

Testimonials from Current AANN Members

Hear from your neuroscience nursing colleagues, in their own words, the best part of being a neuroscience nurse and the benefits of certification.

1. What is the best part of your career?

Erin Fecske, RN MSN CPNP CNRN, Epilepsy Nurse Practitioner: I love my patients and having the opportunity to be a part of their lives. The moment when you suddenly find yourself playing ring-around-the-rosie with a patient, climbing under the exam table to do an assessment on a child who made a fort there, connecting with a teen, or watching a parent grow into the amazing advocate that you always knew they could be, those little moments are just amazing.

Jason Jones, BSN RN SCRNP, Clinical Nurse: The best part of my career is the opportunity for growth and advancement. For me, stagnation is my worst fear. I'm grateful to work in a profession, and at an institution, that values continuing education and opportunities for change and upward mobility. What I find most motivating is seeing examples of nurses moving up the clinical ladder, and advancing to roles that allow them to have greater spheres of influence, affecting the nursing profession and the healthcare industry in general, which I aspire to.

Stacy Smith, RN CNRN, Nurse Manager: Personally, I enjoy watching the successes of those I work with and mentor/encourage. I find that very satisfying!

2. How do your patients/employer benefit from your certification?

Erin Fecske, RN MSN CPNP CNRN, Epilepsy Nurse Practitioner: Having certification and the process of obtaining my certification helped me to advance my knowledge beyond my typical scope. I work with a narrow population, but having the information for a broad base of neurological disorders is beneficial to my understanding. That information aids in my ability to provide ongoing education and support for my families. Additionally, the neuroanatomy that I learned for certification comes in handy every single day. It is because of this core understanding that I can confidently answer questions about brain anatomy for my families. I may be terrible at drawing, the nurses always chuckle at my crayon drawing on exam tables, but I know that I'm accurately depicting the anatomy and physiology for my families so that they can take that understanding home.

Jason Jones, BSN RN SCRNP, Clinical Nurse: Employees and patients benefit from nursing certification because of the translation of advanced knowledge to positive patient outcomes. Nurses with board certification demonstrate that they have in-depth pathophysiological, clinical, and psychosocial knowledge necessary to be able to provide the highest care and outcomes to patients and families. It is through knowledge

that we are able to advance our own nursing practice and the nursing profession as a whole. Patients and families look for physicians that hold board certification due to what it signifies; perhaps they will also look for hospitals with high percentages of certified nurses for the same reasons.

Stacy Smith, RN CNRN, Nurse Manager: Certification pushes nurses to learn even more and hone that knowledge they learned early on, to then apply it to what they do with patients. The patient gets a nurse who is much more well-rounded and astute.

3. How has certification helped you advance in your career?

Erin Fecske, RN MSN CPNP CNRN, Epilepsy Nurse Practitioner: Early in my career my hospital supported certification and obtaining my certification helped me progress up the nursing clinical ladder, later, having that certification helped me obtain a position in an epilepsy clinic as a new grad APRN. It demonstrated to the group that I was interested, driven, and educated for the patient population.

Jason Jones, BSN RN SCRNP, Clinical Nurse: Certification has helped me advance in my career by validating my expertise as a stroke certified RN. I currently am working on a research project related to post-stroke depression. Expertise and knowledge validation is important in research and appearing as a "content expert" when presenting at the local and national levels, and attaining certification helps me to achieve greater credibility when speaking as an authority on this topic.

Stacy Smith, RN CNRN, Nurse Manager: Absolutely – I was certified early in my career and it made a big difference for me to be noticed as a clinical expert. I also was one of the first nurses with dual certifications working at the bedside, and that has spurred others on to do it to where dual certifications are much more common. I also recently felt it was important to obtain my nurse executive certification for my role as a manager. As I go forward, I will continue to evaluate the certifications I have and continue to value that in whatever role I'm in.