



Professional Growth Program Handbook

For Recertification in Wound, Ostomy, Continence and Foot Care Nursing
A publication of the WOCNCB®

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Note: The Handbook may be downloaded at www.wocncb.org

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WOCNCB®
555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
(888) 496-2622
www.wocncb.org

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Updates since 2022 Handbook

1. Recategorized activities into Category One, Category Two, and Category Three, with some activities consolidated or removed.
2. **NEW** — Use your Practice Hours worked for PGP points. See Category Two.
3. Point values now only 5, 10, or 20 unless it is CE
4. No pre-approvals needed
5. No point splitting necessary

 Look for the “Foot” icon which demonstrates it pertains to CFCN recertification.

About PGP

Recertification is achieved every 5 years by submitting a “professional portfolio” using the interactive online submission system for each specialty certification being sought by earning points from the projects or activities outlined in this PGP Handbook. There are three (3) categories of activities and projects:

- ▶ **Category One** – Continuing Education (CE)
- ▶ **Category Two** – Practice Hours
- ▶ **Category Three** – Activities: Teaching, Programs/Projects, Writing/Publications, Research, Volunteering

Each project and activity has defined point values. Portfolios are developed using these point values to equal a minimum of 80 points for each specialty. The PGP Committee will review the portfolio to assure it meets the recertification requirements. After submission of the portfolio, you must be sure your portfolio is reviewed and approved prior to credentials expiration.

Successful recertification requires an in-depth study of the PGP Handbook.



Who is a Candidate for PGP?

Certified WOC or FC nurses demonstrate application of their specialty knowledge by their active involvement with peers, professional organizations and patients. Activities such as teaching presentations, research, publications and volunteering are some of the ways to demonstrate active involvement.

Note: For AP WOC recertification by PGP, please refer to **AP Portfolio** for handbook and forms.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the WOCNCB® Professional Growth Program, a certificant must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Hold current RN licensure (WOCNCB® staff will verify current licensure via review on state board Websites.)
2. Hold current WOCNCB® certification in all specialties for which recertification is sought. WOCNCB® staff will verify current certification upon receipt of application.

Fees

Upon completing your online portfolio, click on the hyperlink to “Submit Application”. You will be re-directed to the testing agency website, Meazure Learning (www.Meazurelearning.com/wocncb), for payment and may submit for PGP portfolio or a combination of PGP and exams (see **pg. 3** for instructions). Fees are subject to change.

One Specialty: \$395

Two Specialties: \$510

Three Specialties: \$610

Four Specialties: \$670

Administrative fee: \$25 per resubmission/per specialty (see **pg. 18** “Revisions and Resubmissions”)

Late Fee \$75*

*A late fee of \$75 allows you to submit up to 30 days after the PGP submission deadline shown on page 4. Online link for late fee on www.wocncb.org/pgp

PGP portfolio submission fees are non-refundable unless you withdraw the portfolio prior to a review by the PGP Committee. Reviews typically start within a week of submission.

About PGP

📍 Applying for PGP in Combination with Exams

The costs are the same whether combining Exam and PGP or not, as shown in the “Fees” section.

Instructions:

1. When submitting your completed PGP portfolio, click “Submit Application”
2. You are then automatically directed to the testing agency site, www.Measurelearning.com/wocncb for payment (either PGP or Exams or both)
3. Click on “Password Retrieval” to obtain a new password only used for the purposes of payment
4. Sign in to the Measure Learning.com/wocncb site
5. Click “start application” and verify “PGP” is indicated for each specialty you are sending by PGP
6. Click “standard” as the option next to any specialty for which you wish to take the Standard exam (versus AP exam)
7. Click “start application” a second time to submit the credit card information

www.Measurelearning.com/wocncb

WOCNCB
The Gold Standard for Certification™
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board

WOCNCB Candidate Access

Welcome / Login
WOCNCB Web Site
Resources
Candidate Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to the WOCNCB Online System. This site is maintained by the WOCNCB's vendor, Meazure Learning. Your browser must allow pop-up windows during this application process.

The WOCNCB Candidate Handbook offers additional information and may be found at the link on the left side of the screen.

Important Login Instructions

- **Initial/First Time Candidates:** Use this application if it is the *first time* you have ever applied for a WOCNCB credential exam. To start an application, click on the **Create Account** button and follow the instructions on each screen.
- **Recertifying/Returning Candidates:** Use this application if you are recertifying or retaking a WOCNCB credential exam. To start an application, click on the **Sign In** button after entering the email address and password on file with Measure Learning. If Measure Learning has an outdated email for you, update it by writing to candidatesupport@measurelearning.com to inform us of your new email address. Email updates will only occur during our office hours – Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Eastern).
- **Recertifying with PGP Portfolio:** PGPs are paid for through the Measure Learning system, but only if the email address under which you submitted your portfolio matches the email address that Measure Learning has on file for you. If you believe there is a discrepancy, send an email to candidatesupport@measurelearning.com to update our records to your new email address. Email updates will only occur during our office hours – Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Eastern).
- **Combination of Recertifying via PGP and Examinations:** If you are completing payment for one or more specialties via exam in combination with your PGP, you will need to log in and click **Start Application**, choose your PGP and your exam specialties on the same screen and then fill out the exam application according to eligibility requirements found in the Candidate Handbook. Payment for all specialties is made at the end of the exam application for both PGP and exams. (This process will allow you to schedule exams once Measure Learning has processed your application. An email is generated by Measure Learning within 10 to 14 days with a link for exam scheduling. Your PGP portfolio is automatically submitted to WOCNCB after this step is completed.)
[Search For PGP](#)

Please Note: This site is for applications only. Refer to your Notice to Schedule email for scheduling instructions.

Sign in
Password Retrieval
Create Account

Communicate with Measure Learning

About PGP

Portfolio Submission Deadlines

Deadline: 3 months prior to certification expiration date

You **MUST** submit no later than 3 months prior to your certification expiration date. You may submit up to 12 months prior to certification expiration.

Example: If your certification expires June 30th, your portfolio deadline is 3 months prior (March 31) and you may submit your portfolio as early as June 30th the year prior.

Early submission does not affect your original CFCN[®] or combined tri-specialty (CWOCN[®]) certification expiration date. Five years will be added to the current certification expiration date upon recertification approval. Certifications earned separately each have their own deadline date. Written requests to combine credentials may be sent to the WOCNCB[®] office.



Due no later than **3 months** prior to credentials expiration

Certification expires: September 30, 2025
Eligibility window: September 30, 2024 to June 30, 2025
Points Accrual: June 6, 2020 to June 30, 2025

Late Portfolio Submission Policy

Late portfolios will be accepted if submitted no later than 30 days following the Portfolio Submission Deadline of 3 months prior to the certification expiration date. A late fee of \$75 applies and must be set up in advance of a portfolio submission.

Late Fee Submission Instructions

1. Go to online link for late fee on www.wocncb.org/pgp (bottom of page)
2. Submit your \$75 late fee
3. Your portfolio deadline will be updated within 24 hours in your PGP account to the new date that is 30 days after your original deadline
4. Remember, this late fee is only for the late submission allowance and you must still click the "Submit Application" link and pay the full recertification fees



Forgot?

Find the website link to set up a late submission, at

<http://www.wocncb.org/recertification/professional-growth-program-pgp>

under "Fees" at the bottom of the page. Be sure you also click "Submit Application" in your PGP portfolio account after paying the late fee.

A late portfolio beyond the 30 days requires preapproval by the Credentialing and Review Committee. Email your written request to the WOCNCB[®] Office at info@WOCNCB.org. Once the request is received, it will be reviewed by the Credentialing and Review Committee, which will vote to determine if the portfolio will be approved for extension/late submission. A \$100 late fee applies and will be collected prior to portfolio submission.

Those receiving credentials extension must keep their activities in a portfolio within the published submission deadlines.

Example: your credentials expire June 2024 and you submitted on April 30 as a late application; therefore activities in the portfolio must occur through March 30 which is the original deadline.

About PGP

Point Accumulation

You may continue to accumulate PGP points for the current 5-year recertification period until your submission deadline. PGP points earned after the submission deadlines will be applicable to your next 5-year recertification period.

For new certificants or certificants who recertify using the exam, the 5-year recertification period begins the day after passing the certification exam. For certificants who previously recertified using PGP, the 5-year recertification period begins the the day after the portfolio is accepted until the next PGP submission deadline.

Example: Your certification expires December 31, 2025 and your portfolio submission deadline is September 30, 2025 – therefore your 5-year certification period for accumulating points is from September 30, 2020 to September 30, 2025.

Candidates may begin to accrue points for their next recertification period the day after their portfolio is accepted, even if this date is prior to the PGP Submission Deadline.

Example: PGP Submitted on 9/1/2024 for a March 2025 credentials expiration when the PGP Submission Deadline is 12/31/2024 – and the portfolio is accepted on 9/20/2024; your next recertification period begins with 9/21/2024 to accrue points.



Point Accumulation Example

Certification expires: September 30, 2025

Eligibility window: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025

Points accrual: March 31, 2020 to March 31, 2025

Online Submission System / Quick Start Guide

- For a Quick Start Guide, [click here](#).
- The online submission system can be found at <http://www.wocncb.org/pgp/>
- Prior to creating your portfolio, register and create a login and password.
- You will need your RN License number for your profile as verification.
- Enter activities in each specialty portfolio in which you seek to recertify.
- You will be able to continuously access your saved data in order to work on your portfolio over the five-year recertification period.
- The “Unassigned” section allows you to enter activities that might fit into more than one specialty. You may later move them to the appropriate specialty as needed.
- Submit your completed specialty portfolio(s) to WOCNCB® via the website between 3 and 12 months prior to your credentials expiration.
- PGP payment is made to the Meazure Learning site and you may add Exams if needed and pay for both. **Note: Your PGP “Profile” email must match Meazure’s records for the payment to be successful. Call or email Meazure Learning for help if needed: 919-572-6880 or candidatesupport@meazurelearning.com.**
- All the portfolio activities entered online are secure and will be maintained over the entire 5-year recertification period. The server back-up systems protect data and prevent data loss. This is the same information that will be received and processed by WOCNCB®’s PGP Committee for review and approval.
- You are encouraged to use the “Download to MS Word” feature for each specialty portfolio for your records.
- If you experience technical difficulties please contact the WOCNCB office directly for assistance 1-888-496-2622 or info@wocncb.org.
- Await email confirmation stating revision is needed or that you are recertified.
- Certificates are mailed and your credential verification will appear on the www.wocncb.org website within 6 weeks. Certificates are mailed once all exams/portfolios are completed.

For any specific questions regarding your PGP activities, please use the on-line “Ask the Board” (<http://www.wocncb.org/ask-the-board>) prior to submission. Questions are routinely answered within 48 – 72 hours.

Portfolio Requirements

The PGP Committee reviews portfolio submissions for recertification according to the policies listed below. You may use the website feature "[Ask the Board](#)", email info@wocncb.org, or call 1-888-496-2622 if you have questions. The PGP Committee is available to assist you and make this a positive experience.

- 1 The PGP portfolio has 3 categories -
- ▶ **Category One:** Continuing Education
 - ▶ **Category Two:** Practice Hours
 - ▶ **Category Three:** Teaching, Research, Writing/Publication, Volunteer activities, Programs/projects

Full descriptions of these categories are found on the following pages.

- 2 Each specialty portfolio must contain a **minimum of 80 points** and meet the minimums/maximums as follows:
- a. **Minimum of 10 CE/CNE/CMEs** must directly relate to the specialty. Up to 40 CE are allowed, per specialty.
 - b. Minimum of forty (40) of the total portfolio points **must directly relate** to the specialty. The entire portfolio may relate to the specialty.
 - c. Maximum of forty (40) points may come from Professional Practice. Professional practice is not required. Maximum of 10 CE allowed from Professional Practice topics.
- 3 Activities/points pertaining to one specialty may not be used in another specialty portfolio.
- 4 Points from one project/activity may only be used once and cannot be used in another specialty.
- 5 Portfolios **must contain 80 points** and cannot exceed 90 points.

- 6 PGP points are not awarded for repeating activities on different dates, unless the topic content clearly has been revised to meet the needs of the learner.
- 7 Do not use any abbreviations (with the exception of SAWC (WHS), WHS, WCET, NPIAP, AANP, AAWC, ANCC, SUNA and WOCN).
- 8 All CE/CNE/CMEs must be listed separately by title (except those from a conference which are grouped together as shown in Appendix A). Please include supporting/clarifying information in the "Comments" section.
- 9 List Conference CE/CNE/CMEs and respective point values. Refer to Appendix A for an example. If the name of the session does not reflect the content, please write a brief description along with the title.
- 10 **Review definitions** of activities/projects prior to completing your PGP portfolio, listed within each activity description.
- 11 Up to 10 "Professional Practice" (not the clinical specialty) CE/CNE/CME, which can only come from: SAWC/WHS, WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, AAWC, and ANCC.
- 12 Your portfolio may only contain completed projects. This means all projects/activities are to be completed within your "points accrual" dates (see screen-shot here and #13.) which are shown within your PGP account when logged in.

Certification expires: October 31, 2024
Eligibility window: October 31, 2023 to June 30, 2024
Points Accrual: July 30, 2019 to July 31, 2024

- 13 Points are accrued between your last recertification date and the PGP portfolio deadline as your 5-year period. Your last recertification date was when you last took the exam OR when your PGP was approved.
- 14 Practice Hours are **LIMITED** to 40 points in each specialty portfolio.

Example #1: Certification expires October 31, 2024. Points are accrued between Oct. 31, 2019 through July 31, 2024, because your last certification was earned on Oct. 31, 2019 via exam.

Example #2: Certification expires October 31, 2024. Points are accrued between June 18, 2019 through July 31, 2024, because your last certification was earned on June 18, 2019 via your PGP approval date.

NOTE: It is not permissible to duplicate activities used from the WOC specialties over to Foot Care (FC). The WOCNCB® will review all information for comparison.

- ▶ **80 points total**
- ▶ **At least 10 specialty CE, but up to 40 allowed**
- ▶ **Max of 10 CE in professional practice allowed**
- ▶ **Max of 40 points for Practice Hours per specialty**
- ▶ **Half the portfolio must relate to the Specialty**
- ▶ **Only use completed projects**
- ▶ **Conference CE see Appendix A**
- ▶ **Review "definitions" in hand-book**
- ▶ **"Professional Practice" see Appendix B**

📍 Portfolio Requirements

📍 Help

If you have questions about the PGP process:

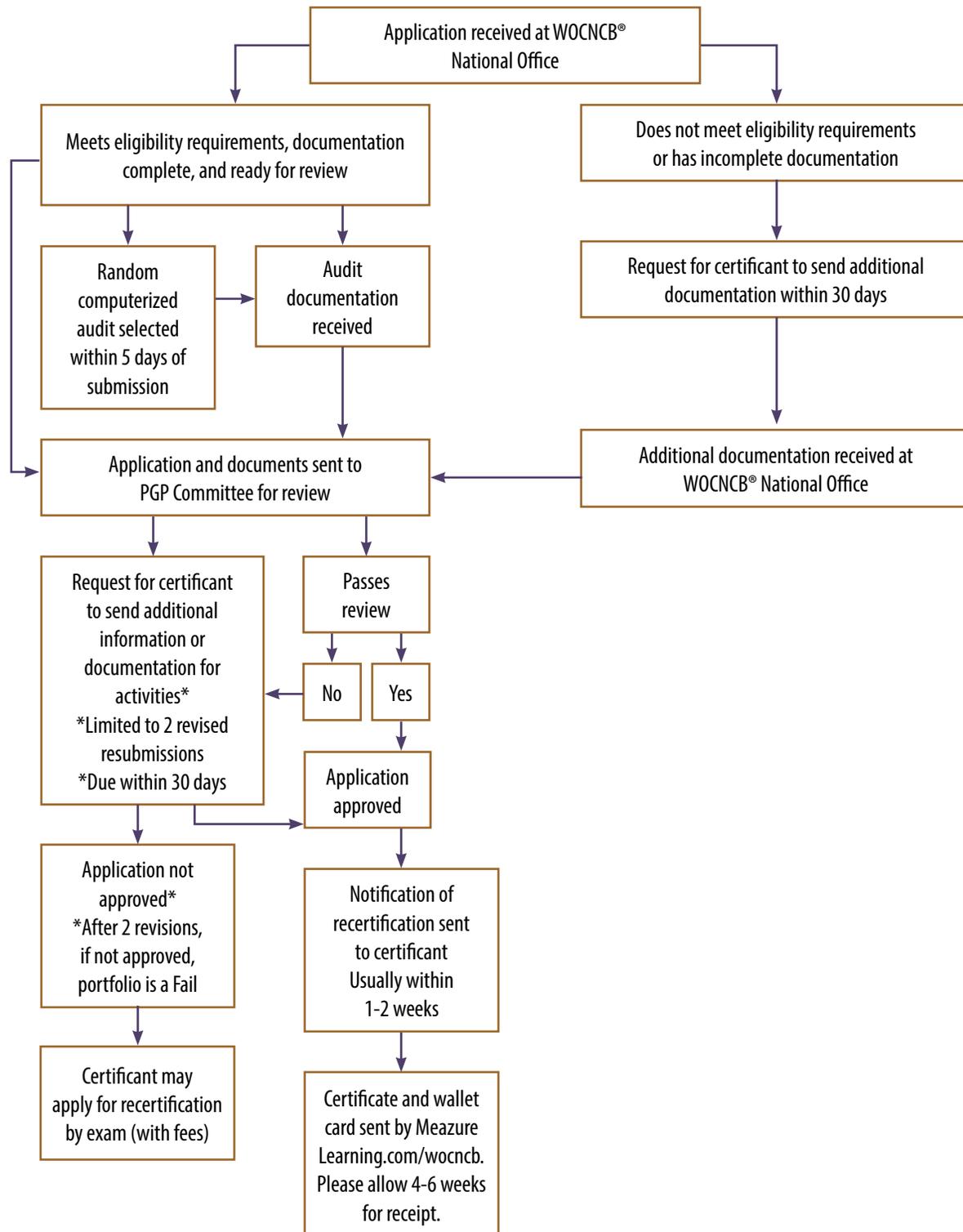
1. Review helpful hints and other resources online (See “Recertification / PGP” on website).
2. Refer to the “Ask the Board” section of the www.wocncb.org website.
3. Review previously answered questions on “Ask the Board” as many questions have been addressed.
4. Post your question to “Ask the Board,” which are routinely answered within 48 – 72 hours.
5. Email or phone the WOCNCB®.

Disclaimer: Answers to PGP questions posted on the www.wocncb.org website’s “Ask the Board” are as accurate as possible without having the questioner’s complete portfolio. Questions may at times lack comprehensive information about a specific activity, or a question or answer may be misinterpreted by the reader. As a result, the WOCNCB® cannot guarantee that it will accept points based on the answer posted on “Ask the Board.” Points can only be fully verified and justified when the completed PGP portfolio is evaluated by a PGP reviewer.

Portfolio Requirements

Application Review Process

The entire application review process can take up to 30 days from date of receipt. If you have not received notification within 30 days, please contact the WOCNCB®.



Continuing Education – CE/CME/CNE

Definition: Attendance at continuing education programs or CE/CNE/CMEs with an approval by an accrediting organization (for example, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), or a state board of nursing). This information is found on the CE/CNE/CME certificate issued to you.

Completion of home study or self-study programs approved for nursing contact hours are acceptable.

Be sure you are not claiming general nursing activities versus those that directly impact or enhance the role of the WOC or FC nurse.

CE CRITERIA

- 1 CEs included in portfolios must be those you completed prior to the PGP submission deadline.
- 2 Individuals that develop and/or present a program may not also receive PGP points for attending that program, even if there is a CE/CNE/CME certificate issued to you. This is considered duplication.

SPECIALTY CE

- 3 Each specialty portfolio must contain a **MINIMUM** of 10 CE/CNE/CME credits that are directly related to the wound, ostomy, continence (WOC) or foot care (FC) specialty. NOTE: Foot care portfolios **MUST** include 10 foot/nail care specific CE's.
- 4 The maximum CE/CNE/CME credits allowed in each specialty portfolio is 40. All 40 CE credits may relate to the specialty.

- !**
- ▶ **10 CE minimum in specialty required**
 - ▶ **40 CE maximum allowed**
 - ▶ **10 Professional Practice CE are only allowed from SAWC (WHS), WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, ANCC, or AAWC**
 - ▶ **CE can be related to specialty or Professional Practice topics, as long as 10 specialty CE are included**
 - ▶ **Do not use general nursing topics**

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE CE

- 5 Professional practice CE must focus on professional practice content and are only allowed from the providers listed below. (See Appendix B for professional practice examples.)
 - Symposium on Advanced Wound Care (SAWC) through the Wound Healing Society (WHS);
 - World Council of Enterostomal Therapy Nurses (WCETN);
 - National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel (NPIAP);
 - Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses Society (WOCNext);
 - Society of Urological Nurses of America (SUNA);
 - American Academy of Wound Care (AAWC);
 - American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP);
 - American Nurses Credentialing Center Magnet Conference (ANCC).
- 6 CE can be related to specialty or Professional Practice topics, as long as 10 specialty CE are included. A maximum of 10 professional practice CE are allowed.
- 7 CE/CNE/CMEs may not relate to another clinical specialty. (i.e., a continence CE/CNE/CME cannot be used as Professional Practice in the ostomy portfolio.)

Examples of acceptable topics: "Marketing Your Business"; "Legal Issues"; "Integrating Technology and Outpatient Billing/ Reimbursement"; "PreceptorWorkshop"; or any of the Professional Practice courses offered at the WOCN® Society Annual Conference.

HOW TO ENTER YOUR CE

- 8 List each conference as one entry, listing CE/CNE/CME session titles/timeframes as shown in **Appendix A**. If the title of the session does not reflect the content, please write a brief description along with the title.
- 9 Professional Practice sessions earned from the same conference must be listed as a separate activity, separate from specialty sessions, and properly checked as Professional Practice. (Examples: See **Appendix A**).
- 10 The brief description is required when the course title does not obviously describe how the content directly impacts or enhances the role of the WOC nurse. List the objectives if it is one course.
- 11 Appropriately check "specialty" or "Professional Practice" in the online system. (See **Appendix B** for Professional Practice.)
- 12 WOCN Society CE/CNE/CME awarded for poster viewing – see handbook page on 'Poster Viewing' that instructs you may enter a CE total for all posters and claim the points in either specialty or professional practice.

Continuing Education – CE/CME/CNE

National/Regional Conference Posters

Please note: The WOCN Society provides contact hours for viewing multiple posters. The PGP Committee approved how these points are used and entered in the PGP portfolios as follows:

- Enter posters in the Continuing Education category as one activity entry with the total of Poster CE's as shown in Appendix A.
- Specific poster titles do not need to be entered -- use "poster viewing" in the Brief Description.
- Points may be used in ANY portfolio, and deemed as Specialty or Professional Practice.
- CE earned from electronic format posters are acceptable.

Points:

1 Contact Hour or 1 CE/CNE/CME Credit = 1 PGP Point
(Max.40 allowed per specialty)

Audit documentation

Certificate of attendance or completion that includes your name, date, program title, provider, approved accrediting organization, and the number of contact hours awarded. Poster viewing shown on a CE certificate is acceptable. If no certificate is available, a WOCNCB® audit form signed by the sponsoring organization may be used as verification.

Practice Hours

Practice hours within the role of WOC or FC nurse – Specialty (S)

Definition: Hours practiced within the role of a Wound, Ostomy, Continence or Foot Care nurse in any work setting (Acute Care, Ambulatory Care, Long Term Care, Home Care, Academics, Administrative, Industry and Independent Practice).

MAXIMUM POINTS

A maximum of 40 points for Practice Hours are allowed in each specialty portfolio.

Points for Practice Hours may be claimed as listed below:

2,000 hours per SPECIALTY per 5 years=40 points

1,000 hours per SPECIALTY per 5 years=20 points

500 hours per SPECIALTY per 5 years=10 points

250 hours per SPECIALTY per 5 years=5 points

Audit documentation: Submit a tracking form and attestation statement, as on example, below.

Tracking Example:

Hours Date	W	O	C	FC
Month of 8/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 7/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 6/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 5/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 4/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 3/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 2/2023	80	40	20	n/a
Month of 1/2023	80	40	20	n/a
2023 YTD	640	320	160	n/a

Attestation: I attest the practice hours as listed are true and accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: *Jane S. Smith*

Teaching, Research, Writing, Volunteer Activities, Programs/Projects

Activities are listed below grouped in order by point values.

40 points – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Textbook chapter author (per chapter)
- ▶ Textbook editor (per textbook)
- ▶ Establish WOC nursing service: independent or within facility (per service)

Definition: You began a NEW SERVICE IN A FACILITY that never had the services of a WOC or FC nurse. This involves writing the proposal to begin this service, developing the billing process and developing policy/procedures.

Audit documentation: Internal or external marketing announcing the service or meeting minutes.

20 Points – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Journal article author - peer reviewed (per article)
- ▶ Data Analysis / Collection / Grant Writing (IRB) (per grant / project)

Definition: IRB (Institutional Review Board) is a committee/group that is given the responsibility by an institution to review research projects involving human subjects. The purpose and role of the IRB is to assure the protection, safety, rights, and welfare of research participants (human subjects).

- ▶ QI Project (per completed project)

Definition: Quality Improvement project is defined as an activity in which a problem and solutions are identified and a corrective program is implemented. After an initial period of utilizing the program, the solutions are evaluated to identify the results and success of the program.

Requirements: This activity is a multi-step process and must include all of the following elements:

- Problem identification, including starting data that is measurable and reportable
- Identification and implementation of corrective program, listing at least 3 different steps not duplicated in other elements listed here
- Program implementation, listing at least 3 different steps not duplicated in other elements listed here
- Evaluation of outcomes of program (negative and/or positive), conclusion and recommendations for practice, including time period used to implement the plan and measure the outcome data

- Measureable and reported results (the project must be finished during this certification period and cannot be described as ongoing)
- You must include measured data.
- It is expected this project would occur over a significant period of time. This project must be completed prior to including it in the portfolio. Activities done during this multi-step process cannot be claimed again (i.e., in-services, data collection) as another activity and would be considered duplication of activity. Look at your individual activities for the QI to consider whether to break out into separate PGP activities for points, instead of submitting as a QI.

(See example in Appendix C)

Teaching, Research, Writing, Volunteer Activities, Programs/Projects

10 points:

Volunteer Work – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Medical Mission Trip and Humanitarian Work (per trip)
- ▶ Volunteer Work for Patient Support Organization (per event or year as appropriate to activity)
 - Examples:** UOAA Stoma Clinic is an event worth 10 points. Ostomy support group volunteering for one year is worth 10 points.
- ▶ Meeting Coordinator for WOC Networking Group (per year)

Teaching – Specialty (S)

- ▶ SWCA/WTA/OCA Course facilitator/faculty (per course)

Research/Authoring/Reviewing – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Developing or testing a research tool (per tool)
- ▶ Newsletter editor (per year)
- ▶ Expert legal case reviewer, peer reviewed (per case)
- ▶ Journal article reviewer, peer reviewed (per article)
- ▶ Developing a poster (national/regional/local) (per poster).

Requirements: You must be listed as author or co-author. Points can be claimed for both developing and presenting the poster. Cannot be duplicated by using the same poster at different events.

- ▶ Present a poster (national/regional/local) (per poster).

Requirements: You must be listed as author or co-author. Points can be claimed for both developing and presenting the poster. Cannot be duplicated by using the same poster at different events.

- ▶ Data Analysis / Collection, non-IRB (per study)

Definition: The process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established and systematic fashion, that enables one to answer a stated question or hypothesis and evaluate outcomes. Please note, this is different than a Product Trial. See the activity “Product Trial” on page 14 in the 5 points section of this handbook for its definition and requirements.

Professional organizations – Professional Practice (PP)

- ▶ National Organization Board/Committee Chair/Officer/Member (per year)
- ▶ State/Region/Local Board/Committee Chair/Officer/Member (per year)
- ▶ Task Force Chair/Member (per year)
- ▶ National/Region/Local Conference Planning Chair/Member (per year)

Definition: You must be a volunteer and serve on an appointed committee or a patient support group. Dues paid membership does not provide PGP points.

Facility organizations – Professional Practice (PP)

- ▶ Facility/Employer Committee Chair/member (Products/non-products) (per year)
- ▶ Conference planning event Chair/member (per year)

Definition: A body of persons meeting regularly, appointed for a specific function by and usually out of a larger body to consider details of specific WOC or FC activities. You must be serving as an appointed member of the formal committee.

Academic education (per course) – Professional Practice (PP)

Definition: Academic credits must be from an accredited college or university. Credits acquired for a nursing major or by challenge examinations are acceptable. Credits should relate to health care, management, teaching or the biopsychosocial knowledge base of human services. Coursework should enhance or impact the WOC nurse role and relate to health care, teaching, research, management, etc. Points for academic education are considered Professional Practice as the courses will not be directly related to the specialties.

Academic credits are not considered CE/CNE/CME.

Examples of Acceptable Courses

- Physical Assessment
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Business
- Ethics
- Medical languages, e.g., Spanish
- Chemistry/Biology/Microbiology/Natural Sciences

Teaching, Research, Writing, Volunteer Activities, Programs/Projects

5 points:

Programs & Projects – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Arranging a Product fair (per fair)

Definition: An organized event involving display of 3 or more products from more than one vendor for individuals to evaluate and vendors to demonstrate correct product usage. This can consist of multiple vendor display tables/sections. This is not a product trial.
- ▶ Product trial (per trial)

Definition: Product testing intended to provide market information for facility to examine, use and test the product prior to fully committing to use or implementation.

Requirements: Product trial cannot be duplicated as product formulary revision. Product Trial cannot be used as a QI project.
- ▶ Product formulary - develop (per formulary)

Definition: A complete line of products related to WOC or FC available for routine use at healthcare facility.
- ▶ Product formulary (revise) (per revision)
- ▶ Grant Activities (not-research based) (per grant application)
- ▶ WOCNCB Job Analysis / Role Delineation survey
- ▶ Conference Booth Volunteer

Writing – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Journal / Magazine / Newsletter Articles, author for non-peer reviewed publication (per article; per review)
- ▶ Journal / Magazine Article Reviewer for non-peer reviewed publication (per article; per review)
- ▶ Abstract Author / Co-Author (per abstract)
- ▶ Writing a book / Article review (per review)
- ▶ Newsletter article author (per article)
- ▶ Developing competency based tool or an educational tool for patients or health care providers (per tool)
- ▶ Algorithm - develop (per algorithm)

Teaching – Specialty (S)

- ▶ Presentation of an educational program (per 30 minute program, not repeated)
- ▶ Develop an educational program (per 30 minute program, not repeated)

Points may be claimed for both presenting and developing a program.

Points for developing are based on the amount of the presentation time (i.e., a 30 minute presentation you developed is worth the 5 points.)
- ▶ Precepting WOCN students or other medical professionals/students (Must precept for 10 hours minimum to earn the 5 points.)

Appendix A

Conference CE Examples

This is an example of how to enter one conference and its Ostomy specialty points in continuing nursing/medical education. This can be a national or regional conference.

Specialty CE's

Title of Session/Course: 2022 Annual WOCN Conference

CE/CNE/CME credits earned OR Length of session in hours: 4.50

Brief Description of course content:

Prevention and Management of GI Fistulas (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Prevention and Management of Peristomal Hernias (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Site Marking for Difficult Stomas (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Management of the High Output Stoma (1.5 CE/CNE/CME)

Session / Course Provider: WOCN

Approved Accrediting Organization: ANCC

Poster CE's

Title of Session/Course: 2022 Annual WOCNext Conference

CE/CNE/CME credits earned OR Length of session in hours: 10.0

Brief Description of course content:

Poster viewing (do not enter individual poster titles)

Session or Course Provider: WOCN

Approved Accrediting Organization: ANCC

This is an example of how to enter one conference and its Professional Practice points in continuing education. This can be a national or regional conference.

NOTE: Professional practice CE are only allowed from SAWC (WHS), WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, ANCC, or AAWC. Note that professional practice CE are not required and that all CE may pertain to the specialty.

Professional Practice CE/CNE/CMEs

Title of Session/Course: 2022 Annual WOCN Conference

CE/CNE/CME credits earned OR Length of session in hours: 7.25

Brief Description of course content:

Developing a Clinical Practice Supported by content Validated Evidence Based Tools (1.25 CE/CNE/CME)

Navigating the Rapids of Joint Commission and Magnet (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

WOC Roles: The Gateway to Opportunities (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Surgeons and Ethics: You Bet! (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

The WOC Nurses Role in Leading the Charge to Improve Health Care (1.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Annual Evidence Based Medicine Symposium: Transitions and Transformations in Care (2.0 CE/CNE/CME)

Session / Course Provider: WOCN

Approved Accrediting Organization: ANCC

Appendix B

Professional Practice

Definition

Professional Practice is defined as courses or activities that do not directly/clinically relate to wound, ostomy, continence, or foot care nursing specific activities, yet directly impact or enhance the role of the WOC or FC nurse. These are Professional Practice and are not intended to reflect advanced practice nursing, general nursing tasks or non-nursing tasks. These activities may not relate to another specialty.

Requirements

- Up to 10 professional practice CE are allowed, which can only come from SAWC (WHS), WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, ANCC, or AAWC
- It is **not** required to have any items in a portfolio that are professional practice topics (i.e., an entire portfolio can relate to the specialty).
- CE can be related to specialty or Professional Practice topics, as long as 10 specialty CE are included and the 40 PP is the max within overall portfolio
- You are limited to 40 points overall in a portfolio that are professional practice topics.
- PGP portfolio points submitted as Professional Practice are subject to review by the PGP committee.

? Ask yourself “would this topic alone make me a WOC specialist?” (For example, if I were only taking CE courses in “Patient Safety” or “CPR” would that make me a WOC Nurse?) If the answer is No, it is likely not qualified as “Professional Practice”.

Example

Below are examples of topics directly related to the Clinical Specialty versus Professional Practice. Professional practice CE are only allowed from SAWC (WHS), WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, ANCC, or AAWC

Topic	Provider	Professional Practice	Clinical Specialty
Marketing Your Business	WOCN	✓	
Legal Issues	WOCN	✓	
Deposition on the Witness Stand	NPIAP	✓	
Research: Fine Tuning your Practice	WHS	✓	
General Session: When the Music Changes, So Does the Dance	AAWC	✓	
Conference Planning Committee, WOCN Region	WOCN Region	✓	
It All Starts With Attitude	SUNA	✓	
Publication Ethics	AANP	✓	
Insider Secrets to Wound Care	SAWC		✓
Palliative Wound Care	SAWC		✓
It's Not Just a Rash! So What Is It? What Do I Do?	WOCN Regional		✓
Treatment and Management of wound pain	WOCN		✓
Stage 2 pressure injury: Partial Thickness Skin Loss	NPIAP		✓
Over the Rainbow with Skin Tears	Mercy Med.Ctr.		✓
MASD vs. Pressure Injuries: What is that Yellow Stuff	ANCC		✓



- ▶ Professional practice CE are only allowed from SAWC (WHS), WCET, NPIAP, WOCN, SUNA, AANP, ANCC, or AAWC
- ▶ CE is limited to 10 professional practice points in each portfolio
- ▶ Not for general nursing tasks.

Appendix C

Below is an example of a Quality Improvement Project write-up as it would appear in your online portfolio.

Activity type*

Professional practice * Specialty

Date activity completed *

PGP points claimed for this activity: 20

Give an overview of the problem identified including the starting data (this must be measurable and reportable data) *

My facility-acquired pressure injury (HAPI) prevalence and incidence (P&I) rate was 8%. This high rate was not acceptable and had implications for the financial reimbursement of the facility. There was a need identified to reduce the HAPI rate for the first quarter of the year.

Describe the corrective plan and implementation of the plan listing a minimum of 3 different steps (in-services, data collections, task force meetings)

*** these activities cannot be duplicated in other entries *

1. I formed a team of colleagues that includes nurse managers, quality specialists, nursing educators, and skin care champions.
2. The team reviewed our policies, procedures, and protocols for preventing pressure injuries and reviewed current literature on best practice. The team determined what changes needed to be implemented in my facility.
3. An education process began with nursing staff on the proposed changes.
4. I developed a pressure injury team of nurses from each unit that make sure to implement the changes that were identified.

Describe the time period used to implement the plan and measure the outcome data *

This project started with the identification of high HAPI P&I rates and identification of the changes in January and the collection of data in April through June for comparison to the previous rate noted at 8%.

Enter the measurable and reported outcome data for the project (the project must be finished during this certification period and cannot be described as ongoing) *

After collecting the data of reported HAPI the three months following the intervention, there is a drop in the HAPI rate to 2%.
The data was presented to the nursing quality improvement staff and the appropriate changes were made to the policies and procedures.
HAPI rates continue to be monitored on a regular basis and stay at or below 2%.

Unassigned

The online system has tabbed sections for wound, ostomy, continence, etc. and includes a section marked “Unassigned”. This is a place you may enter projects and activities when you are unsure of how or where to use them. It is a placeholder for you to save them and later assign the item to a portfolio specialty. By clicking on the “move” feature it can be sent to Wound, Ostomy, Continence, or Foot Care.

NOTE: Information is never transmitted to WOCNCB from Unassigned unless you move it to a specialty portfolio. You may delete items if you do not plan to use them but will always be stored here if you do not delete them.



This section is your “Placeholder” for items to move to a specialty portfolio as needed



📌 Revisions and Resubmissions

If your portfolio is deemed incomplete or incorrectly filed, it will be returned and you may choose to revise and resubmit. The following rules apply to portfolio revisions and resubmissions:

- Minor requests for clarification/edits may be sent to you without request for revision/resubmission and administrative fee.
 - Example:** You entered a CE/CNE/CME and clicked the checkbox for “Professional Practice” and it is actually related to the wound care specialty and you should have clicked the “Specialty” checkbox. This can be sent to you for minor editing.
- You will be allowed to revise your original portfolio and resubmit it for consideration for further review for recertification if it is not approved initially. Portfolios cannot exceed 90 points.
- An email notification is sent for revision requests within 1 to 2 weeks. Check your spam and junk emails if you have not received a message in your inbox. Contact WOCNCB directly if you have not received messages.
- There is a LIMIT OF TWO revisions and resubmissions. An administrative fee of \$25 per resubmission is charged for each specialty portfolio. For example, the initial portfolio is submitted, and a revision is requested. The first revision is submitted. If required, a second revision will be requested, and that revision will need to be submitted. At that point, no further revisions of the portfolio will be accepted.
- The revised portfolio must meet all the standards outlined in the handbook.
- Portfolios must receive approval prior to your credentials expiration.
- After the second and final revision, if that version of the portfolio is not approved – your portfolio is considered a fail status for recertification.
- If your portfolio is not accepted, you must apply for examination with a separate application and fees.

You **MUST** resubmit your revised portfolio within 30 days of the request, even if you have submitted it prior to the deadline or were granted an extension. If it is resubmitted past 30 days, another \$25 fee will be assessed.

Clarification

Examples of a portfolio being deemed returned for clarification are:

- You entered professional practice topics that were marked as “specialty”
- You submitted a PGP activity for a presentation and the presentation evaluation method was described as “1 – 5”, but this should be clarified in order to rank the presenter between 1 and 5, worst to best, on evaluations
- A Wound Care Committee activity was marked “professional practice”. This should be corrected by clicking the checkbox as “specialty”
- Abbreviations were used in your write-up such as “PICC”, and the reviewer would like you to spell out the meaning as “Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter”
- You gave a vague title of a committee, such as “Safe Patient Handling Committee”, and the reviewer asked you to clarify what was your role on the committee as it pertains to the specialty.
- You completed the online form by answering the questions on a QI when it was unnecessary



- ▶ **Email notifications are sent if Revision is needed**
- ▶ **Limited to 2 resubmissions**
- ▶ **Resubmissions due within 30 days of notice**
- ▶ **Be sure to click “Resubmit Portfolio” on each specialty**
- ▶ **If not resubmitted and approved prior to credentials expiration, credentials will lapse**

Revisions and Resubmissions

Revision

Portfolios returned for Revision status will contain multiple errors, which may include:

- CE included that pertained to a general nursing task, such as a CPR course.
- Using too many professional practice points
- Using items from the wrong specialty or different specialty.
- Clinical Education of other Medical Professionals is used incorrectly. Twenty students are listed for 1 hour of bedside mentoring when it is clearly classroom education or a presentation rather than bedside mentoring
- Duplicate CE entries
- NP Committee member of State Board of Nursing. This does not relate to WOC role
- Provided incomplete information on Case Study Data Collection, need more detail (i.e., how many charts were reviewed, what specific data was collected over the 5 week period, how data was analyzed, etc.)
- A presentation that contained both Wound and Ostomy content was included in the wound portfolio. Only the presentation time for wound content can be claimed in the wound portfolio.

Audit Process

- The WOCNCB® performs a random audit on PGP applications for quality assurance purposes and to remain in keeping with NCCA and ABSNC accreditation standards.
- Certificants selected for audit will be notified by email within five (5) days of submission of application.
- If audited, you must submit the documentation required for audit to the WOCNCB® within 30 days.
- The required audit documentation is listed at the end of each of the Activity Categories.
- Only one opportunity to comply is allowed. Failure to comply will result in a failed portfolio. To maintain your credential you will need to submit an exam application and all applicable fees.

Records you should keep for potential audit:

- CE certificate of completion/attendance
- Academic transcripts
- Copy of project completed, such as algorithm, grant approval letter, law case confirmation letter, product formulary, etc.
- Copy of publication (article, brochure, chapter, etc.)
- Copy of IRB approval letter
- Sign-in sheet from presentation
- Proof of poster acceptance
- Precepting tracking form

Policies

Revocation of Certification

The WOCNCB® will revoke certification for any reason deemed appropriate including, but not limited to, the following:

- Falsification of the certification application or application materials.
- Falsification of any information requested by the WOCNCB®.
- Knowingly assisting another person or persons in obtaining or attempting to obtain certification or recertification by fraud.
- Misrepresentation of certification status.
- Illegal use of the certification certificate or falsification of credentials. This would include any lapse in professional license during the five-year period and any appearance of revocation, including those due to any misdemeanor or felony charges.
- Cheating (or reasonable evidence of intent to cheat), such as copying or using another person's portfolio contents.
- Unauthorized possession or distribution of official WOCNCB® materials.

The WOCNCB® provides an appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of certification. It is the responsibility of the former certificant to initiate this process. The complete process may be found on the WOCNCB® website at www.WOCNCB.org. Written appeals should be forwarded to the WOCNCB® at the address listed on the website.

Appeals Policy and Procedure

An appeal policy and procedure is available to any Applicant or Certificant who has applied for WOCNCB® certification/recertification and wishes to contest any adverse decision affecting their certification/recertification status or eligibility. Any individual who does not file a request for an appeal within the required time limit shall waive the right to appeal.

1. **Review of Eligibility Decisions.** In the event of a determination that an individual has been denied certification or recertification based on a failure to satisfy application or eligibility requirements, pay fees required by WOCNCB®, a change in certification status, or failure of their recertification, the individual shall have thirty (30) days to file a written request for review.
2. **Appeals process.** The individual may file a written appeal request to the WOCNCB® office within thirty (30) days of the date of their receipt of the determination in the above instances. Once the request is received, it will be reviewed by the Credentialing and Review and Appeals Committee whereby, a vote will take place to determine if the eligibility decision will be upheld or reversed. If the eligibility decision is reversed, the Credentialing and Review and Appeals Committee will determine the terms and issue a decision in writing.

About WOCNCB

Mission Statement

WOCNCB® is committed to safe, patient-centered care by maintaining the Gold Standard in wound, ostomy, continence and foot care nursing.

Certification Statement

The Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board® (WOCNCB®) supports and endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification by examination for all wound care nurses, ostomy care nurses, continence care nurses and foot care nurses. Certification is one component of credentialing and is a process by which a non-governmental agency or association grants recognition of competence to an individual who has met certain predetermined standards specified by that agency or association.

Professional Growth Program (PGP)

This document was developed by the Professional Growth Program Committee of the WOCNCB® and approved by the Board of Directors: April 2023.

The WOCNCB® is committed to updating the PGP process to reflect the most current clinical practices of the WOC and Foot Care nursing profession. This Handbook is used as your guideline for development of your professional portfolio for recertification. Be sure to check www.wocncb.org for the most current Handbook.

If you have questions, please call the WOCNCB® office at 1-888-496-2622 or email: info@wocncb.org.

(RE)Certification Philosophy

The WOCNCB® endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification. WOCNCB® certification focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current knowledge in a specialized area of nursing practice. Certification provides formal recognition of nursing knowledge in:

- wound
- ostomy
- continence
- foot care

The objectives of the WOCNCB® certification programs are to promote excellence in wound, ostomy, continence, or foot care nursing by:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet all the requirements of the WOCNCB®.
2. Encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of wound, ostomy, continence, and foot care nursing.
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification in wound, ostomy, continence, and foot care nursing.
4. Providing a standard of knowledge required for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public and members of health professions in the assessment of wound, ostomy, continence, and foot care nursing.

Recertification via examination is an indication that nurses in the specialty demonstrate continual learning and professional growth using current evidence-based practices in the area of wound, ostomy, continence, or foot patient care. The WOCNCB® also established the Professional Growth Program (PGP) to recognize activities which go beyond routine WOC practice, or which represent progression of practice along the novice-to-expert continuum.

Statement of Nondiscrimination Policy

The WOCNCB® does not discriminate among certificants on any basis that would violate any applicable laws.

Credentials

Upon passing the exam, individuals receive their CWOCN®, CWCN®, COCN®, CCCN®, CWON®, CFCN®, WTA-C®, CWOCN-AP®, CWCN-AP®, COCN-AP®, CCCN-AP®, and CWON-AP® credential. Certification must be re-established every five years.

Qualified nurses may recertify in the specialties of wound, ostomy, continence or foot care nursing by passing the exam OR by fulfilling the activity requirements of the Professional Growth Program (PGP), or through a combination of the two processes.

Accreditation

ABSNC

The WOCNCB® earned reaccreditation status of the following examination programs: CWOCN®, CWON®, CWCN®, COCN®, and CCCN® in April 2021 by the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC), formerly the ABNS Accreditation Council. Accreditation status is granted for five years.

ABSNC, the only accrediting body specifically for nursing certification, is the standard-setting body for nursing certification programs. ABSNC sets a very stringent and comprehensive accreditation process. WOCNCB® provided extensive documentation demonstrating that it has met the 18 ABSNC standards of quality. Using the analogy that ABSNC is to nursing certification organizations as JCAHO is to hospitals is appropriate. (www.nursingcertification.org)

NCCA

The WOCNCB® is also accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) for the following examination programs: CWOCN®, CWON®, CWCN®, COCN®, and CCCN®. Accreditation by the prestigious NCCA assures that the WOCNCB® has met the most stringent and rigorous of standards in issuing its credentials. By meeting these standards, the WOCNCB® helps to ensure safe and expert practice of wound, ostomy and continence nursing.

Additionally, accreditation assures that:

* The validity and integrity of credentials issued by the WOCNCB® are unquestionable and of the highest caliber.

* Fair and equitable standards have been met for each certificant who is certifying or recertifying.

* WOCNCB® certificants have earned credentials that are esteemed and valued among their peers, other medical professionals and employers.

(<http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/>)