Guidelines on Accreditation Applications (November 1, 2005)

These guidelines serve as a reference for credentialing bodies when preparing their application form to submit to the CPC. However, this should also be referred to for self-assessment of both new credentialing program plans and existing programs.

These guidelines are laid out under the Pharmacist Credentialing Program Evaluation Standards. For a fair assessment of the credentialing program, application materials should be prepared clearly and accurately in accordance with the facts.

Note that these guidelines give only examples, and do not preclude explanation of compliance with assessment standards from a more detailed or different perspective.

1. General Principles

A description should be provided of basic concepts and policy underlying the credentialing program to enable a comprehensive assessment of the program as a whole.

1.1 Program Objectives

The objectives and roles of the program, i.e. its “mission,” should be clearly written in documents. Objectives, targets, expected outcomes and overall effects on patients, the health care environment and the society should be clearly documented.

1.2 Management System

A program must have an appropriate management system in order to attain the program objectives, A commitment should be made that it is operated properly in a fair, impartial and non-profitable manner, and that there are committees to for future planning and self-assessments,

2. Standards on Credentialing Bodies

For evaluation, details should be given of the structure and management of the parent body implementing a program (“credentialing body”), and the status of the credentialing programs. Information on sources of funding and staffing should be entered in Sections 4 and 5.

2.1 Credentialing Body

The credentialing body, which must be an academic pharmaceutical

organization, a professional organization, an educational institute, a public corporation, or a similar entity, must be organized and administered in a socially trustworthy manner, and must have articles of association, an act of endowment and bylaws. The status of the credentialing programs in the credentialing body should be shown clearly, as in a flowchart..

2.2 Administrative Organization
Is the credentialing body operated in accordance with appropriate rules by a decision-making organization (e.g. a board of directors or steering committee)?

2.3 Program Director
Does the credentialing body appoint a program director for each credentialing program? This program director must have sufficient understanding, academic knowledge and skills regarding the credentialing program.

2.4 Suitability of Program Director
Details should be provided regarding the career, past record and ambitions of the above program director to enable his/her suitability as director of the credentialing program to be assessed.

2.5 Joint Programs
If a credentialing program is planned jointly with another organization, the locus of responsibility for administrative management of the program and outcomes should be specified.

3. Standards on Program Plan and Content

Credentialing bodies must document the specific plan and content of their programs according to the standards.

In order to assess the program content, the following matters should be discussed based on the implementation guidelines and bylaws that may have been proposed at the initial stage. If the following matters were not discussed upon application, they should immediately be added or should be implemented in the system operation.

If a specific feature of a credentialing program are not categorized under the following headings, a new heading should be created for that purpose.

(The underlined sections below relate especially to Pharmacy Specialties Credentialing Programs and Special Training Programs. Other sections apply to all types of credentialing program.)

3.1 Regulations

If there is a regulatory committee involved in program administration, a register should be kept of its members.

By whom and by what method revisions are made to the above guidelines, regulations and other arrangements are made, questions answered, and interpretations and other judgments are made should be stated.

Any personnel other than the program director involved in the operation of the program, either full-time or concurrently with other duties, should be specified.

Policy and procedures for establishment of training programs (coursework, speakers, etc.) should be described

3.2 Scope

What is the scope of intended participants in the program seminars? What is the scope of persons eligible for credentials? Is it open to any pharmacists, or to a specific organization? Are there any arrangements for non-pharmacists participants?

In the case of Pharmacy Specialties Credentialing Programs and Specific Training Programs, details should be given of the criteria for selection, if any, and also of the regions that the credentialing cover.

3.3 Credentialing Criteria etc.

Information on the following headings should be provided regarding the criteria for acquisition of credentials and credentialing standards

Type: Details of program content classification according to the type of training required to acquire credentials, e.g. live lectures, practical training, long distance learning, e-learning, independent research and other self-learning.

Assessment: How does the credentialing body assess the contents and participants' evaluation of the training programs, self-learning, etc.? Describe matters relevant to assessment of the contents of the program (subjects) and assessment by participants and trainees (objects). For example, assessment of content performed by means of a questionnaire survey of seminar participants, declaration and notification after participation, or self-study reports, etc.

Records: Is there a system for recording what each individual has studied what subjects in what fields, using the fifteen-digit number?

Note: A fifteen-digit number is assigned to individual element of training provided by lifelong training providers approved by CPC. This number will be unique to the training program. It will include the provider number (which will be issued upon accreditation), year of program implementation, and the type of training (live lectures, practical training, long distance learning, e-learning, independent research and other self-learning).

Standards: The relationship between the length (hours) of training and the credits earned should be explained, along with required number of credits and coursework to acquire credentials.

Note: The provider will specify the requirements for credentialing, i.e. required number of credits and its categories (e.g. acceptance of credits from other providers).

Subsidiary Requirements: Are there any other requirements that must be met to acquire credentials in addition to the number of credits? (For example, period of membership of a certain organizations, attendance at certain academic conferences, achievements, experience, etc.)

3.4 Study Content

In the case of Pharmacy Specialties Credentialing Programs and Specific Training Programs, if the scope of study (curriculum, etc.) and methods of the program are stipulated, these should be stated. If certain teaching materials and learning media are specified, the reasons for their use and content thereof should be indicated.

3.4.1 In the case of Pharmacy Specialties Credentialing Programs (and special training programs?), the records of any negotiations with related medical profession fields should be indicated. Details should be given of mutual participation in the operation of credentialing programs and training planning, requests for instructors for training, the state of cooperation in relation to operation of credentialing schemes, and other such matters.

3.4.2 In the case of Pharmacy Specialties Credentialing Program (and special training programs?), if any special education, training or clinical training programs are established, details should be given of matters including the content and attainment targets of such education, training and clinical training, assessment of supervisors, standards for clinical training facilities, and relationshipwith the latest medical needs and social needs.

3.5 Examinations

If participants are required to pass an examination in order to acquire a

credential, details should be given of the qualifications for examination candidacy, examination fee, the time of examination, scope and allocation examination questions (with reference to the content of the U.S. BPS examination), and the acceptance criteria and standards.

3.6 Application for Credentials
The application procedure for credentials must be described giving easy-to-follow examples. Costs should be uniform within a certain range (currently not yet determined).

3.7 Issuer of Credential Certificates
The name of the issuer of credential certificates should be given.

3.8 Renewal and Revocation of Credentials
Periodical renewal of credentials should be provided systematically. The requisites for renewal, assessment system and other arrangements must be specified.

If revocation of certification may arise, the conditions must be specified.

3.9 Ascertainment of Credentials Status
A system must be put in place to record the name, address (or place of work), qualification conditions (past record regarding renewal status) of credential holders and ascertain changes in numbers (number of currently certified persons), regional distribution, occupational distribution, age distribution, and similar matters.

3.10 Protection of Personal Data
Proper care must be taken to prevent unintended disclosure of personal data.

4. Standards on Budgets and Financial Resources

4.1 Budgets
A credentialing body must have sufficient financial resources to enable development and improvement of credentialing programs for pharmacists. In order to certify pharmacists with high-level skills and abilities, it is essential to have access to ample financial resources.

4.2 Cost Measures
Budgets must be provided to cover both the direct and indirect costs of a program, including provision for expenses other than operating expenses.

4.3 Staff Pay
As well as the development of lifelong training, there must be sufficient financial resources for appropriate staff pay.

4.4 Accounting

Budgets, financial resources, and its management must be transparent in accordance with appropriate accounting regulations.

5. Standards Regarding Administrative Activities and Staffing

5.1 Administrative Activities

The quality of a pharmacist credentialing program relies heavily on the abilities and specialist knowledge of support staff as well as those directly involved in providing education and training. Details of personnel involved in administrative activities should be given. If there are shortages, details of plans for remedying the shortage or outsourcing services, etc. should be described.