics that are most difficult for you first.
- Consider topics from the last five years that have been relevant, particularly from a policy and public health perspective.
- For areas you are confident about prior to studying, consider taking that area's practice exam. If you do well, spend time touching up on other areas first and then go back to this area for review at the end, time pending.

## Suggested 4-Month Calendar

MONTH 1	Topic Areas	ASHP Core Therapeutic Modules	ASHP Pharmacotherapy Review Course Modules
<b>Week 1</b>	Research and Statistics	Statistics, Evidence-Based Medicine, and Clinical Trial Design	Research Design, Evidence-Based Medicine and Statistical Analysis, Part 1, 2
<b>Week 2</b>	<i>Cardiovascular Disorders:</i> Hypertension, Dyslipidemia, CAD, PAD, Arrhythmias, ACLS, Valvular Heart Disease	Cardiac Arrhythmias and Advanced Cardiac Life Support  Heart Failure  Suggested Guideline Topics to Supplement Review: HTN, Lipids, A. fib, Clotting Disorders	Cardiovascular Disease: Primary Prevention Case  Cardiovascular Disease: Secondary Prevention Case #1  Cardiovascular Disease: Secondary Prevention Case #2
<b>Week 3</b>	<i>Acute Care Issues:</i> Thrombocytopenia, Hemorrhagic Stroke & Cerebral Ischemia, Thromboembolic Disorders, Clotting Factor Disorders & DIC, Acid-base Disorders, Electrolyte Abnormalities & Nutritional disorders, ICU Sedation/Paralysis/Delirium & Traumatic Brain Injury	Pharmacotherapy Considerations in the Management of Shock  Nutrition, Fluid, and Electrolytes  Suggested Guideline Topics to Supplement Review: Clotting Disorders, Stroke, ICU Delirium and Sedation	N/A
<b>Week 4</b>	<i>Nephrology and Hepatology:</i> Chronic Liver Disease, Cirrhosis, Hepatitis & Pancreatitis, Acute Renal Failure, Chronic Kidney Disease & Dialysis	N/A  Suggested Guideline Topics to Supplement Review: CKD and Liver Disease	N/A

MONTH 2	Topic Areas	ASHP Core Therapeutic Modules	ASHP Pharmacotherapy Review Course Modules
<b>Week 1</b>	<i>Infectious Diseases:</i> STIs, Fungal Infections, & HIV/AIDS, Respiratory, Urinary, Skin and Soft Tissue & Ear Infections, Endocarditis, Bone and Joint Infections & Intra-abdominal Infections, C. Diff, Febrile Neutropenia, Antimicrobial Prophylaxis & CNS Infection, Tuberculosis, Sepsis & Organ Transplantation	Select Topics in Infectious Diseases  Pharmacotherapy Considerations in the Management of HIV and AIDs  Suggested Guideline Topics to Supplement Review: Sepsis	Complex Pneumonia Case  Complex HIV Case
<b>Week 2</b>	<i>Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders:</i> Adrenal disorders, Parathyroid disorders & Thyroid Disorders, Diabetes	Diabetes	N/A

	Mellitus, Diabetes Insipidus & SIADH  <i>Gastroenterology:</i> GERD, GI Bleed, Stress Ulcer Prophylaxis & PUD, Constipation, Diarrhea, Nausea/Vomiting, IBD, IBS & Malabsorption Syndrome	Select Topics in Gastrointestinal Diseases	N/A
<b>Week 3</b>	<i>Immunology:</i> Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Osteoporosis & Gout, Allergy/Anaphylaxis, Stevens-Johnson syndrome & SLE, Dermatitis	Select Topics in Rheumatology	N/A
<b>Week 4</b>	<i>Pulmonary Disorders:</i> Asthma  <i>Geriatrics and Pediatrics</i>	N/A N/A	Complex Pediatric Asthma Case Complex Nursing Home Case

MONTH 3	Topic Areas	ASHP Core Therapeutic Modules	ASHP Review Course Modules
<b>Week 1</b>	<i>Psychiatric Disorders:</i> Schizophrenia, Depression, PTSD, Anxiety, Bipolar Disorders, Pain, Withdrawal, Overdose	Select Topics in Psychiatric Disorders	N/A
<b>Week 2</b>	<i>Neurologic Disorders:</i> Epilepsy, Migraines, Sleep Disorders, Cognitive Disorder, Fibromyalgia, Peripheral neuropathy	Select Topics in Neurologic Disorders	N/A
<b>Week 3</b>	<i>Women's Health:</i> Contraception, Menstrual Disorders, Pregnancy-related Disease, Chronic Disease in Pregnancy, Lactation, Menopause, PCOS, Endometriosis, Infertility, Sexual Dysfunction, Routine Health Screening  <i>Oncology and Oncologic Supportive Care:</i> Breast Cancer, Lung Cancer, Prostate Cancer	Select Topics in Women's Health	Complex Breast Cancer Case
<b>Week 4</b>	<i>Men's Health:</i> Urinary Incontinence, Prostatic Hyperplasia, Prostate Cancer, & Health Education, Erectile Dysfunction, PrEP/PEP	Select Topics Men's Health	N/A

<b>MONTH 4</b>	<b>Topic Areas</b>	<b>ASHP Core Therapeutic Modules</b>	<b>ASHP Review Course Modules</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	Medication Safety & Regulatory Affairs	N/A	Medication Safety Regulatory and Quality Issues
<b>Week 2</b>	Statistics Review	Statistics, Evidence-Based Medicine, and Clinical Trial Design	Research Design, Evidence-Based Medicine and Statistical Analysis, Part 1, 2
<b>Week 3</b>	Take Final Practice Exam		
<b>Week 4</b>	Briefly review modules of areas that you were unable to cover in previous weeks and review areas missed on practice exam		

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