



**Moving Forward  
on Continuing  
Competence:  
*The Lived Experience***

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***THE TRANSFORMATION  
OF HEALTH CARE HAS - AND  
CONTINUES TO BRING ABOUT  
CHANGES IN CERTIFICATION***




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**IOM Report: To Err is Human (1999)**

**RECOMMENDATION 7.2:**

- ▶ Performance standards and expectations for health professionals should focus greater attention on patient safety.
- ▶ Health professional licensing bodies should
  - 1) implement periodic reexaminations and relicensing of doctors, nurses, and other key providers, based on both competence and knowledge of safety practices; and
  - 2) work with certifying and credentialing organizations to develop more effective methods to identify unsafe providers and take action.




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**Continued Competence in Nursing (2005)**



**NCSBN convened the Continued Competence Advisory Panel with the following charges:**

- ▶ Develop and implement a communication plan on Continued Competence.
- ▶ Develop a Content Outline for Continued Competence Assessments
- ▶ Conduct preliminary feasibility studies for assessments of continued competence.
- ▶ Continue development of a Continued Competence Regulatory Model to be used by member boards.




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**Continued Competence**

- ▶ **Must provide employers and the public a valid measure of assurance regarding the ongoing competencies of providers**
- ▶ **Both RN and APRNs will be pushed to demonstrate on-going competence in their specialty areas**




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**CERTIFICATION: Continued Competence (2008)**

**APRN Joint Dialogue Group**  
Developed the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation*

- ▶ Stated: Certification maintenance must include a review of qualifications and continued competence
- ▶ There must be procedures for
  - Ensuring a match between continued competency measures and the APRN specialty
  - Validating information provided by candidates
  - Re-certification




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## NCC and Continued Competence (2010)



**National Certification Corporation (NCC) response to insuring health care providers knowledge competency was to develop a continuing competency program to:**

- ▶ Validate knowledge competencies related to the certification that is consistent with the current educational curriculum, national standards of practice and the current practice
- ▶ Demonstrate maintenance of competencies over time
- ▶ Continuing Competency Specialty Assessment
  - Assess knowledge gaps
  - Develop an educational learning plan




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## Continued Competency Specialty Assessment

- ▶ Introduced in two stages with the first being an orientation
- ▶ 125 questions in 2 hours and 15 minutes
- ▶ No Pass/Fail
- ▶ Provides feedback in core areas of competency
- ▶ Individualized educational plan demonstrating knowledge strengths and gaps
- ▶ Specialty Index score on a scale of 0-10
  - 7.5 or better satisfies maintenance for continuing education in that area
- ▶ Provides 5 CE hours




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CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1)	6.5	10 hours
Pathophysiology (Code 2)	7.55	Standard met
Pharmacology (Code 4)	6.15	10 hours
Physical Assessment & Diagnostic Tools (Code 3)	8.5	Standard met
Professional Practice (Code 5)	6	5 hours

YOUR EDUCATION PLAN	CE HOURS
Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1)	10 hours
Based on your Specialty Index score, you are required to complete the following Self Assessment modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1) Self Assessment module</li> </ul>	
Pharmacology (Code 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on your Specialty Index score, you are required to complete the following Self Assessment modules:</li> <li>Pharmacology (Code 4) Self Assessment modules</li> </ul>	10 hours
Professional Practice (Code 5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on your Specialty Index score, you are required to complete the following Self Assessment modules:</li> <li>Professional Practice (Code 5) Self Assessment modules</li> </ul>	5 hours
Baseline Hours — 15 Continuing Education hours in any of your core competency specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	- 5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>




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### Continued Competency Specialty Assessment

- ▶ Does not affect the certification but the nature and amount of continuing education that is required for maintenance
- ▶ Available on demand at any computer
- ▶ Can be taken anytime during the 3 year maintenance cycle
- ▶ Only CE earned after taking the continuing competency specialty assessment can be used for maintenance
- ▶ Encouraged to take it soon after they maintain
- ▶ No cost




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### Continuing Competency

- ▶ Maintenance requirements are determined by the educational plan
  - The plan is in their NCC account and recapped in their online maintenance application
- ▶ They must focus their educational needs as required by the plan
- ▶ They can upload CE into their maintenance application as they obtain it.
  - The application is active and the CE needed changes as they add CE
  - They can store their CE certificates as they obtain them




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### Continuing Competency Benefits

- ▶ CE is individualized to meet knowledge gaps
  - CE is only required in areas that need further updating
- ▶ In most cases less CE is required
  - If they received 7.5 specialty index in all content categories all they need to provide is 15 CE in any areas
  - If the specialty index is below 7.5 they may have to provide 45 CE for maintenance. (Total of 50 CE but 5 are earned for taking the assessment)
- ▶ Specialty assessment provides an objective measure of the core certification specialty knowledge competencies

Alternative Maintenance is offered  
 – Few have used it




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**Your Education Plan**  
From your NNP Education Plan created on 9/17/2013.

Core Competency Area	Hours required	Hours entered
General Management (code3)	10 hours	6 hours
Physical Assessment (code1)	5 hours	4 hours
Physiology and Pathophysiology (code2)	20 hours	0 hours
Professional Practice (code4)	5 hours	2 hours
Baseline Hours — 10 Continuing Education hours in any of your core competency specialty areas	10 hours	
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to any of the above requirements)	-5 hours	
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>45 hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>

**Your Education Plan**  
From your NNP Education Plan created on 3/3/2013.

Core Competency Area	Hours required	Hours entered
Baseline Hours — 15 Continuing Education hours in any of your core competency specialty areas	15 hours	
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours	
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10 hours</b>	<b>36.00 hours</b>

CE hours




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### Competency Assessment: How is it going

- ▶ **111,670** RNs and APRNs have taken the competency assessment
- ▶ **42,873** have taken stage 1
- ▶ **54,000** have taken stage 2
- ▶ **14,795** have taken required CCI beyond Stage 2
- ▶ About **51%** still require 45 CE
  - a decrease from **63%** initially (**A 19% decrease overall**)
- ▶ Of those requiring less than 45 CE the majority require about 35 CE.




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### Continued Competency Assessment

- The plan does the following
  - Provides a periodic continued competency assessment
  - Develops a personal plan that must be met
  - Documents how the plan is met
  - And is demonstrating an evaluation of competence that is impacted by focused CE




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### The Good, the Bad and the Ugly!

**The Good**


- ▶ They are doing it and it is working
- ▶ It has been received positively by many
- ▶ There has been no appreciable decline in maintenance participation

**The Bad**

- ▶ It took a lot of work to get them to understand why we were doing it and how the program worked.
- ▶ It really took time for them to understand the assessment was required at the beginning of each maintenance cycle

**The Ugly**

*...a few are still hiding.....*



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