

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND *PHARMACY BOARD*

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*Member Organization of the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA)*

## POLICY STATEMENT

### **Certification Programs for Pharmacists**

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In Canada, the pharmacy profession continues to evolve in response to an ever changing health care system leading to an increased interest in specialization in pharmacy practice. Currently, pharmacists can take advantage of a myriad on voluntary certification programs designed to instill, expand or enhance competence in a specific area. Certification is defined as a voluntary process by which a non-governmental/non-regulatory agency grants recognition to an individual who has met predetermined qualifications specified by that agency.

However, to determine the quality and credibility of the certification program, several factors need to be considered:

- The identification of the actual competencies that a pharmacist must possess if they claim to be certified in a certain area
- The educational outcomes (curriculum) that the program must possess in order to equip the pharmacist with the identified competencies
- The competency of the agency issuing the certificate
- The quality assurance process used to ensure the program developed by the agency meets pre-established standards
- The effect of the certification program on a pharmacist's practice and the method of evaluation this effort, such that it can be demonstrated that the pharmacist's enhanced training will positively impact patient care

Currently, in Canada no system exists for the accreditation of certification programs for pharmacy. There are no established standards for certification programs to ensure they contribute to overall public health nor are there accrediting bodies responsible for ensuring that these programs meet established standards if they were to exist.

In the absence of any official accreditation of certification programs, it is the position of the PEIPB that pharmacists should undertake certificate/certification programs for the purpose of their own personal professional development **and not for promotion to the public of superior ability to provide care in a specific area of health care.**