

National Nurse Practitioner Credential Changes

New Credentials effective May 1, 2008

The American Nursing Credentialing Center (ANCC) put out a formal proposal to national nurse practitioner certifying bodies to change nurse practitioner credentials to a standardized national format. ANCC carefully reviewed the impact of changing the credentials, exploring how the credential could have the most impact on the nurse practitioner profession and their recognition in the health care system. The title APRN is used in over 17 states to recognize advanced practice nurses. They felt a change could provide for a nationwide consistency and simplification for the public and state boards of nursing.

Over 6,000 advanced practice nurses were surveyed in the fall of 2006. The survey results indicated that they felt simplification of credentials, recognition of the role of the NP and recognition of the specialty was needed. A follow up survey of 4700 nurse practitioners was completed to choose the specialty and role combination credential.

The recommendation by the ANCC is that the following credential and format be used by all certifying bodies:

The use of NP (Stresses the role): **NP**

The use of the specialty (example: neonatal nurse practitioner): **NNP**

The use of BC for board certification (equality with our physician partners):

NNP-BC

Some nurse practitioners already use these credentials in their practice. The change was made in hopes that all certifying bodies would use the same credentials which would simplify things for the state boards of nursing. It provides uniformity for the public, our patients and their families. The use of "board certified" is already recognized and accepted by the public because of its use by physicians. It allows individual certified NPs to have their specialty area designated within their certification credential and provides some consistency in credentialing titles. Both the National Certification Corporation (NCC) and the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC) have moved to the designation of BC with the designated specialty. It is hoped that the remaining certification organizations will also move in this direction. NCC will distribute new certificates with the new designation to all NCC certified individuals. NNP-BC and WHNP-BC will reflect the official designation of NCC certification effective May 2008.