NBCRNA

National Board of Certification *&* Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists

2014
Annual Report

VISION

The NBCRNA is recognized as the leader in advance practice nurse credentialing.

MISSION

The mission of the NBCRNA is to promote patient safety through credentialing programs that support lifelong learning.

RESPONSIBILITY

The NBCRNA is responsible for ensuring that the credentialing standards of nurse anesthetists meet nursing specialty accreditation standards and support competency among nurse anesthesia providers.

A word from our 2014-2015 President, Dr. Edward Waters

The NBCRNA's 2013 - 2014 fiscal year was marked by significant progress in our continuing mission to ensure our certification and recertification practices meet the current and future expectations of our stakeholders, prepare nurse anesthetists to pursue expanding opportunities in the workforce, and promote the safety of the patients we serve.

Major elements of the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program were finalized in preparation for the program's launch in 2016. Our Board worked with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists and continuing education vendors to ensure our stakeholders' perspectives were considered throughout the process. We are close to completing the development of the voluntary subspecialty certification for nurse anesthetists in Nonsurgical Pain Management (NSPM), which is on schedule to go into effect in 2015. And while moving forward on these enhancements to our certification, the NBCRNA continued our responsibility to certify and recertify nurse anesthetists.

Much of our success can be credited to the leadership of Dr. Charles Vacchiano, who recently concluded two years as the President of our Board of Directors. He led a remarkable board, which included two outgoing directors, Dr. Michael O'Connor, our anesthesiologist representative, and Dr. Michael Rieker, a recognized leader in the CRNA community who was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing in August 2013. Dr. Vacchiano was also inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing in August 2014. Enormous thanks are also owed to NBCRNA's CEO, Dr. Karen Plaus, and her extraordinary staff for their tireless efforts on behalf of all nurse anesthetists.

Sincerely,

Edward Waters

Edward Waters, DNP, CRNA

President
Charles Vacchiano, PhD, CRNA
Chuck has 28 years of experience in the nurse anesthesia profession. He is currently a member of the Duke University School of Nursing, Nurse Anesthesia Program faculty. Previously, he served 26 years in the U.S. Navy, and has worked as a practicing nurse anesthetist, educator, and researcher.

Vice President
Edward Waters, DNP, CRNA
Ed practices clinical anesthesia at the Kaiser Foundation Hospital in Woodland Hills, CA and has 16 years of experience in the nurse anesthesia profession. He is also an academic and clinical educator at the Kaiser Permanente School of Anesthesia in Pasadena.

Secretary - Treasurer
Steve Wooden, DNP, CRNA
Steve is a managing partner of Boone County Anesthesia Services, LLC, a private practice anesthesia group in East Central Nebraska. He has 30 years of experience in the nurse anesthesia profession.

Director
Joseph L. Fink, III, JD
Joseph is the Public Member of the NBCRNA Board. He holds membership in the American Health Lawyers Association as well as the Health Law Section of the American Bar Association. He previously served as the Public Member of the Council on Recertification from 1993-1999.

Director
Paul Jones, MD
Paul is the surgeon member of the NBCRNA Board. He currently serves as the Section Head of Pediatric Otolaryngology. Previously, he was Acting Chair, Assistant Dean of Rush Medical College. Dr. Jones is a recipient of the Leonard B. Tow Humanism in Medicine Award from Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

CRNA directors are highlighted in red.

Director
Michael O'Connor, DO, MPH
Michael serves as the anesthesiologist representative on the NBCRNA board. He chairs the Department of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology at the Cleveland Clinic, where he practices cardiothoracic and vascular anesthesia as well as critical care medicine. He served 28 years in the Navy Reserve.

Director
Susan Rawson, MA, LNC, CRNA
Sue has 33 years of experience in the nurse anesthesia profession. Her career has been dominated by clinical practice in locations of high intensity patient care, delivering safe anesthesia care in level one trauma centers, community operating rooms, outpatient surgical facilities, endoscopy centers, interventional radiology departments and obstetrical suites.

Director
Michael Rieker, DNP, CRNA, FAAN
Michael is the Director of the Nurse Anesthesia Program at Wake Forest Baptist Health. In his 20 years of practice, he has worked as a clinical anesthetist in 5 of the 7 AANA regions. A former chief CRNA in obstetrics, he teaches in the AANA obstetric anesthesia workshop.

Director
Mary Golinski, PhD, CRNA
Mary is Assistant Professor at Oakland University in Rochester Hills, MI and the Assistant Program Director for the Oakland University Beaumont Graduate Program of Nurse Anesthesia. She is an active practicing CRNA for two level one trauma hospitals in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Director
Patricia Wirth, DNP, CRNA
Patty has 20 years experience in the nurse anesthesia profession and is currently working as a practitioner at Sentara Princess Anne Hospital in Virginia Beach, VA. Previously, she served for 23 years in the U.S. Navy practicing as a nurse anesthetist, educator and administrator.

Director
Robert Hawkins, PhD, DNP, MS, MBA, CRNA
Robert is a nurse anesthesia educator and has served in various roles including clinical instructor, assistant program director and program director. He is a graduate of the Medical University of South Carolina (BSN), Webster University (MBA), Georgetown University (MS), and Rush University (DNP and PhD).

CRNA directors are highlighted in red.

A message from our CEO, Karen Plaus

Over the last year, the NBCRNA staff has continued evaluating and refining how we provide certification and recertification services to current and future certified registered nurse anesthetists. Through qualitative and quantitative surveying, communication monitoring, and implementing new technologies, the NBCRNA has adapted to the feedback of our stakeholders, developed strategies to help our staff complete our mission more efficiently, and exceeded the expectations of the nurse anesthetists we serve. Our ongoing goal is to ensure our operations and customer service reflect the standard of excellence set by the nurse anesthetist credential.

Among our achievements in 2013-2014 was the completion of our transition to electronic recertification. We initiated the change in 2013 as the majority of nurse anesthetists preferred online recertification and the process is both faster and more secure. The NBCRNA also successfully arranged for the Self-Evaluation Examination (SEE) to be offered year-round, providing students and nurse anesthesia educational program administrators more opportunities to receive feedback on how well students are prepared for the National Certification Examination (NCE). Remarkably, we reached these milestones without disruption to the tremendous tasks of certifying and recertifying nurse anesthetists, which included administering the NCE nearly 3,000 times and recertifying more than 21,000 current certificants.

The NBCRNA's ability to simultaneously carry out our mission while constantly improving how we do business is only possible with the incredible work of the NBCRNA staff. We also greatly benefitted from the leadership and vision of an extraordinary Board of Directors. Dr. Charles Vacchiano has done a marvelous job guiding our organization during a period of historic transition, and the NBCRNA staff looks forward to working with Dr. Edward Waters and the entire 2014 - 2015 Board as we see many of our plans and hard work over the last five years realized.

Sincerely,

Karen Plaus

Karen Plaus, PhD, CRNA, FAAN, CAE

The Value of the NBCRNA

Value of the CNRA credential...

90%
90% of National Certification Examination (NCE) candidates agree with the statement, "I am proud of my CRNA credential."

> *Thanks for making it painless, like anesthesia.*
>
> *Comment on online recertification*

Customer Service

98%
More than 98% of NCE candidates agreed or strongly agreed that NBCRNA staff answered their questions, and more than 97% agreed or strongly agreed that staff were courteous and helpful.

National Certification Examination...

97%
More than 97% of NCE candidates reported being satisfied with their testing experience.

> *I support the proposed changes. They will make us a stronger profession in the public's eye.*
>
> *Comment on Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program*

Online Recertification Process

94%
94% reported that the recertification application process was easy.

Certification

On January 1, 2014, the NBCRNA implemented a new passing standard for the National Certification Examination (NCE). The decision to raise the passing standard was initiated as part of our continuing responsibility to periodically evaluate whether the standard reflects the current expectations for competent professional performance at entry-level. The Board convened a panel of certified registered nurse anesthetists to develop a passing standard recommendation using a recognized testing and evaluation process. Based on the panel's results, the Board voted that the standard should be raised. The passing rate for the NCE in Fiscal Year 2014 remained within one percentage point of the passing rate for the NCE for the last three years, indicating that those taking the NCE met the higher passing standard at nearly the same rate as those who took the examination over the previous three years.

New Online Certification System Launched

The NBCRNA launched a new online certification system for all nurse anesthesia educational programs in July, 2014. This system created dramatic efficiencies in recording data, completely eliminating all manual data entry for student management and certification-related functions.

- NBCRNA staff time spent on processing student enrollments was reduced from more than 600 hours to less than 30 hours

- First-time NCE application processing time was dropped from more than 800 hours to just more than 200 hours

- NCE retake application processing time was reduced by one third

- NCE and SEE interim report process time was completely eliminated

The development of time-saving innovations allows the NBCRNA to expeditiously provide a greater number of high-quality services. This year, the NBCRNA was able to begin offering the Self-Evaluation Examination year round. The SEE is an incredibly valuable tool for students who wish to measure their progress in their nurse anesthesia educational programs and better prepare themselves for the NCE. Program administrators also benefit from the SEE, as it provides a gauge for how prepared their students are for anesthesia practice.

Recertification

More than 21,700 recertification applications were submitted in 2014. Nearly all were approved before the July 31 deadline. The 2014 recertification period was the second consecutive year the NBCRNA accepted all applications through the NBCRNA website, completing our transition to a solely electronic process. Nearly all certificants already preferred recertifying online because the process is both faster and more secure. For those certificants new to electronic recertification, the NBCRNA answered questions through a customer service email address and phone number, and produced video tutorials that walked certificants through the process at their own pace.

- 94% reported that the recertification application process was easy.

- 97% reported that the NBCRNA responded to their questions in a timely manner.

- 91% reported some degree of satisfaction with the NBCRNA, the majority of which rated themselves "extremely satisfied."

- 79% of approved applicants took advantage of the NBCRNA's CE credit transfer partner-ship with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

> **"**
> This online re-certification was fast and easy. Thank you.
> **"**
>
> *Survey Respondent*

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Recertification Application

Recertification Process

Video Tutorial on Online Recertification
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELm59zDLJJ8

Continued Professional Certification

The NBCRNA's Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program committee, comprised of board members and volunteer CRNAs with relevant expertise, continued developing the program scheduled to take effect January 1, 2016. The Board voted to finalize and adapt details of the CPC according to best practices and feedback from stakeholders. Among the Board's decisions was determining the format and length of the CPC examination. The Board produced a robust list of activities that will qualify for non-assessed credits. The assessed continuing education (CE) and non-assessed requirements were renamed Class A and Class B activities, respectively, to more clearly differentiate between the two types of activities. Additionally, the NBCRNA participated in a CPC town hall with CE vendors and, based on their feedback, voted to allow modules to be presented at in-person events.

As many of the CPC's elements were finalized, the NBCRNA invested in new tools to communicate the programs details to nurse anesthetists. Our Communications Committee produced a short, animated video to explain the genesis of the CPC Program and breakdown the four new requirements. We posted sample certification scenarios on our website, outlining four examples for how to comply with the CPC Program depending on a nurse anesthetist's practice and CE preferences. The NBCRNA staff created a CPC Calculator that enabled nurse anesthetists to determine their personal schedule for transitioning to the CPC Program. And, as in every year since announcing the proposed CPC, the Board sent speakers to more than a dozen events to present the details of the program and answer questions.
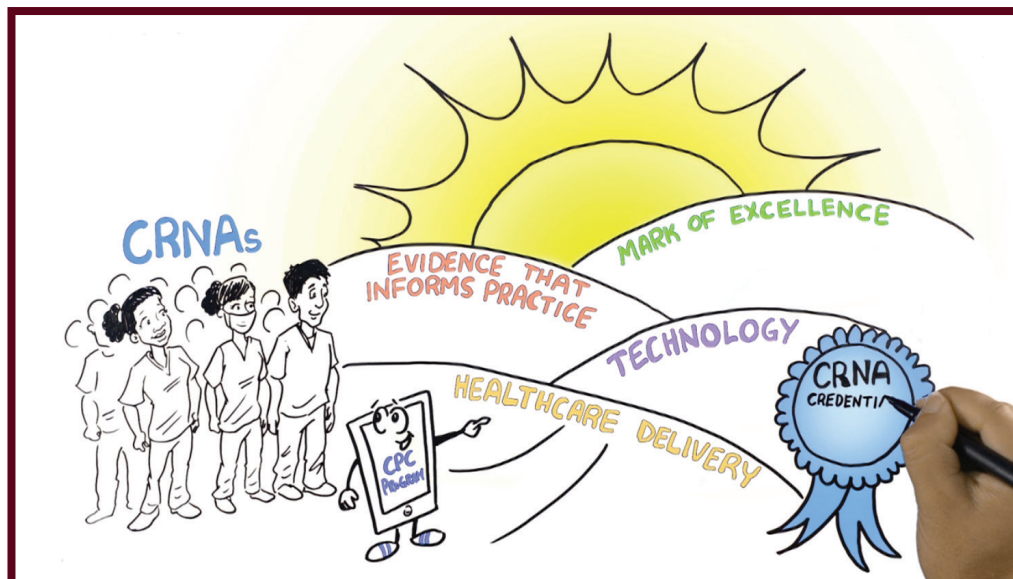
3-Minute Video Guide on CPC Program Fundamentals
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzaGHUPmkqo

Rural Ralph

Ralph runs a small hospital department in a rural setting. It is usually difficult for him to leave town for continuing education, so he looks for alternative opportunities.

Avatars created to highlight possible scenarios for CPC compliance.

Non-Surgical Pain Management Certification

The NBCRNA initiated the development of a voluntary subspecialty certification in Nonsurgical Pain Management (NSPM) in early 2013, following a 2012 decision by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to stop reimbursements to nurse anesthetists submitting requests for payment using Current Procedural Terminology codes related to nonsurgical pain management. In the last year, the NBCRNA has approved and moved forward on recommendations made by the Board members and pain management experts who comprised the NBCRNA's NSPM committee. These recommendations were shaped by research into best practices; a practice analysis study; and surveys, webinars and town halls with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs, and the nurse anesthetist community.

The criteria for both the initial and continued subspecialty certification have been finalized. The NBCRNA also voted on the composition and format of the initial examination for obtaining the subspecialty credential. A nurse anesthetist committee of test developers has since been hard at work creating an examination that reflects the standard of clinical practice in NSPM. The first NSPM certification examination is scheduled to be available in the fall of 2015.

NSPM Certification Examination Content Outline

- Physiology and Pathophysiology of Pain (13%)

- Imaging Safety (8%)

- Assessment / Diagnosis / Integration / Referral (24%)

- Pharmacological Treatment (15%)

- Interventional Pain Strategies (29%)

- Professional Aspects (11%)

Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program

Begins January 2016

CPC CORE MODULES
Educational activities that provide an update of knowledge that is fundamental to nurse anesthesia practice

CLASS A ACTIVITIES
Assessed CEs, which are any educational program that includes a demonstration of learning

CLASS B ACTIVITIES
Professional development activities that enhance patient safety, knowledge of anesthesia practice, or an understanding of the healthcare environment

CPC EXAMINATION
Examination taken every 8 years, validating crucial clinical decision-making knowledge in the practice of nurse anesthesia

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Promoting patient safety by enhancing provider quality.

NBCRNA
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