

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CHANGES TO THE BOARD OF
PHARMACY'S CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS THAT ARE
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2018**

1. **I heard that the Board of Pharmacy has changed its continuing education requirements. Is that true?** Yes, the Board has adopted changes to Rule 21 NCAC 46.2201, which sets forth continuing education requirements for pharmacist license renewal.

2. **When do these changes go into effect?** The changes go into effect **January 1, 2018.**

3. **So, when I renew my license for 2018, what rule do I have to follow?** The current rule. Again, the changes to the CE rule do not go into effect until January 1, 2018, so when pharmacists begin renewing their licenses on November 1, 2017, those renewals will be governed by the current CE rule.

4. **What if I renew my license for 2018 during the “grace period” from January 1, 2018 to March 1, 2018?** Doesn't matter. All license renewals for 2018 will be governed by the current CE rule, even if you renew during the “grace period.”

5. **So, I don't need to do anything different with my CE this year?** That's correct. The Board will roll out a new IT system later in 2017, which will change the pharmacist CE interface. When that system goes live, Board staff will provide any necessary instructions. But rest assured, any CE that you enter into the system between now and then will not be “lost.”

6. **Alright. Tell me about the new rule that goes into effect January 1, 2018, and that will govern my license renewal for 2019.**
 - a. **How many total hours of CE will I need to renew for 2019?** Fifteen (15). The total number of required CE hours has not changed.

 - b. **How many “live” CE hours will I need to renew for 2019?** Five (5). This is a decrease from the eight (8) hours of “live” CE required for renewal under the current rule.

 - c. **What kinds of CE will count toward my renewal for 2019?** CE must fall into one of the following categories: (1) ACPE-accredited courses; (2) North Carolina

Association of Pharmacists (NCAP)-accredited courses; (3) Precepting a student enrolled in the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, the Campbell University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, the Wingate University School of Pharmacy, or the High Point University Fred Wilson School of Pharmacy for at least 160 hours as part of the school's academic program.

- d. Will I have to enter all my CE course titles and accreditation numbers into the Board's website to renew for 2019?** No. You will have to attest that you have acquired all the CE necessary for renewal, and you will have to report the number of hours you received from ACPE courses, NCAP courses, or precepting. But you will not have to enter course titles and accreditation numbers.

- e. Will I have to keep paper certificates for the CE that I earn for my 2019 renewal?** No. The new rule specifies that if an approved accreditor keeps an electronic database of all pharmacists granted CE, the pharmacist's recordkeeping requirement is met. The e-Profile system maintains a database for all ACPE-accredited courses. NCAP will maintain a database of all pharmacists who receive CE credit from a course NCAP has accredited. The North Carolina-based schools of pharmacy maintain databases that track preceptor credit.

- f. Will I be able to carry over surplus CE hours from year to year?** No. The five-hour carry-over option ends effective January 1, 2018. So, for 2019 renewal, you must make sure you obtain a full fifteen (15) hours of CE in calendar year 2018.

- g. Will there be any exemptions from CE?** Only two: (1) members of the armed forces who are eligible for a waiver under Rule 21 NCAC 46.1613; and (2) a pharmacist who resided the entire year in another state, did not practice pharmacy in North Carolina, and satisfied the state of residence's CE requirements for pharmacist licensure.

- h. Will the Board audit more pharmacists for CE compliance?** Yes. But Board staff will provide reports to e-Profile, NCAP, and the North Carolina-based schools of pharmacy. Those reports will identify pharmacists selected for audit and the claimed CE hours accredited by the organization receiving the report. The organization will review the report and advise Board staff of any discrepancy. The Board will only contact a pharmacist selected for audit if that review identifies a discrepancy.