

Removing Barriers to Certification



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Certification, as defined by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), is the formal recognition of the specialized knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by achieving the standards identified by a nursing specialty (ABNS, 2017). It standardizes the criteria that validates that the nurses' knowledge, skills, and abilities are exceptional and lead to improved patient outcomes. As we transition to evidence-

based care, nurses who are certified can lead the progression to the improved quality of care that is important to our urologic patients. Nationwide, as many of our hospitals express interest in becoming a Magnet-designated facility, the need and appreciation for certified nurses is strengthened. Urologic certification needs to become an active player in the Magnet® status. Hospital administrations are more aware of the importance of recruiting and retaining the certified nurse.

Many of our urologic colleagues ask us (CBUNA) about the benefits of becoming certified and why they should choose a urologic certification. Our answer is simple. Urology is a specialty field that overlaps every other medical field and population. We need to have nurses who are specialized in urology. The many benefits of urologic certification include personal achievement, job satisfaction, job opportunities, professionalism, validation of knowledge, and most importantly, improved patient outcomes.

If we want SUNA to remain a strong viable organization, we must encourage and promote certification among SUNA leaders, chapter presidents, and every individual member. Certification should be the grassroots support for a strong nursing organization that encompasses urologic care. Nurses who placed a high importance on urologic certification are more likely to attend urologic conferences and stay active in an organization that fosters their highly specialized knowledge base.

Studies identified some of the barriers that people experience when considering applying for certification. These may include lack of institutional support and no reward for the individual's effort, the financial cost of testing and certification maintenance, and limited free time to prepare for certification. In many Magnet-designated facilities, certified nurses are given a financial incentive to become certified. Many institutions have a clinical ladder system that pays a yearly bonus to those on the clinical ladder. National certification is a key component of the clinical ladder.

CBUNA is working hard to ease some of these barriers for you. Here are some of the ways:

1. Scholarships are available to assist with the financial costs associated with certification. These scholarships include:
 - Jan Le Bouton CBUNA Certification Scholarship
 - SUNA Foundation Recertification Scholarship
 - CBUNA "Margaret Baran Gott" Recertification ScholarshipFor more information about these scholarships, visit www.cbuna.org/scholarship-opportunities-and-awards.
2. CBUNA has altered our recertification criteria to make recertification easier. Starting in 2018, only 36 urology specific CNE credits are needed for the certification period. In conjunction with the monthly free CNE programs offered by SUNA, the recertification candidate will not have any out-of-pocket costs to acquire the needed CNE credits.
3. Our website offers additional information and tips on how to study and prepare for the exam. Learn more at www.cbuna.org/certification/tips-preparing-certification.
4. CBUNA board members are available for any help or questions you may have. We are very proactive in helping you to succeed. If you are attending the uroLogic Conference, please stop by our booth and talk with us about your concerns and your questions.
5. CBUNA has developed an *Examination Preparation Guide* that helps to guide your study needs. It includes an outline, the grid and blueprint of topics, and also a number of sample questions that can help you prepare.

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Reference

American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS). (2017). About us. Retrieved from <http://www.nursingcertification.org/about>.