

## **Frequently Asked Questions Certified Geriatric Pharmacist Examination**

January 2012

**Q: What resources are available to help pharmacists prepare to take the CGP examination?**

A: The role of CCGP is to develop and administer the CGP examination. There is no required curriculum or courses needed to take the examination. However, the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists has compiled a list of resources related to geriatrics and geriatric pharmacotherapy. This resource directory is available at:

<http://www.ascp.com/GeriPharm>

CCGP also has a self-assessment examination (SAE) available for purchase, in either print form or online. The SAE contains 150 multiple-choice questions and may be useful for candidates as part of the process of preparing for the examination. The link for more information about the SAE is:

<http://www.ccgp.org/pharmacist/self.htm>

The American Society of Consultant Pharmacists has also developed an educational Web site on geriatric drug therapy with about 50 hours of continuing education provided in 20 modules. There is a fee to access the Web site, and a discounted rate is available for members of ASCP. These introductory courses in geriatric pharmacotherapy are available at:

<http://education.ascp.com/gpr>

**Q: Are there any live preparatory courses for the CGP examination that have been approved by CCGP?**

Several organizations offer live conferences on geriatrics, some of which are marketed as “board preparation” conferences for physicians and/or pharmacists. CCGP has not endorsed or approved any live programs that are intended or marketed as programs to prepare pharmacists to take the CGP examination.

**Q: Is the examination content taken from the review course modules and the specific resources listed above?**

A. The CGP certification examination is prepared by a committee of Certified Geriatric Pharmacists. Examination questions are developed and reviewed by committee members, with appropriate security precautions to keep the examination confidential.

## CGP Exam FAQs

While study materials can be useful as aids in preparing for an examination, it is important to understand that the examination is not based upon these materials. The study materials are intended to review the scope of the content outline provided in the Candidate Handbook, but those who prepare the study materials have no knowledge of the actual examination content. The Self-Assessment Examination and the 20 modules of the online review course are representative of the knowledge needed to pass the examination, but are not comprehensive in scope.

**Q: Is a table of normal laboratory values provided to candidates for use during the examination?**

A: Normal laboratory test results may vary somewhat from one lab to another. Candidates who take the CGP examination have access to a table of normal laboratory values for use during the examination. Laboratory values are provided in both conventional and international units for convenience of candidates.

**Q: How is the examination scored?**

A: The examination has 150 multiple-choice questions. Each question has one correct answer and three incorrect answers. Credit is granted for the question only if the correct answer is chosen. Candidates are advised to answer every question on the examination, as there is no penalty for guessing.

Of the 150 questions on the examination, only 140 questions are used in the scoring. Each version of the exam contains 10 questions that are being pre-tested for validation. Once validation is completed, these questions will be used on future versions of the examination. These questions that are being validated are randomly scattered through the examination and are not marked or identified as “pre-test” items. They will look just like any other question.

**Q: Candidates have the opportunity to provide comments on test items during the examination. If I comment on a question, do I have a better chance of being credited for the question?**

A: No. All comments that candidates submit on the test questions are reviewed by the Examination Development Committee (EDC). These comments will be considered during periodic review of the examination questions. Comments submitted by candidates will not affect the candidate’s score on the examination.

**Q: Where do the questions used on the examination originate, and how is the “correct” answer determined?**

## CGP Exam FAQs

**A:** Examination questions are written by a member of the EDC and then reviewed and edited by the full committee, with consultation and input from test development specialists at Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP). Depending upon the topic of the question, the “correct” answer may be based upon pharmacology of a particular drug or drug class, expert consensus from clinical practice guidelines, or the collective clinical judgment of the experts on the EDC on how to handle a particular patient case.

Examination questions fall into three categories: recall, application, and analysis. Recall questions are generally straightforward and fact-based, and the “correct” answer is well-defined. Application questions test the ability of the candidate to apply factual knowledge to patient situations. Analysis questions are the most complex and test higher-level judgment and analytical skills.

**Q: Some of the items on the examination did not appear to have a correct answer. For some of the scenarios presented, I would have handled the patient differently.**

**A:** Many of the test scenarios, especially at the “analysis” level, involve complex older adults with multiple morbidities. In many of these cases, there could be more than one “correct” or acceptable way to manage the patient. In the real world, patterns of practice may vary based upon settings of care, medication formulary limitations, federal or state regulations, and other factors.

In the context of a multiple-choice examination, the candidate is expected to choose the best strategy for patient management from among the four options presented. While this may be frustrating for the candidate who, for example, might usually prefer to use a different medication, the successful candidate should be able to focus on the options presented, analyze pros and cons, and choose the best option from among those provided.

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