Getting and Staying Certified: Issues for the New and Practicing NP

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Objectives

Upon completion of the program, the participant will be able to:
- Describe the purpose and requirements of NP certification and recertification.
- Identify future trends in NP certification.

Opportunity:
We can look at where we have come as the NP profession.

What else happened in 1965?

1965

1965 was a time of
- Societal change
- Desperate need for healthcare providers, particularly in primary care
- The institution of healthcare insurance plan that was a source of great debate

Sound familiar?
In 1965...

Dr. Loretta Ford, the cofounder of the first NP program was NOT concerned about physician shortage but WAS concerned about the lack of primary health care services.

NP Certification: An Overview

In the First 15 Years of the NP Role’s Establishment

• The scope of practice expanded, matched with the increasing complexity of healthcare

In the First 15 Years of the NP Role’s Establishment (continued)

• Need to define and credential the profession
• Part of this credentialing included the establishment of the NP certification examination.

NP Certification

• Certification part of APN licensure in nearly all of the US states

• Exceptions
  – Kansas
  – New York
  – California

How do the certifying organizations describe certification and the NP certification examination?

• Per the ANCC
  – “Certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency or an association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications.”
How do the certifying organizations describe certification and the NP certification examination? (continued)

• “Certification can be used for entry into practice, validation of competence, recognition of excellence, and/or for regulation. It can be mandatory or voluntary.”

• “Certification validates an individual’s knowledge, skills, and abilities in a defined role and clinical area of practice, based on pre-determined standards.”


How do the certifying organizations describe certification and the NP certification examination? (continued)

• “The Nurse Practitioner (NP) certification examination tests the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for entry into advanced practice.”


How does the National Council of State Boards of Nursing describe the APRN (NP, CNM, CRNA, CNS)?

• An Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) is a nurse who practice builds on the competencies of registered nurses (RNs) by demonstrating a greater depth and breadth of knowledge, a greater synthesis of data, increased complexity of skills and interventions, and greater role autonomy.

Currently, there is no uniform model of regulation of APRNs across the states. This has created a significant barrier for APRNs to easily move from state to state and has decreased access to care for patients.

APRN Regulation: LACE Essentials

• **Licensure**
  – Granting of authority to practice

• **Accreditation**
  – Formal review and approval by a recognized agency of educational degree or certification programs in nursing or nursing-related programs

APRN Regulation: LACE Essentials (continued)

• **Certification**
  – Formal recognition of knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by the achievement of standards identified by the profession

• **Education**
  – Formal preparation of APRNs in graduate degree-granting or post-graduate certificate programs

Relationship Between Educational Competencies, Licensure and Certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Measures of competencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Foci</td>
<td>Licensure Based on Education and certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Specialty Certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
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APRN Regulatory Model

- **APRN Specialties**
  - Focus of Practice beyond role and population focus
  - Related to ethical framework
- **Population Foci**
  - Oncology
  - Older Adults
  - Orthopedics
  - Nephrology
  - Palliative Care
  - Critical Care

Foundational Requirements for Certification per APRN Consensus

- **APRN certification used for licensure will:**
  - Follow established certification testing and psychometrically sound, legally defensible standards for APRN examinations for licensure.
  - Assess the APRN core and role competencies across at least one population focus of practice.

Foundational Requirements for Certification per APRN Consensus (continued)

- **APRN certification used for licensure will:**
  - Assess specialty competencies separately from the APRN core, role and population focused competencies.
  - Be accredited by a national certification accreditation body.
Foundational Requirements for Certification per APRN Consensus (continued)

• APRN certification used for licensure will: (cont.)
  – Enforce congruence between the education program and the type of certification examination.
  – Provide a mechanism to ensure ongoing competence and maintenance of certification.

Target Date for Full Implementation

For the uniform APRN regulations across the four essential elements for licensure, accreditation, certification, and education=2015

ANCC NP Credentials: 2008 Changes

• APRN, BC (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Board Certified) was retired effective January 1, 2008.
• Replaced with FNP-BC, ANP-BC, ACNP-BC, etc.

What we have had...

• Implying primary care
  – Adult NP, family NP, gero NP
    • Offered by ANCC, AANP
  – WHNP
    • Offered by NCC
  – Peds NP
    • Offered by ANCC

APRN Regulatory Model
Already Here

- Pediatric Acute Care NP
  - Already here with PCNB
- Pediatric Primary Care NP
  - Already here with PCNB

Launched early 2013 or Launching Soon

- Adult-Gerontology Acute Care NP
  - ANCC
- Adult-Gerontology Primary Care NP
  - In 2013, ANCC and AANP
- Adult-Gerontology CNS (wellness through acute care)
  - In 2014

Certification retirement?

A number of certifications will be retired due to not meeting the APRN Consensus Model requirements for role and/or population foci.

Exams Retiring Soon (End 2014)

- Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
- Adult Nurse Practitioner
  - ANCC and AANP
- Gerontological NP
  - ANCC and AANP
- Gerontological Clinical Nurse Specialist

Exams Retiring Soon (continued)

- Adult Health Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Adult Psychiatric & Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Adult Psychiatric & Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Child/Adolescent Psychiatric & Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist

What happens if you hold one of these certifications?

- Keep certification current!
- If your certification lapses, you may not be able to renew your existing certification or your license to practice.
- Your credential is NOT retiring!
ANCC’s Proposed Updates in 3-year Existing Cycle

• To incorporate Consensus Model requirements
  – Family Nurse Practitioner
  – Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
  – Family Psychiatric & Mental Health NP (across the lifespan)

ANCC’s Proposed Updates in 3-year Existing Cycle (continued)

• To incorporate Consensus Model requirements
  – Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist (from wellness to acute care)
• "The process of updating these certifications may also include an evaluation of the title."

ANCC’s APRN Corner: Frequently Asked Questions


Certification by Portfolio

• Emergency department NP
  – Later 2013 as a joint program of ANCC and ENA
  – Likely will not qualify as a licensing certification form
• Portfolio evaluation=Emerging certification model

Certification Examinations Not Part of Licensing Process

• Advanced practice certification by examination
  – Advanced diabetes management
  – Oncology
  – Dermatology
  – Occupational health
  – Others

Examination for NPs with Earned Doctoral Degree

• Often called the "DNP exam"
  – Sponsored by the American Board of Comprehensive Care
  – http://www.abcc.dnpcert.org/
  – Credential=Diplomate of Comprehensive Care=DCC
• Currently not licensing exam
http://www.abcc.dnpcert.org/development.shtml

• “The purpose of this exam is to test DNP graduates' medical knowledge and understanding of the clinical science considered essential for the sophisticated practice of comprehensive care, with emphasis on patient management in ambulatory care settings.”

NP Recertification Every 5 Years: Examples

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<tr>
<th>ANCC</th>
<th>AANP</th>
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<tr>
<td>Practice hours plus CE hours and select professional activities or retest (if cert remains available)</td>
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FHEA Free Resources

• Contact Hour Tracker
  – http://fhea.com/npexpert/

A few other thoughts...

• Should we recertify via retesting?
• What will happen when DNP entry credential to practice?

Agencies Offering NP Certification

• American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
  – www.aanpcertification.org
• American Nurses Credentialing Center
  – www.nursecredentialing.org

End of Presentation
Thank you for your time and attention.
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Agencies Offering NP Certification
(continued)

- AACN Certification Corporation
  - www.aacn.org
- National Certification Corporation
  - www.nccwebsite.org
- Pediatric Nursing Certification Board
  - www.pncb.org

Additional Resources
(continued)

- Archived FHEA electronic newsletters
  - Timely information on pharmacology
  - Clinical issues of interest to advanced practice nurses
  - Available free of charge at www.fhea.com/ezine_archive.shtml

Additional Resources

- Frequently asked questions, study recommendations and sample exam questions to aid in preparing for certification including archives of Margaret Fitzgerald’s certification issues articles
  - Available free of charge at www.fhea.com/certificationcols/certfaqfhea.shtml

Additional Resources
(continued)