

CNRN Corner

ABNN Board of Directors—Call for Nominations

ABNN is looking for certified neuroscience registered nurses (CNRNs) interested in becoming a part of the leadership and helping to shape the future of neuroscience nursing. Applications are now being accepted for two director-at-large positions (one elected and one appointed) for 3-year terms beginning in conjunction with the 2009 AANN Annual Educational Meeting in Las Vegas, March 28–31.

The ABNN Board of Trustees is composed of eight members who oversee the development, operation, and integrity of the CNRN certification process and examination. In addition, trustees set the strategic vision and plan for neuroscience nursing certification.

If you are interested in running for a position, or to learn more, please download and complete a trustee application from www.CNRN.org. Candidates must be CNRNs and have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree with a major or focus in nursing.

We look forward to receiving your completed trustee application electronically and ask that you submit them no later than close of business on Wednesday, December 31. If you have questions, contact Jennifer Boka at jboka@cnrn.org. Thank you for your time and your commitment to ABNN.

Don't miss your opportunity to shape the future of ABNN, and submit your application today!

Melanie Minton Award—Call for Nominations

The Melanie Minton CNRN of the Year Award recognizes outstanding achievement of a certified neuroscience registered nurse (CNRN) in neuroscience nursing clinical practice. This annual award is named after the late Melanie Minton, ABNN board member, former AANN board member, and member of the inaugural class of CNRNs. Nominees may be self- or peer-nominated and should demonstrate outstanding leadership and contributions through professional service, mentoring/education, staff/patient advocacy, and promotion of the CNRN certification. For more information or to complete an application visit www.CNRN.org. **Deadline for nominations/applications for this award: December 31, 2008.**

2008 CNRN Recertification Deadline

For CNRNs initially certified in 2003 or recertified effective January 1, 2004.

Those who missed the October 3 recertification deadline may still submit applications with an additional late fee of \$75. Applications must be received at the ABNN office by 5 pm (CDT) on January 30, 2009. No applications will be accepted after this time.

The 2008 CNRN Recertification Handbook can be downloaded at www.aann.org/credential/Recert.html. Please remember that all applications must be typed.

The ABNN Test Development Committee: A Place to Grow as a Neuroscience Nurse

Cecelia Roscigno, PhD RN CNRN

At the heart of the American Board of Neuroscience Nursing (ABNN) is its certified neuroscience registered nurse (CNRN) Test Development Committee (TDC). The TDC is a volunteer committee composed of 12 CNRNs who write questions for the ABNN CNRN test bank. The current group of TDC volunteers includes nurses with educational background ranging from an associate degree to pre- and post-doctoral training. Their practice settings encompass care of neuroscience patients across the lifespan, in the hospital to the outpatient clinic, as well as in the community. Their collective areas of specialization are diverse, and mirror the various neurological disorders contained in the CNRN test matrix. Because there is constant research in the neurosciences with resultant novel information and practice changes, the committee is also tasked with reviewing and revising test questions to ensure exam diversity, accuracy, and relevance.

This year, a sub-committee of 15 volunteers was created to assist the TDC with validating and updating questions that have been in our exam bank, but now have outdated references. Once again, the area of specialization and educational level of these nurse volunteers is varied. Since the variation seen in both of these groups of volunteers is reflective of the multifaceted nature of actual neuroscience nursing practice, it is ideal to accomplishing our goals.

As chair of the TDC over the past 3 years, I am proud to tell you about the hard work of our members and their accomplishments. ABNN is charged with constructing an exam that is reflective of the diversity of neuroscience nursing practice. The CNRN exam is a generalist exam that tests a broad scope of neuroscience nursing functions and specialization areas. Following the 2005 Role delineation study, the areas identified as part of neuroscience nursing practice was expanded. Because there was a paucity of questions in some of these specialization areas and limited subject matter expertise in these areas on our committee at that time, targeting questions in these poorly represented areas became a priority goal for the current committee. Fortunately, an astute group of neuroscience nurses came forward to volunteer writing questions in these areas.

To support members in improving their item writing skills, educational materials and classes were provided. These measures have resulted in a marked improvement in the statistical performance of new questions being pretested on the CNRN exam. In fact, in the past two years, there were only a handful of questions that were not statistically validated when pretested on any of the CNRN exams. This improvement in exam item performance, allowed the TDC to focus more time on writing new questions. TDC members also reported that these new measures improved their confidence and decreased the anxiety that is inherent in writing questions for an exam.

For those who have never written exam questions, it may seem like an easy task, but those who have done it can tell you that there is both an art and a science to writing good exam questions, especially for the CNRN exam. Our different practice settings, patient populations, and variable nursing expertise all adds to the complexity of writing valid and relevant questions. Neuroscience nurses use countless nursing interventions that vary in the broad nursing intervention categories of physiologic, behavioral, safety, family support, and health care system improvement. Capturing this breadth of nursing care in an exam with a limited number of

questions is challenging. Our members have risen to this challenge and have afforded us the ability to choose questions from a diverse test bank.

Looking forward, Amy Quien has been co-chair this past 6 months and will take over as chair of the TDC committee in January 2009. She will continue with these goals and I am confident that she will continue to think of new ways to improve the composition of our TDC committee, the CNRN exam bank, and the CNRN exam question writing process. I want to personally thank the current members of the TDC, who all work very hard to make sure that the CNRN exam reflects relevant practice of neuroscience nursing.

Carmalita Andrus, MN RN FNP-C CNRN
Eileen Bohan, BSN RN CNRN
Michele DeFilippis, RN CCRN CNRN
Mary Eklund, MN ARNP CNRN
Katherine Johnson, MS RN CCRN CNRN
Mary King, MSN/Ed RN CNRN
Kathleen Meunier, RN CNRN
Jody Leigh Osteyee, MS APRN CPNP CNRN
Amy Quien, MSN ACNP-BC CNRN
Patricia Raetz, MSN APN RN CNRN
Karen L. Saban, PhD APN RN CNRN

Special thanks are also in order for the new members of the TDC re-referencing committee for their hard work: Deborah Krueger, Bessie Hannigan, Richard Herm, F. Michael Vislosky, Holli Takahashi, Barbara Tanner-Torres, Linda Morris, Pamela Frantz, René Smith, Kristine Meyer, Suzanne Pine, LeRoy Marklund, and Sandra Faulkner.

The ABNN TDC periodically puts out calls for volunteers and we hope you will consider volunteering to share your expertise. Writing questions for the CNRN exam is challenging, but it is also a way that you can develop professionally and network with other neuroscience nurses.