

WOC Credentials: A Legally Defensible Process

Presented by:

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Chair, Marketing Committee of the WOCNCB



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Session Description

- This session is designed to inform participants of the issues related to certification.
- **Certification is a voluntary process that validates professional knowledge and skills. The WOCNCB® provides a psychometrically sound and legally defensible method to certify in wound, ostomy, continence, and foot and nail care.**
- An understanding of the certification process will aid the participants in successfully marketing your credentials.



Objectives

By the end of the presentation, the participant will:

1. Relate the steps involved in creating a WOC examination that is psychometrically sound and legally defensible certification examination.
2. Describe the difference between a certificate of completion and professional certification.
3. Recognize the importance of appropriate credential use to achieve role validation.
4. Identify ways to market you credential accurately and professionally.



Mission of WOCNCB®

- **The Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board (WOCNCB®) is a professional organization dedicated to providing consumer safety and protection by offering credentialing in the areas of wound, ostomy, continence and foot and nail care nursing.**



Purpose of the WOCNCB®

1. To **set, maintain, and evaluate national standards for certification and re-certification** in wound, ostomy and continence, and foot and nail care nursing.
2. To **promote the certification program** for wound, ostomy, continence and foot and nail care nursing practice.
3. To **encourage continued professional growth** in specialized nursing practice.
4. To **provide formal recognition** of individuals who meet the certification requirements.
5. To **provide identification of nurses who have achieved certification in WOC nursing to employing agencies, the public and other healthcare professionals.**



Meet the Board

- **President**
Mary Walden, RN, MSN, CWOCN
- **Financial Officer**
Cathryn Vogeley, RN, MSN, CNS, CWOCN
- **Liaison to Foot and Nail Committee**
Chair, Credential & Review/Nominations Committees
Beth Hawkins Bradley, RN, MN, CWOCN
- **Liaison to WOC Examination Committee**
Jane A. Fellows, RN, BSN, CWOCN
- **Liaison to Experiential & Graduate Pathways Committee**
Kathleen Wright, RNC, MS, CWOCN
- **Chair, Marketing Committee**
Cathy Thomas Hess, RN, BSN, CWOCN
- **Chair, Professional Growth Program Committee**
Patricia Gable Burke, RN, BSN, CWOCN
- **Public Member**
Miki Felsenburg



Committees and Sub-Committees

- **Foot and Nail Committee**
- **WOC Examination Committee**
- **Professional Growth Program Committee**
- **Marketing Committee**
- **Experiential & Graduate Pathways Committee**



Certificate vs. CE vs. Certification

- **Certificate of Completion** denotes that someone has completed a course that has no formal requirements.
- **Continuing Education (CE)** is defined as approved activities [often short courses] that professionals engage in to receive credit for the purpose of maintaining continuing competence and renewing certification.



Nomenclature

- **Certification** is defined as a voluntary process by which individuals who have demonstrated the level of knowledge and skill required in the profession, occupation, role or skill are identified to the public or other stakeholders.

1. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Executive Summary: *Safeguarding the Patient and the Profession: The value of critical care nurse certification*. December 2002. www.aacn.org



Certification

- Certification of nurses in general began in 1973 by the American Nurses Association (ANA) to provide “**tangible recognition of professional achievement in a defined functional or clinical area of nursing**” (1).
- Certification is one way to formally recognize the knowledge and expertise of an experienced practitioner.

1. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Executive Summary: *Safeguarding the Patient and the Profession: The value of critical care nurse certification*. December 2002. www.aacn.org



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Certification

- It has been thought that certified nurses are thought to strive for higher standards in patient care by maintaining updated skills (1).
- In 2001, Nurses held more than 410,000 certifications in 134 specialties by 67 certifying bodies (2).

1. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Executive Summary: *Safeguarding the Patient and the Profession: The value of critical care nurse certification*. December 2002. www.aacn.org
2. Cary, AH. *Certified registered nurses: Results of the study of the certified workforce*. American Journal of Nursing. January 2001; 101(1):44-52.



Highlights of the WOCNCB®



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Certified Enterostomal Therapy Nurse

- **1978 (January):** WOCN certification committee was formed.
- **1978 (October):** The certification committee/board voted to become a separate body from the Accreditation Committee and call themselves the ET Nursing Certification Board (ETNCB). The credential would be certified in Enterostomal Therapy Nursing (CETN). Certification effective for 5 years.
- **The first WOC examination was administered in 1979.**



WOCNCB®

- **1993 (March):** ETNCB changes name to WOCNCB® and offers 3 specialty examinations in addition to generalist. Offers new credentials CWCN®, COCN® and CCCN®
- **1994 (November):** Board decided to adopt policy initiated by ONS to require baccalaureate degree for initial certificants beginning in the year 2000
- **1995 (December):** First **National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA)** meeting attended by WOCNCB® representative. Many discoveries made related to **standards, accepted credentialing practices** including National Commission of Certifying Agencies accreditation (NCCA)



WOCNCB®

- **1997:** Signed contract with **Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP)** to develop, implement and evaluate the credentialing program. An exam committee was appointed and the credentials CWOCN®, CWCN®, COCN®, CCCN® were awarded
- **1997: Professional Growth Program (PGP)** began
- **2001:** WOCNCB received **accreditation through the NCCA**
- **2002:** The CETN credential was retired
- **2003/2005:** WOCNCB became a **member of American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS)**. This year, the WOCNCB is seeking **accreditation through ABNS**
- **2005 (January): Foot and Nail Exam administered** for new credential CFCN®
- **2005 (June): APN portfolio launched and CWOCN-AP credential** available for Graduate level CWOCN's who successfully complete the AP portfolio



Certification Requirements

- **Licensure is the first step towards certification and is an entry-level competence. A license to practice represents a mechanism designed to ensure that health professionals have adequate knowledge and skills to care for patients (1).**
- **“Licensure measures entry level competence while certification validates specialty knowledge, experience and clinical judgment” (1).**

1. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Executive Summary: *Safeguarding the Patient and the Profession: The value of critical care nurse certification*. December 2002. www.aacn.org



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WOCNCB[®] Certification Requirements

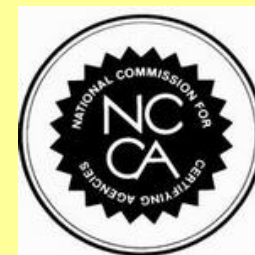
- **Hold a current unencumbered license as a registered nurse**
- **Hold a baccalaureate degree**
- **Complete and file an application for the desired specialty certification examination(s)**
- **Pay the required fee**
- **Complete one of the following:**
 - A WOC Nursing Education Program that is accredited by the WOCN. The Nursing Education Program must be accredited at the time of graduation, **OR**
 - A graduate-level program in nursing with documentation of graduate clinical course work equivalent to two semester hours in each specialty for which certification is sought, **OR**
 - Fifty (50) Contact Hours (CEU) and 1,500 clinical experience hours over the last five years within each specialty for which certification is sought.
 - To be eligible for *recertification with active credential, the candidate must:
- **Hold current credential(s) as a CWOCN[®], CWCN[®], COCN[®], CCCN[®] and/or CFCN[®].**
- **Recertification may be obtained by either examination or the Professional Growth Program (PGP) or APN portfolio.**



Accreditation and Constituency

Status awarded to WOCNCB® demonstrating compliance with the Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs set forth by NCCA.

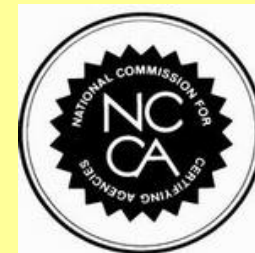
To assure our members and public that the WOCNCB® certification meets stringent guidelines by a national certifying body of impartial experts.



Accreditation and Constituency

NCCA validates the WOCNCB® testing process.

To date, the WOCNCB® is the only wound care certifying body accredited through NCCA.



Accreditation and Constituency

- Incorporated in 1991 to “create uniformity in nursing certification and to increase public awareness of the value of quality certification, serves as an advocate for consumer protection by establishing and maintaining standards for professional specialty nursing certification.” (4)



4. American Board of Nursing Specialties. www.nursingcertification.org



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Accreditation and Constituency

- Mission of ABNS is to promote the value of specialty nursing certification to all stakeholders. (4)
- Accreditation by ABNS demonstrates WOCNCB commitment to quality.
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing recognizes the ABNS accreditation program for nursing certification.



4. American Board of Nursing Specialties. www.nursingcertification.org



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ABNS Survey

- **“*Specialty Certification: More than a title*”***
- Survey completed by attendees visiting ABNS booth
- Information collected about nurse-manager perceptions of certified registered nurses and how nursing certification is recognized and supported by institutions
- 139 surveys collected from nurses in 35 states and several countries

*Stromborg, MF, Hiebuhr, B, Prevost, Z, Fabrey, L, Muenzen, P, Spence, C, Towers, J, Valentine, W. *Specialty Certification: More than a title*. Nursing Management 2005;36(5):36-46.



ABNS Survey

- ***Findings:***

Certification does play a role in clinical practices; and certification generally is valued in the workplace by healthcare administrators

- ***Future:***

More research is needed to further investigate what role specialty nursing certification plays in direct patient care, the effect of certified versus non-certified nurse assignment to patients, and the foundation of nurse management preference for hiring certified nurses.

- ***Present:***

ABNS is currently completing a study on certification and its value.

All of our members had the opportunity to complete this study survey.

The study survey was sent to nearly 1,000,000 nurses. The results of the survey will be available later this year.



Testing: The Process for Certification

**Applied
Measurement
Professionals (AMP)**
assists to develop,
implement and
evaluate the
credentialing
program



Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Psychometric Principles**
- **Measurement for Credentialing**
- **Job Analysis**
- **Examination Development**
- **Recertification Process**

Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Psychometric Principles**

- Psychometrics is the **scientific study of testing**
- Psychometrics **validates the performance of each testing item and its performance. This relationship is important in the development of a psychometrically sound examination**

Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Measurement for Credentialing**

- Credentialing is a process of granting a credential based on assessment of competence in a subject or area
- Certification normally **requires assessment, including testing and an evaluation of education and/or experience**
- **“Without a strong psychometric foundation underlying the measurement process, candidates cannot be assured of fairness and accuracy” (5)**

5. Browning, AH, Bugbee, AC, and Mullins, MA editors. *Certification: A NOCA Handbook*. 1996. www.noca.org



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Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Job Analysis**

- The goal of a job analysis is to “**ensure a representative linkage of test content to the job**” (5)
- A job analysis can be **thought of as a detailed job description**
- **Updating a job analysis is vital to be reflective of the current profession; this process may be completed every 3-5 years. Our members will be receiving a job analysis survey in the next few months.**



Role Delineation vs. Job Analysis

- The first step in the development of a legally defensible certification examination is the delineation of the role that is to be certified.
- Some organizations opt to perform a “role delineation” study as opposed to a job analysis.
- A job analysis provides more information to support the certification examination process.

Testing: The Process for Certification

- "A second purpose of the job analysis survey is **to be able to legally defend the validity of the exam objectives.**
- Especially in the United States, whenever there is the potential for a hiring decision to be made based on criteria such as a certification, there is also the potential that someone might file a lawsuit against the certifying body claiming that the exams are biased and constructed in an unfair manner.
- The job analysis survey is critical in proving the legal defensibility of the exam objectives and blunting any criticism of bias."



Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Examination Development**

- Test specifications **cover all of the important parts of an examination**
- A content outline is developed to detail the content coverage on the examination. **The content is directly linked to the job requirements, knowledge, skills, and abilities delineated by the job analysis (5)**
- Item development entails **gathering the experts to write the test questions**; these individuals should have content expertise and practice related experience
[item request form on website; PGP points if item accepted]
- **Item review process entails editing and reviewing the items developed**

Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Examination Development (continued)**
 - Test construction addresses selection of a set of test questions for a draft test form; test review; equating of the final test form; scaling of raw scores; and statistical evaluation of the examination following test administration
 - The assembly of the test questions takes into consideration content coverage; previous item usage on other test forms; equating design; statistical characteristics of the items and the total test; and item sequencing
 - Reviewing the test for content validity is an important step by the group
 - **Expert measurement consultation is key to developing a test!**

Testing: The Process for Certification

- **Recertification Process**
 - Professional Growth Program (PGP)
 - Advanced Practice Portfolio
 - Computer-based testing model



Value for the Patient

- **Provides consumer safety and protection through being:**
 - **A Clinical Expert**
 - **An Advocate**
 - **A Healthcare educator**
 - **...Experienced**
 - **...Knowledgeable**

Value for Employer

- Cost Containment for overall patient care
- Improved Clinical Outcomes
- Provides systematic/holistic care for institution
- Formulary Selection Expert
- Patient Benefits
- Staff Educator
- Bridges a clinical and operational platform for the facility
- Raises the level of care delivered to patients and influences other nurses in care delivered
- **Provides legally defensible practice standards**

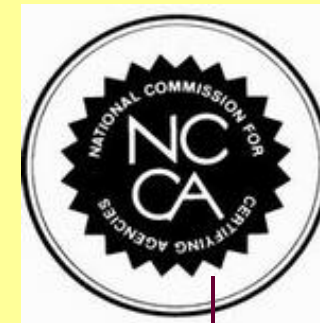
Value for Certified WOC Nurse

- Proven knowledge base in given specialty
- Increases professional satisfaction
- Increases personal satisfaction
- Improves patient outcomes
- Provides autonomy in practice
- Demonstrates positive role model
- Provides clinically effective and cost-effective outcomes
- ...and much more!



v Accreditation

To assure our members and public that the WOCNCB® certification meets stringent guidelines by a national certifying body of impartial experts.



v Accreditation

Accreditation by NCCA demonstrates the highest standards in certification, exceeding the requirements of the American Psychological Association and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.



Accreditation and Constituency

NCCA validates the WOCNCB® testing process.

To date, the WOCNCB® is the only wound care certifying body accredited through NCCA.



Commitment to Quality

Accreditation by
ABNS
demonstrates
WOCNCB®
commitment to
quality.



v Accredited Courses

- Emory University School of Medicine
- Harrisburg Area WOC Nursing Education Program
- La Salle University School of Nursing
- Rupert B. Turnbull, Jr. School of ET Nursing
- The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
- University of Virginia Graduate Program in WOC Nursing
- WebWOCN Nursing Education Program



v Credentialing

**Applied
Measurement
Professionals (AMP)**
assists to develop,
implement and
evaluate the
credentialing
program



WOCNCB® Quick Poll

- **Does your employer understand the value of your certification?**
 - Clearly understands 46% (133 responses)
 - Understands, but would like reinforcement document to explain further 18% (52 responses)
 - Does not understand, would like document to explain my value 23% (65 responses)
 - Unsure 13% (37 responses)



**To date,
WOCNCB® has
certified
more than
4300 certificants!**



Checklist to confirm WOC Value

1. Is the credentialing organization accredited by an independent, national certifying body?
2. Was a job analysis or role delineation study performed?
3. Is the examination created by an individual or a committee of content experts?
4. Does the certifying organization's mission agree with the mission of your work environment?
5. Does the certifying organization provide self-assessment (or practice) to measure your professional knowledge and prepare you for the actual credentialing exam? [It must not teach the answers to the test]
6. Does the certifying organization require that the coursework be completed by an outside, accredited program focusing on wound, ostomy and/or continence?

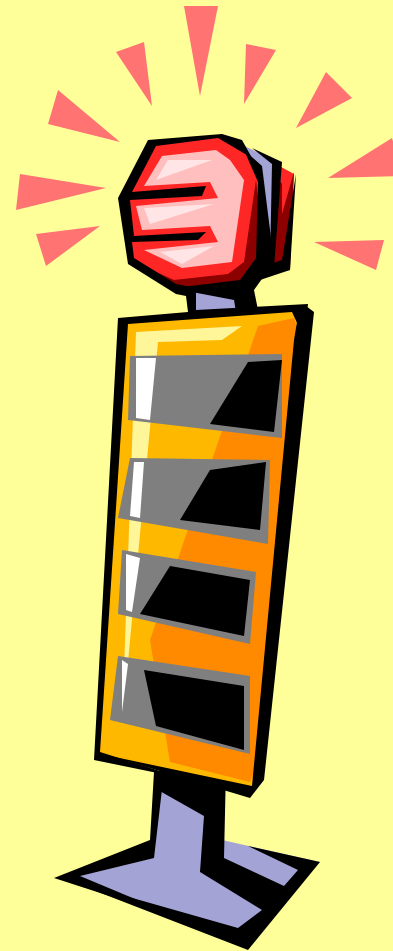


Legally defensible

- "A second purpose of the job analysis survey is **to be able to legally defend the validity of the exam objectives.**
- Especially in the United States, whenever there is the potential for a hiring decision to be made based on criteria such as a certification, there is also the potential that someone might file a lawsuit against the certifying body claiming that the exams are biased and constructed in an unfair manner.
- The job analysis survey is critical in proving the legal defensibility of the exam objectives and blunting any criticism of bias."

**Let the buyer
beware.**

**Be a smart
consumer!**



Certification in the News

- American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) will publish research on certification
- National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) will complete a white paper on certification later this year
- WOCNCB will publish ABNS/WOC research in the Board's Bulletin in 2005-2006
- WOCNCB will provide the value of the WOC credentials as a section the website
- WOCNCB will write an article regarding the value of the WOC credential and place it on our website for members to download



Thank you!

