

OVERVIEW OF ANCC NURSING CERTIFICATION BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION



ANCC
AMERICAN NURSES
CREDENTIALING CENTER



The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), provides individuals and organizations throughout the nursing profession with the resources they need to achieve practice excellence. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify nurses in specialty practice areas; recognize healthcare organizations for promoting safe, healthy work environments through the Magnet Recognition Program® and the Pathway to Excellence Program™; and accredit providers of continuing nursing education. In addition, ANCC provides leading-edge information and education services and products to support its core credentialing programs.

Nursing Excellence. Your Journey. Our Passion.

Eight Good Reasons to Certify



ANCC
AMERICAN NURSES
CREDENTIALING CENTER

8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

1.800.284.2378
301.628.5000 *tel*/
301.628.5004 *fax*

www.nursecredentialing.org

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Why certify?

Evidence from studies on the effects certification has on nurses identifies:

- > increased confidence in a nurse's abilities,
- > earlier intervention to prevent problems, and
- > more nurse/physician collaboration.¹

Here are more reasons for nurses to become certified >>

Eight Great Reasons Supporting Nurse Certification

RN Certification

Evidenced-based outcomes do not exist, but the question remains, "What proof do we have that a board-certified nurse provides better care to patients or that the patients cared for by certified nurses have better survival or recovery rates than those cared for by non-certified nurses?"

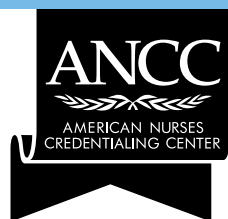
Board certification is an expectation for physicians, and more than 90% of physicians are board-certified (American Board of Medical Specialties website September 2007). It shows healthcare consumers the physician has the expertise to practice in the particular specialty. What will it take to make certification an expectation for nurses?

Professional recognition is the original reason for certification for which the American Nurses Association (ANA), now the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), started its certification program back in 1973. It gives nurses recognition among their peers and indicates the nurses have a certain level of specialty knowledge. Health care consumers understand the term "board-certified" and expect it from physicians. What about nurses?

Personal recognition is what internally motivated individuals thrive on, and it stimulates them to action. These individuals appear to be drawn toward certification as a means of personal recognition as evidenced from studies.²

Career progression is why increasing numbers of hospitals and facilities are using certification along with education and continued learning as criteria for advancement or reward. In nursing facilities with Magnet™ status, one of the 14 Forces of Magnetism, professional development, is a driver for nurses to seek certification.

Certification can become a tiebreaker when two people interview for the same position and have equal skills. In a study done by the American Board of Nursing Specialties in 2002, with all other factors being equal, nurse managers would clearly select a certified nurse over a non-certified nurse when hiring.



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Professional opportunities and networking become available to individuals who are certified. For instance, at ANCC as well as other certifying bodies, there are opportunities to meet other certified nurses from all over the U.S. to share expertise and information. Certified nurses are invited to participate on expert panels to work on test development for their specialty, participate in item development workshops, and participate in standard setting studies (to determine the passing score of an examination), or role delineation studies (job analyses). In addition, nursing contact hours may also be awarded for participation and used toward renewal of certification.

Competency assessment is a unique purpose of certification. Certification exams are built on the results of role delineation studies which identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities prerequisite for competent practice in a particular specialty. Validation of predetermined knowledge allows nurses to evaluate their competence in a specialty area and shows peers that the individual has met a national standard. Certification in a specialty area can help with accreditation and demonstrates to ANCC Magnet Recognition® reviewers that nurses have a proven knowledge base to care for their specialty patients.

In addition, certifications must be renewed approximately every three to five years, so certified nurses must continue to update their knowledge and ascribe to lifelong learning. A reason to remain current may be one of the most important reasons for certification. Continued competence has been a major concern of regulatory agencies and organizations such as the Citizens Advocacy Commission for several years. Some state boards of nursing have already started to recognize certification as evidence of continued competence for license renewal.

Licensure is one of the few reasons certification takes on a less than voluntary status. Advanced practice nurses are required to be certified in the majority of states to obtain authority to practice and to prescribe.

Reimbursement is a more recent phenomenon that has encouraged many nurses to obtain certification for advanced practice even if they are in a state which does not require it. The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) has mandated certification as a requirement in order to obtain reimbursement. In addition, some insurance companies require certification for reimbursement, such as case management certification for worker's compensation cases.

Increased salary of (\$8,000-\$10,000) on the average was identified in two recent surveys as being a positive differentiator for the certified nurse over the non-certified nurse. This is the first time a monetary differential of any significance has been identified in a survey.

The question remains — why would any nurse not want to certify?

By Mary C. Smolenski, EdD, APRN, BC, FAANP, CAE
Director, Certification Services, American Nurses Credentialing Center

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1. Cary, Ann. Certified Registered Nurses: Results of the Study of the Certified Workforce. American Journal of Nursing, Vol 101, No.1, January 2001, pgs. 44-52.
2. Stromberg, Marilyn F., et.al. Specialty Certification, More than a title. Nursing Management, May 2005, pgs 36-40.