Position Statement

Pharmacotherapeutics Education Required for Prescriptive Authority Application

Formulated: July 2004

Revised: May 2009

Reviewed: March 2015, September 2011

Section 40-33-34(E) and (F) outline the requirements for applying for initial prescriptive authority and renewal, including education in pharmacotherapeutics. Among other requirements, the statutes specify that in order to be granted prescriptive authority, a NP, CNM, or CNS must provide evidence of completion of forty-five (45) contact hours of education in pharmacotherapeutics acceptable to the Board within two years preceding the application or provide evidence of prescriptive authority in another state meeting twenty (20) hours in pharmacotherapeutics acceptable to the Board, within two years before the date of application.

Additionally, in order to be granted controlled substance prescriptive authority, at least fifteen (15) of those hours must be education in controlled substances acceptable to the Board if the NP, CNM or CNS initially is applying to prescribe Schedules III through V controlled substances. Thereafter, for renewal of prescriptive authority, twenty (20) contact hours of pharmacotherapeutics within the preceding two years are required. For a NP, CNM, or CNS with controlled substance prescriptive authority, two (2) of the twenty (20) hours must be related to prescribing controlled substances.

Initial Application Requirements

1. For first time applicants for prescriptive authority, forty-five (45) contact hours of pharmacotherapeutics education must have been completed in the two years prior to the date of the application. Additionally, if the NP, CNM, or CNS initially is applying to prescribe controlled substances, fifteen (15) of the forty five (45) contact hours must be education in controlled substances acceptable to the Board. This also applies to NPs, CNMs or CNSs previously holding prescriptive authority in another state but whose privileges in that state have expired by more than six (6) months.

NPs, CNMs, or CNSs who have graduated within the preceding two (2) years and who have completed the required forty five (45) contact hours of pharmacotherapeutics within the last two years of the curriculum meet the educational requirements for prescriptive authority. If the NP, CNM, or CNS initially is applying to prescribe Schedules III through V controlled substances, fifteen (15) hours of the forty five (45) must be education in controlled substances acceptable to the Board.

2. NPs, CNMs or CNSs with documented current prescriptive authority in another state must submit documentation of at least twenty (20) hours within the two (2) years preceding the date of their application. Fifteen (15) hours of education in controlled substances acceptable to the Board must be part
of the twenty (20) hours if the NP, CNM, or CNS currently has equivalent controlled substance prescribing authority in another state.

**Renewal Application Requirements**

1. For renewal of prescriptive authority, twenty (20) contact hours of continuing education in pharmacotherapeutics related to the NP’s, CNM’s, or CNS’s certification specialty must be obtained every two (2) years and documented upon Board request. For an NP, CNM, or CNS with controlled substance prescriptive authority, two (2) of the twenty (20) hours must be related to prescribing controlled substances.

2. The Board randomly audits renewal applications and, if requested, documentation of education in pharmacotherapeutics must be provided within the time specified in the request. Failure to timely comply will result in suspension of prescriptive authority and possible disciplinary action.

**Educational Requirements**

1. Contact hours may be obtained through courses taught in an approved program of study or through approved continuing education offerings, which may include personal attendance at real time course sessions (including remote locations), self-study courses, video based and computer based courses. Examples of learning may include web-based on-line education, distance education and learner-centered programs.

2. For initial applications, a maximum of fifteen percent (15%), or 6.75 hours, may be obtained through approved alternative, natural, herbal or complementary pharmacotherapeutics education. For renewal applications, a maximum of fifteen percent (15%), or three (3) hours, may be obtained through approved alternative, natural, herbal or complementary pharmacotherapeutics education.

3. Renewal applicants selected for audit must provide the following evidence of pharmacotherapeutics education, as applicable:

   a. Documentation of attendance either by official transcript or copies of certificates of continuing education attendance. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the educational institution to the Board of Nursing. Graduates of in-state graduate nursing programs may hand-carry official transcripts to the Board offices and will be accepted if transcripts are personally delivered to Board staff members in officially sealed envelopes.

   b. Documentation of continuing education approval by an authorized or accredited provider (i.e., national certifying organization, college or university, state regulatory body, national or state professional organization). It is the responsibility of the NP, CNM, or CNS to assure that the documentation includes the number of hours received in any particular session or course.

   c. A description of course content which is applicable to the APRN's specialty area(s) of practice.