



## Advanced Practice Credential **You asked for it...and we listened!**

The WOCNCB® has established an Advanced Practice certification program at the request of Advanced Practice (AP) nurses specializing in wound, ostomy and continence areas. In order to be eligible for the AP credential, the candidate must:

- Hold current RN licensure
- Possess current entry-level WOCNCB® certification
- Have graduated from a WOCN program. The WOCN Program must be currently accredited by the WOCN Society or have been accredited at the time of candidate's graduation.
- Have completed a Graduate level NP or CNS program.

The AP Portfolio Program is to be used for AP certification only after entry-level specialty nursing practice knowledge has been demonstrated by examination. Activities approved for AP portfolio points go beyond routine, entry-level WOC practice and challenge individual applicants to contribute to the art and science of the specialty.

Individuals pursue professional certification for many reasons – personally and professionally. Advanced practice credentialing provides formal recognition of a clinician's achievements and abilities to apply advanced knowledge and skills in various settings. At-

tainment of an AP credential assists the employer, the public and members of health professions in the assessment of the Wound, Ostomy and/or Continence Care Nurse.

While the portfolio for AP certification is designed to meet regulatory requirements, **the WOCNCB® cannot guarantee that successful completion of the AP certification in the WOC specialty will meet each candidate's AP licensure needs.** The requirements for a clinical Master's (NP or CNS) and completion of structured didactic and clinical post-Bachelor's education were included specifically to address APN licensure requirements. However, due to the significant variance in these requirements across the country, individuals must confirm specific application needs with their State Board of Nursing.

Once again in listening to your needs, the WOCNCB® AP program is offered in single or the tri-specialties! If you have recently certified or recertified via exam, or via the Professional Growth Portfolio (PGP) Program, applications for AP certification can be submitted at a reduced fee! For more information, please visit the website at [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org) or call Kathy Meyer in the WOCNCB® office at (888) 496-2622.

## It's Official! WOCNCB® Accredited by ABNS

The WOCNCB® has earned American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS') accreditation of the following certifications: CWOCN®, CWCN®, COCN®, and CCCN® in March 2006. Accreditation status is granted for five years. ABNS, the only accrediting body specifically for nursing certification, is the standard setting body for nursing certification programs and sets a very stringent and comprehensive process.

Also, the wound, ostomy, and continence certification programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Compliance must be demonstrated every six years and is a benchmark for certifying bodies to achieve.

Accreditation by the prestigious ABNS and NCCA assures that the WOCNCB® has met the most stringent and rigorous standards for issuing its credentials. By meeting these standards, the WOCNCB® helps to ensure safe and expert practice of wound, ostomy and continence nursing.

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## Message from the President



Kathy Wright,  
RN, BC, MS,  
CWOCN, APRN

As the incoming President of the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board (WOCNCB), I would like to express my commitment to serve you, the certified nurse, during my tenure! Indeed, each Board member serves you via their individual roles and responsibilities, as described within the pages of our newsletter. The entire Board is also committed to our mission of ensuring public safety, and are proud to provide legally defensible and psychometrically sound certification programs. As we move forward with our many initiatives, we all keep the nurses and the patients we serve foremost in our minds!

The Board is listening and responsive to your concerns! Read this newsletter and visit our website ([www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org)) to learn about the many initiatives implemented on your behalf. We now offer the CWON credential, the CWOCN-AP credential (along with Advanced Practice certification in individual or dual specialties) and CFCN credential. Discounted fees have been implemented for those interested in our new credentialing programs, and PGP fees have been revised based on the number of specialties for which recertification is sought. In January, we initiated work on an aggressive marketing campaign to clearly define WOCNCB programs as THE gold standard in our specialty certification!

The WOCNCB will once again provide an educational session on the PGP program at the WOCN National conference in June, along with an in-person "Ask the Board" panel discussion. We will also be present in the exhibit hall providing additional networking opportunities. We look forward to this time together!

Members of the WOCNCB volunteer personal time and passionate energies to our many projects, and invite your feedback via phone or email. We also encourage you to consider Board service as an opportunity to contribute to the art and the science of our nursing specialties! We are listening...and want to hear from YOU!

A thought for today (and everyday) on the "Essence of a New Day" (author unknown) :

*"You have been given this day to use as you will. You can waste it or use it for good. What you do today is important because you are exchanging a day of your life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever; in its place is something that you have left behind....let it be something good!"*

## Board of Directors

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## Online Credential Verification Available

The WOCNCB® now has online credential verification on its website. This resource allows employers to quickly access credentialing information. It also benefits certificants who want to check the expiration date of their credentials. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by visiting [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org).

# The Benefits of Certification through the WOCNCB®

**Q:** Have you stopped to think about the value of your credential(s)?

**A:** Being credentialed through the WOCNCB® offers benefits to you, your employer/clients and your patients. The WOCNCB® provides you with the necessary tools to allow you to be successful in your practice!

## Credentials

CWOCN®, CWCN®, CWON™, COCN®, CCCN®, CWOCN-AP™, CWCN-AP™, COCN-AP™, CCCN-AP™, CWON-AP™ and CFCN®.

CWOCN® is the only officially recognized designation for certification with the tri-specialty of wound, ostomy and continence practice. Additionally, the WOCNCB® now offers an advanced practice nursing (APN) certification in the wound, ostomy and/or continence specialties.

To learn more about our exciting endeavors, please stop by our booth at the WOCN Society Conference, June 24-28. We would like to speak with you personally about the value of your credential through the WOCNCB.

## International Certification

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The WOCNCB® is now offering board certification testing in Canada and will be beginning this process in South Korea. This is an exciting time for our certificants across the globe! *More on page 4.*

## Self Assessment Exam (SAE)

The SAE provides self assessment (or practice) to measure your professional knowledge and prepare you for the actual credentialing exam. This web-based SAE gives you instantaneous scoring and results, along with feedback on your answers.

## Professional Growth Program (PGP)

The Professional Growth Program offers the ability to demonstrate professional growth in specialty areas and offers an alternative to testing for re-certification. The program encourages a natural progression from testing to demonstration of continued competence and excellence. The PGP provides a framework for professional development in each specialty.

## [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org)

Over the next few months, you will continue to see our website change to better meet your needs. Please visit us often so that you can remain up-to-date as we move forward on many exciting platforms!

## Hardship Assistance Program

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The WOCNCB® realizes that the road of life can provide a few unexpected curves, causing your life to be turned upside down. To assist our certificants who may be experiencing financial hardships that would prevent them from recertifying in their specialty, the WOCNCB® has established a Hardship Assistance Fund.

To qualify for this fund the certificant must:

- Currently be certified through the WOCNCB.
- Demonstrate financial hardship that prevents the candidate from recertifying in a specialty/specialties.
- Submit requested information in its entirety.

The WOCNCB® is currently accepting applications for individuals who will be recertifying in January 2007. Applications can be obtained at [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org).

# Finance Update

Patti Gable Burke, RN, BSN, CWOCN

Being a non-profit organization the WOCNCB® is comprised of volunteers who make up the Board, Exam, PGP and Foot and Nail Committees. WOCNCB's mission is to provide consumer safety and protection, but to do that we must be financially sound. Our income is generated through Exam and PGP fees, Self Assessment Exam and items that the Board sells, i.e. pins, organizers, and shirts. Our goal is to manage our funds judiciously and to maintain a strong organization that will benefit our membership today and into the future.

To assist you in visualizing how funds are spent we have provided a pie chart with a brief explanation of these expenses.

## Testing = 54%

- Reminder-to-recertify letters and Exam Handbook mailings
- AMP Foot and Nail exam services and candidate fees
- AMP WOC exam services and candidate fees
- AMP PGP fees
- AMP SAE fees
- Testing center space and equipment

## Management = 19%

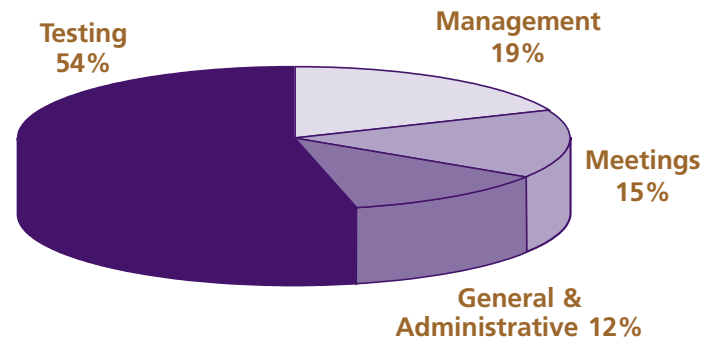
- Staff salaries; Office space rental; Office equipment
- Supplies

## General & Administrative = 12%

- Telephone and fax
- Newsletter printing and mailing
- WOCNCB stationery
- Postage
- Website management
- Credit card and bank fees
- Elections brochures and ballots
- Audit/legal fees
- PGP handbook printing and distribution

## Meetings = 15%

- Conferences: ABNS, NOCA, WOCN
- Semi-annual Board meetings
- Semi-annual WOC and Foot and Nail Exam Committee meetings
- Bi-annual PGP Committee meetings



## WOCNCB®

# Goes International

We are expanding our horizons! A CWOCN (Certified Wound, Ostomy, Continence Nurse) in Korea has started a WOC nursing program that meets the criteria set by the World Council of Enterostomal Therapists (WCET). She has requested that BSN-prepared nurses in Korea be able to take the same certification exams offered in the United States and be granted the CWOCN credential. The WOCNCB® has investigated the criteria for a WCET approved program and found it very similar to the accreditation requirements for our WOCNEPs. The WOCNCB's testing company, Applied Measurement Professionals, has the capability to offer testing in Seoul, Korea. At the spring meeting, the WOCNCB® voted to allow nurses in Korea to test and become certified as WOC nurses. The exam will be given in English and a small group is preparing for the exam now. Their excitement and enthusiasm for this opportunity is contagious! The WOCNCB® has had inquiries from nurses in Australia and Great Britain and will investigate how we might be able to offer them certification as well. Several nurses in Canada have already been certified so we are on our way to setting the standard in credentialing for wound, ostomy, continence and foot care nursing internationally.

## **NEW CWON™ credential Use it legally**

***You asked for it - you got it !***

The WOCNCB® announces the new credential available for certified **wound and ostomy** care nurses. This new credential combines a designation for nurses that previously used two separate credentials (CWCN® and COCN®). All CWCN®/COCN® nurses may begin to use the new CWON™ credential immediately. Your current credentials expiration date will apply.

If you wish to receive a printed certificate with the new designation, please contact the WOCNCB® testing service, Applied Measurement Professionals at (913) 541-0400. Certificates may be obtained for a nominal \$10 fee.

## **Online voting for the Certification Board**

Do you get those ballots from your professional organizations and put them in the "to do" pile on your desk? Then, when you are clearing off space on your desk to send holiday cards, you find the ballot marked please return by July 31. Oops! We have the same problem, too.

This year, the WOCNCB® will be conducting online voting for its summer election. Other organizations that have done this have a higher percentage of their members voting which certainly suggests that it is easier to do. We are all in favor of better results with less effort on your part. However, we will need to be sure we have your current email addresses. You have received a card asking for nominations for new Board members with the email address that we have for you. Please be sure to let us know if that has changed. Notify Kathy Meyer at (888) 496-2622 or by e-mail at [kmeyer@wocncb.org](mailto:kmeyer@wocncb.org) with your e-mail address changes.

Before the ballot is available online you will receive an e-mail announcing the coming election and another postcard to remind you to update your e-mail address if necessary. For those who do not have Internet access, there will be paper ballots available. Contact the WOCNCB® office to request a paper ballot. We hope this will be an effective and positive change in our election process. Your participation in voting for new members for the Board helps to ensure that everyone is fairly represented.



## **Step Forward for Foot Care Certification**

From its early beginnings as a new certification with the WOCNCB®, the option of becoming a Certified Foot Care Nurse has attracted the attention of nurses from across the country and now the world. More and more nurses are becoming certified every month. What is even more exciting is the interest that this field of nursing is attracting. As an organization, we are continually learning about new educational opportunities for both formal and distance learning.

This increased commitment to education is in response to the needs that nurses and their communities have identified. With our growth, we naturally are experiencing some changes. Beginning in January 2007, the number of supervised clinical experience hours will be increased from three to eight hours. This change will reflect the preparation necessary for the certification exam.

The current requirements are:

1. Current RN license, and either #2 or #3:
2. Completion of a formal foot and nail program including five hours of didactic and three hours of clinical foot and nail care practice.  
Or,
3. Completion of the experiential pathway including five hours of CE and three hours of clinical foot and nail care practice under the supervision of an expert.

The requirements beginning in January 2007 will remain the same EXCEPT that the number of clinical hours will be increased to eight hours of clinical practice under the supervision of an expert. We will also begin international testing with South Korea being our first international site.

# Preparing for the Foot Care Nursing Exam

## *based on experience and knowledge (“experiential pathway”)*

written by Kathy Cullett, RN CFCN, Aurora, Oregon

Friendsview Retirement Community, Newberg, Oregon and RN Foot Care, Newberg, Oregon

Most nurses have a compassionate desire to ease pain and suffering. That is why foot care nursing is so encouraging to me. The results don't take weeks to see. The patient leaves my office feeling immediate relief and wearing a smile.

Perhaps you are where I was. You see the need and you want to become certified in foot care nursing, however, your time, finances and seminar opportunities are limited or non-existent. Be encouraged. I know from my own experience that it is possible to pass the Foot Care Nursing Exam without participating in expensive seminars at distant locations. You can receive the minimum requirement of five hours continuing education in foot and nail care closer to home. Certainly, attending a two-day foot and nail seminar would be quite helpful, but a lack of opportunity should not deter you from seeking certification.

Here on the West Coast, most foot care nurses are “self-taught”. I know of nurses who received advice from a podiatrist, or an orientation from another foot care nurse. Perhaps this has been your experience. I was told the following by an instructor at a foot care class: “If you're already working in foot care nursing and have half a brain, you can easily pass the exam.” I later realized that this is not true. Let me share with you some of the strategies I used to successfully pass the exam.

First and foremost, educate yourself. Start with the list of resources detailed on the back page of the CFCN exam application. I purchased several titles through eBay® for a small price. It is not necessary to obtain every source listed. A few of my favorite books are Common Foot Problems in Primary Care by Richard Birrer DPM, (et.al.), Your Feet Don't Have to Hurt by Suzanne M. Levine DPM, and The Foot Book by David Copland DPM. Another great resource is Feet Can Last a Lifetime (the health care providers guide) produced by National Diabetes Education Program. The Internet is also a fantastic place to find current and valuable information on diabetic foot care. Web sites for health professionals that I have found to be helpful are [www.diabeticfoot.org.uk](http://www.diabeticfoot.org.uk) and [www.lifeclinic.com](http://www.lifeclinic.com). Also in the CFCN exam application there is an outline detailing the exam content. My advice is to follow it precisely, researching each item listed, even if you think you already know the material.

Secondly, gain experience in the field. I only wish that I had actually done things in this order. When I was “thrown” into foot care nursing eight years ago, I noticed a bit of hyperkeratotic skin and wondered, “Is this a corn or a callous?” It was only then that I researched corns and calluses. This was the way it went for

several months. I saw something “different” and then researched it. Remember, knowledge, *then* experience. If you're not already practicing foot care in a clinical setting, this would be a good time to start. Nothing compares to the learning that takes place during “hands on”. Become acquainted with a podiatrist or a certified foot care nurse. Create a mentor/student relationship and ask questions. Ask if they would consider letting you do a clinical practicum under their supervision. This gives you the opportunity to observe them at work and for them to observe you. It would have been so much easier for me if I had had a mentor in this field.

Third, when preparing to take the exam don't get hung up on issues that aren't “black and white” so to speak. This has

been my downfall on many tests. The consistent emphasis on the exam is what would be *best* for your patient in a given situation. As always, the important thing to remember is patient safety.

With diabetic-related foot complications being one of the leading causes of hospitalizations in the U.S., there is a real need for nurses trained in preventative foot care.

With determination and experience, you *can* become a certified foot care nurse and I hope that you do.

*This story depicts the personal journey set forth by this certificant in achieving foot care nursing certification. The WOCNCB does not endorse nor monitor the educational pathways to achieve certification.*

If you are interested in obtaining the credential Certified Foot Care Nurse, please visit the [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org) website and explore your options. Formal programs are increasingly available across the country as well as the number of options for experiential learning.



## WOCNCB® Mission Statement

Promoting the highest standard of consumer care and safety by providing credentialing in the areas of wound, ostomy, continence and foot care nursing.

## WOCN SOCIETY 38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

June 24 -28, 2006

Minneapolis Convention Center  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attend the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society Annual Conference to find excellent concurrent educational opportunities, strengthen your evidence-based practice and revitalize your career.



Wound  
Ostomy and  
Continence  
Nurses  
Society

Visit [www.wocn.org](http://www.wocn.org) for details.

## Alternative Certification Preparation—

### *The Experiential Pathway,* Experience counts!

For individuals specializing in Wound, Ostomy and/or Continence Nursing, and cannot complete an accredited WOCN Education Program (WOCNEP), there is another way to qualify to take the examination. This alternative is the **Experiential Pathway**.

Candidates who apply via the experiential pathway attend specialty-related continuing education programs and complete “on-the-job” training within the specialty, rather than obtaining knowledge and skills through the formal, structured format of the WOCNEP. Eligibility requirements for **each specialty** certification in the Experiential Pathway are:

- 50 contact hours (CEUs) specific to the specialty for which certification is sought
- Certificates of Continuing Education Attendance must be included in application. A program brochure or class syllabus is also required if multiple topics are included in the educational offerings.
- 1,500 clinical hours must be completed over the previous 5 years.
- Effective January 1, 2007, at least 375 of those hours must be completed within the year prior to certification application

All candidates must possess a current license as a Registered Nurse and have completed a baccalaureate degree. A copy of the current R.N. license and diploma or transcripts must be submitted with the application to take the examination.

Nurses working in wound, ostomy or continence care may be interested in this alternative preparation method. Encourage your peers who work in our specialty areas but have not attended an accredited WOCN Education Program to consider the **Experiential Pathway** to certification!

For more information about the various pathways to WOCNCB® certification, visit the website at [www.wocncb.org](http://www.wocncb.org) or call the WOCNCB® office at (888) 496-2622.



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## Information Update

If your name, address and/or phone number have recently changed, please fill out the form below. Thank you for helping us keep our information current. Note: You must complete this form for the WOCNCB® even if you've notified the WOCN Society; the two organizations are completely separate entities.

### Please Print.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If different from when you last certified, enter "old" name here:

My  address and/or  phone number has changed

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State, ZIP)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Phone) (Email)

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street address)

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(City, State, ZIP)

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(Phone) (Email)

Return to Kathy Meyer, WOCNCB® Executive Office, 555 E. Wells St. Suite 1100, WI 53202-3823 or send the information by e-mail to [Kmeyer@wocncb.org](mailto:Kmeyer@wocncb.org)

## The Board's Bulletin

is a semi-annual publication of the  
**Wound, Ostomy and Continence  
Nursing Certification Board**

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