

## CNRN Corner

### Magnet™ Recognition and Certification: What's the Correlation?

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#### **Background of Magnet™ Recognition**

In 1983, the “Magnet” concept was born. The American Academy of Nursing (AAN) conducted a study of 163 healthcare organizations to identify and describe variables in creating an environment that attracted and retained well-qualified nurses who promoted quality care for patients. From this study, 41 of the organizations demonstrated Magnet-like qualities because of their ability to attract and retain professional nurses.

In 1990, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) was established as an organization through which AAN offered credentialing programs and services. The Magnet Recognition Program® was developed by the ANCC to recognize healthcare organizations providing quality patient care through nursing excellence and innovative practice. In 1994 the University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle became the first ANCC-designated Magnet organization.

The Magnet Recognition Program is based on quality indicators and standards of nursing. Goals of the program include

- promoting quality in a setting that supports professional practice
- identifying excellence in the delivery of nursing services to patients and residents
- disseminating “best practices” in nursing services.

Magnet nursing leaders value staff nurses, involve them in shaping practice, and encourage advanced nursing practice and certification.

Magnet recognition is the ultimate marketing strategy for these healthcare organizations because it provides the public with benchmark information regarding the quality of care that they should expect to receive. Patients can feel safe knowing that they are entering a safe environment that employs competent nurses who are dedicated to improving patient outcomes.

#### **Professional Certification**

The definition of *professional certification*, according to Wikipedia, is “a designation earned by a person to assure qualification to perform a job or task. Many certifications are used as postnominal letters indicating an earned privilege from an oversight professional body acting to safeguard the public interest.”

*Certification* is a term that has been used for a number of years by healthcare professions to distinguish providers who meet educational preparation standards for practice and are able to demonstrate competency by passing an examination. This certification is typically awarded by a specialty board. The same process occurs in nursing.

Certification needs to be promoted so the public is able to recognize the significance of this accomplishment. Board certification also gives the public some assurance that the individual must engage in life-long learning to maintain and renew their certification. Being cared for by a certified nurse provides comfort to the patient because their assigned nurse has achieved an elevated level of practice.

## What Is the Connection Between Magnet Recognition and Certification?

Nursing certification is becoming the standard for distinguishing a nurse's level of expertise and knowledge of professional nursing practice. Just as with Magnet Recognition<sup>®</sup>, nursing certification also gives the public some assurance that the individual who is caring for them has acquired a predetermined level of knowledge in a particular specialty area. Many sources have provided strong evidence that organizations with a higher percentage of certified nurses have improved patient outcomes, provide a more productive and safe workplace, promote staff retention, and increase patient satisfaction.

### Take the Challenge...Become a CNRN!

Visit [CNRN.org](http://CNRN.org) for more information about the examination.

### References:

- American Nurses Credentialing Center. (2009). *History of the Magnet program*. Retrieved June 2, 2009, from [www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/ProgramOverview/HistoryoftheMagnetProgram.aspx](http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/ProgramOverview/HistoryoftheMagnetProgram.aspx).
- American Nurses Credentialing Center. (2009). *Magnet Recognition Program overview*. Retrieved June 2, 2009, from [www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/ProgramOverview.aspx](http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/ProgramOverview.aspx).

## ABNN Announces CNRN-Retired Credential

If you are planning to retire (or have already retired), you may want to consider the new CNRN-Retired credential. ABNN recently developed this status to recognize CNRNs who have retired from their professional nursing career but wish to maintain their credentials.

In order to be eligible for CNRN-Retired status, candidates must

- retire from professional nursing with no plans to return or renew certification otherwise
- be a current CNRN at the time of retirement
- have a current, unrestricted RN license at the time of retirement.

Visit [www.aann.org/cnrn/retired.html](http://www.aann.org/cnrn/retired.html) for additional information.

## Fall CNRN Exam Information and Deadlines

The paper-pencil CNRN exam will be offered this fall on Friday, October 9, with a computer-based testing window of Friday, September 25–Friday, October 23. **Applications for the fall CNRN exam must be received (not postmarked) by the ABNN office no later than 5 pm (central time) Friday, August 28, 2009.** Applications for independent test sites, along with the required five applications, must be received by the ABNN office on Friday, August 14, 2009.

All applications are available for download [here](#).

## Don't Forget to Register for the CNRN Review Course

If you are preparing for the CNRN examination, you won't want to miss this chance to review the material with Jeanne Clancey, MSN RN CNRN. To find out more about this course, visit the Product Features page in this issue of *Synapse*.

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