

# Relevance of Certification

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## Objectives


- Describe the relevance of nursing certification
- Identify barriers for achieving specialty nursing certification
- Discuss successful strategies for achieving nursing certification

## Defining Certification

- Nursing specialty certification is "a mechanism for validation or formal recognition by documenting individual nurses' knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to their specialty." Chappel K, Jeong D, ElChammao K, et al.
- Above and beyond entry-level education and licensing

## History of Certification

- Established in the United States in 1945  
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
- Over 180 specialty certification options



## ANCC

- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
  - Subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA)
  - Certification body for nursing board certification
  - Largest certification body for advanced practice registered nurses in the United States
    - 2011 certifying over 75,000 APRNs, including nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists
- ANCC's nursing board certification program is one of the oldest in the USA
  - Many of ANCC certifications were established before 1980, when nursing certification was still in early developmental stages

## ANCC Timeline

- 1966: ANA created certification boards
- 1968: paper published on certification
- 1973: Announcement of national certification program
- 1974: first certification exams. The next 17 years expansion of certification exams.
- 1990: ANA created ANCC, subsidiary nonprofit corporation
- 1999: created an international branch of the organization
- 2024: ANCC offers certification programs in 29 nursing specialties

## Why Get Certified?



## Reasons for Certification

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <p><b>Intrinsic: Personal Incentives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Personal accomplishment</li> <li>■ Satisfaction</li> <li>■ Validates knowledge</li> <li>■ Professional growth</li> <li>■ Attainment of practice standard</li> <li>■ Commitment</li> <li>■ Professional challenge</li> <li>■ Credibility</li> </ul> | <p><b>Extrinsic: Professional Incentives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Peer recognition</li> <li>■ Employer recognition</li> <li>■ Recognition from other professionals</li> <li>■ Consumer confidence</li> <li>■ Advances the profession</li> <li>■ Salary</li> <li>■ Marketability</li> </ul> |
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## Return of Investment

- Patient returns
  - Lower rate of complications
    - Hospital-acquired conditions
  - Failure to rescue
  - Mortality
  - 30-day mortality

## Organizational Investment

- Promote Certification
  - Organization goals
  - Financial support
  - Recognition and reward
- Unit Promotion
- Support Certification
  - Certification review courses
  - Study groups
  - Mentors

## What Prevents Nurses Getting Certified

- Time
- Finances
  - Study prep
    - Books
    - Practice exam(s)
    - Review class
  - Exam
- Lack of employer recognition
- Fear of failure

## How to Get Started

- Investigate which certification
- Review the eligibility requirements
- Find a mentor
  - Unit
  - Reach out to your national certification organization
- Map out a study plan
- Set a goal for test taking
- DO IT!

## Summary

- Deciding when to begin the journey toward certification is an individual decision
- Set a timeline and goal
- Advocate for organizational support

## References

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