



POSITION STATEMENT WOUND TREATMENT ASSOCIATE-CERTIFIED (WTA-C) EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

The role of the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) was established by the American Nurses Association in 1964 in the article "Statement of Functions of the Licensed Practical Nurse" in the American Journal of Nursing.

LPNs play a crucial role in the nursing process by providing direct, foundational care under the supervision of Registered Nurses (RNs) or physicians. They actively participate by collecting data (assessment), contributing to care plans, implementing interventions, and monitoring patient progress, acting as the "eyes and ears" of the healthcare team.

Wound Ostomy and Continence Nursing

Wound, Ostomy and Continence (WOC) nursing is a distinct and well-defined field of nursing practice that is international in scope and based on a tested body of specialty-related, evidenced-based knowledge. WOC nursing specialty practice is consistent with the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) definition of a nursing specialty, in that there is an identified need for the WOC nursing specialty and these nursing professionals devote most of their practice to their area of nursing expertise. A WOC nurse provides acute and rehabilitative care for people with selected disorders of the gastrointestinal, genitourinary, and integumentary systems. The WOC nurse plays a pivotal role in the guidance of optimal patient care in multiple healthcare settings, including inpatient, outpatient, long-term care, and home health.

WOUND OSTOMY AND CONTINENCE NURSING CERTIFICATION BOARD: CREDENTIALING

The Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board (WOCNCB) is an international, professional organization dedicated to promoting the highest standard of consumer care and safety by providing credentialing in the areas of wound, ostomy, and continence nursing. The purposes of a credentialing program are to protect the public by establishing standards for professional practice and to assess individual nurses' knowledge and skills related to practice. This assures consumers that the certified professionals have met standards of practice. The National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) Guide to Understanding Credentialing Concepts states, "End-of-course examinations should not be allowed to substitute for professional credentialing examinations, because these examinations are not designed for, and are therefore not valid for, these purposes" (National Organization for Competency Assurance, 2005, p. 8).

The WOCNCB stands firmly in its belief that WOC certification improves the level and quality of patient care by defining and maintaining competency within the WOC specialties. Furthermore, certification provides a competitive advantage for employment and promotes job satisfaction. The nurse who chooses to certify demonstrates a commitment to WOC nursing practice and patient protection. Credentials are awarded for a five-year period. Recertification can be achieved by means of an examination or a portfolio process through the Professional Growth Program (PGP).

The Wound Treatment Associate - Certified (WTA-C) is an integral part of the health care team, providing care for patients with acute and chronic wounds under the direction of a WOC specialty nurse, WOC APRN, or physician.

The WTA-C may be involved with identifying wound and skin injury risk factors, collecting data to guide the development of the plan of care, documenting data and interventions to contribute to the development/modification of the plan of care, and perform ongoing evaluation of the patient. The WTA-C may implement preventive measures for patients to promote optimal skin health and provide wound care for various wounds and pain management. The WTA-C is involved with educating patients, caregivers, and other healthcare professionals on wound care to promote consistent care, and WTA-Cs will be part of the collaborative team for patient wound care. The WTA-C must work within the LPN/LVN, or RN scope of practice under a CWCN or Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) and within their licensed state's nurse practice act since scope of practice laws vary by state.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION

The Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board defines an eligible Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)/Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)/Registered Nurse (RN) for certification as a Wound Treatment Associate-Certified as one who minimally:

- Has completed a minimum of a nursing diploma, associate degree, practical/vocational nurse education;
- Is licensed as a registered nurse or practical nurse/vocational nurse by the SBON in the state(s) where the nurse practices;
- Has completed the following continuing education:
 - Completed the WOCN Society's Wound Treatment Associate (WTA) Program or the WEB WOC Skin and Wound Care Associate (SWA) course within the past five years.
 - Accumulated 16 clinical hours under the direct supervision of an expert in wound care, for example: Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, or an RN or APRN certified in wounds through WOCNCB®. The expert **MUST HAVE** experience relevant to wound care.

OR

- Completed 24 CE/CME credits (contact hours) specific to wound care within the past 12 months meeting the WTA-C Exam Content Outline
- Completed 160 hours of clinical preceptorship within the last 12 months under the direct supervision of an expert in wound care, for example: Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, or an RN or APRN certified in wounds

through WOCNCB®. The expert MUST HAVE experience relevant to wound care.

- Completed a clinical skills checklist with the preceptor to include:
 - Monofilament testing
 - Ankle Brachial Index (ABI)
 - Compression wrap
 - Negative pressure wound therapy

CREDENTIALS

The following WOCNCB credentials are registered trademarks and are awarded based on the successful completion of the examination(s) or the recertification by portfolio process.

CWOCN®	Certified Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse
CWCN®	Certified Wound Care Nurse
COCN®	Certified Ostomy Care Nurse
CCCN®	Certified Continence Care Nurse
CWON®	Certified Wound Ostomy Nurse
CWOCN-AP®	Certified Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse Advance Practice
CWON-AP®	Certified Wound Ostomy Nurse Advance Practice
CWCN-AP®	Certified Wound Care Nurse Advance Practice
COCN-AP®	Certified Ostomy Care Nurse Advance Practice
CCCN-AP®	Certified Continence Care Nurse Advance Practice
WTA-C®	Wound Treatment Associate-Certified

REFERENCES

American Board of Nursing Specialties. (2000). ABNS Standards. Aurora, OH.

Statement of Functions of the LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE. American Journal of Nursing. 64(3):93, March 1964.

National Organization for Competency Assurance (2005). The NOCA Guide to Understanding Credentialing Concepts. Primary Author Cynthia C. Durley, Washington, DC.

WOCNCB. (2026). Candidate Examination Handbook. Milwaukee, WI.

WOCN Accreditation Policy & Procedure Manual (2007). Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society, Mt. Laurel: NJ.

WOCN Society Position Statement: Role and Scope of Practice for Wound Care Providers (April 2017). Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society, Mt. Laurel: NJ.

WOCNCB. April 2024. WTA-C: A Statement Defining Definition of Scope. Milwaukee: WI. <https://www.wocncb.org/UserFiles/file/WTA-C.WhyCertify.definitionofscope.pdf>