

The CERT Report

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President's Message

ABCGN celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year. The administration of the first Certification Exam was held in May 1986 in 26 different locations. A total of 669 candidates sat for the exam. What an exciting day and milestone for GI nurses! This was the culmination of several years of planning and rigorous preparation. ! Of course, a tremendous amount of hard work and thought went into preparing for that first exam.

The first seeds for certification were sown by SGNA, then named SGA—Society of Gastrointestinal Assistants. In 1979, SGA formed an Ad Hoc Certification Committee to study the feasibility of a certification program. In 1980, this group became a standing committee and developed five steps leading to certification:

1. Standards of Practice
2. Educational Curriculum Guide
3. Educational Training Programs
4. Accreditation Program
5. Implementation of Certification

In 1985, the certifying group separated from SGNA and became the Certifying Council for Gastroenterology Nurses (CCGN). The first role delineation study was conducted, which identified the competencies and skills in the scope of practice for a certified gastroenterology nurse. The first exam followed.

Through the years, we have experienced many changes. Our name has changed three times—from Certifying Council for Gastroenterology Nurses to Certification Board for Gastroenterology Nurses to our current name, the American Board of Certification for Gastroenterology Nurses. Yet one thing has remained constant, the dedication of our volunteers to the GI profession. The certification exam has never wavered. As we recognize this milestone, I could not possibly identify by name each and every person who has contributed to our certification program over the past 25 years. Let me collectively thank all those who recognized the need to standardize our specialty and who worked tirelessly to develop our program. I would especially like to thank those who have written and reviewed countless items to provide a quality exam and those who have served on the Board of Directors and various committees.

I would like each of you to understand why and how we continue to provide a quality certification program. ABCGN is accredited thru ABNS or American Board for Nursing Specialties. “Specialty nursing is THE standard by which the public recognizes quality nursing care.” ABNS states that certification is a mechanism for acknowledging and promoting professional competence. I believe we can all agree with this statement.

ABSNC, the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification, has this to say about competence: “Competence includes both cognition and behaviors. Continued competence can be defined as the ongoing ability to integrate the knowledge, skills, judgment and personal attributes to practice safely and ethically in a designated role.” ABSNC believes that recertification is an important component of validating and maintaining continued competency.

All of the above history and support are reasons why ABCGN has been here for 25 years. We believe in the importance of offering you a reliable exam. We also believe that everyone needs to continue to expand their knowledge in our chosen field. You need to be current on the latest methods of care, new diseases, infection control standards and new technology. And if you are reading this newsletter, you are already succeeding in that. You made the choice to take the certification exam in GI and passed. Now, make sure you stay informed through the many educational conferences offered by the SGNA Regions, online contact hours, the SGNA Annual Course and other educational opportunities.

Am I preaching to the choir? Absolutely. Congratulations on your continued competency. Shout out to your fellow staff members and managers: **I am certified and proud. I want the best for my patients. Come join me!** You may spark a light to bring more members onboard.

Please remember to celebrate Certified Nurses Day, March 19th. (Or the 18th or 21st, as the 19th is on a Saturday). By now you may have received a “surprise” in the mail from ABCGN celebrating our 25 year anniversary. Wear your surprise to make a statement that shows you have the competence to give quality GI nursing care.

Thank you for a great year and may ABCGN go on for another 25 years and more!

Barbara Schwant, BSN RN CGRN
ABCGN President, 2010-2011

From the Editor

“Always remember where you are going and never forget where you’ve been.”

This was in my fortune cookie this week and it is a shining example of your ABCGN Board of Directors. The board works tirelessly, serving you while looking ahead, to keep GI certification strong and valuable.

The primary role of the certification board is to provide a test that verifies a knowledge level and competency that reassures the public of our expertise. To that end, we work with our testing company to maintain accuracy and relevancy. Regarding recertification, the board updates the categories, analyzes recertification standards of other certification organizations and makes revisions as needed. We do this to maintain a high level of accountability to our members.

As we all look forward to celebrating ABCGN’s 25 years of professionalism we look back with fond memories. Those memories include “how it used to be done” and wonderful friendships that were forged through the heat of disagreement. Current and former board members know that times change, styles of operation may change, and opposing views are opportunities to grow.

It has been my good fortune to be a member of the ABCGN Board of Directors for five years. I encourage all of you to consider where you can serve, whether it’s with ABCGN, SGNA or at your workplace. It has been an honor and privilege and I leave you with:

A Golden Recipe From Life

- 1 c. good thoughts
- 1 c. consideration for others
- 3 c. forgiveness
- 1 c. kind deeds
- 2 c. sacrifice for others
- 2 c. well-beaten faults
- 4 c. prayer and faith

Mix these thoroughly and add tears of joy and sorrow and sympathy for others. Flavor with little gifts of love and kindly serve. Fold in 4 cups of prayer and faith to lighten other ingredients and raise the texture to great heights of living. After pouring all this into your daily life, bake well with the heat of human kindness.

Georgette Knoebel, BSN RN CGRN
ABCGN Board of Directors

It's a Great Day to Be Certified



Certified Nurses Day™, which takes place March 19, is a special day of recognition to celebrate the contribution of board certified nurses to the advancement of nursing professionalism and to higher standards and better outcomes in patient health.

The date chosen to celebrate is the birthday of Margretta “Gretta” Madden Styles, a pioneer in both the United States and internationally in championing the value of nursing certification before broad awareness or acceptance of its value had been achieved. Dr. Styles led the first comprehensive study of credentialing in the 1970s and was a key leadership figure in a number of national and international nursing organizations.

What can you do to celebrate? Take time to celebrate your certification and recognize those certified nurses around you. Encourage other nurses to continue their professional development by sitting for the certification exam. Visit the Official Certified Nurses Day Website (<http://www.certifiednursesday.org/>) to learn more about ways to celebrate and show appreciation to your certified nurses.

What is Considered GI Specific?

As you ready yourself to recertify in 2011 or begin collecting contact hours, you want to make sure you have enough GI Specific hours (80 of the 100 total needed). ABCGN defines a GI Specific contact hour as providing a knowledge or skill that is essential to providing care to a patient with a gastrointestinal disease

or problem. The information imparted should enable the Gastroenterology nurse to anticipate the care and interventions needed to treat the patient; provide the necessary care and interventions and supply follow-up care and teaching.

- GI specific courses identify the knowledge that the certified gastroenterology nurse is required to know to stay current in the field of gastroenterology.
- Non-GI specific courses may relate to gastroenterology, but do not address the science of nursing or medicine as it relates to the field of gastroenterology and digestive disease.

GI Specific Criteria identifies:

Aspects of the science of gastroenterology/hepatology include:

- ◇ Anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology
- ◇ Diagnostic and therapeutic gastroenterology/hepatology procedures
- ◇ Diagnostic tests which relate to gastroenterology/hepatology
Example: pathology specimen collection specific to endoscopy procedures or to GI diagnosis
- ◇ Research and technology in gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Infection control as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Environmental safety as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Standards of practice as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
Example: Standards as they relate to SGNA Standards and Guidelines, SGNA Position Statements
- ◇ Disease Processes that effect or are affected by the GI systems
- ◇ GI related radiological procedures
Example: ERCP, TIPS
- ◇ Radiology use and safety in the GI Lab
- ◇ Patient teaching related to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Sedation and monitoring including Capnography
- ◇ Cleaning, Disinfection and Reprocessing of equipment and supplies
- ◇ Universal Precautions
Example: Use of PPE during procedures and reprocessing, care of infectious disease patients, handling of body fluid/tissue samples.
- ◇ Standards of Nursing Practice: OSHA, Joint Commission, AAAHC
Example: Reducing Infection Risks Associated with Medical Equipment in the GI setting, Devices, and Supplies
- ◇ Electro surgery/cautery usage and safety
- ◇ Laser training and safety as related to GI/endoscopy
- ◇ Pharmacology as it pertains to digestive disease
- ◇ Nutritional therapy and enteral therapy as it pertains to digestive disease
- ◇ Eating disorders and their effects
- ◇ Surgical Procedures related to gastroenterology
Example: Surgery, post-operative complications, ulcers/strictures, issues with

absorption/malabsorption, endoscopic issues post surgery as in change of anatomy.

Bariatric surgery, Gastric Bypass, Gastrectomy would be types of surgeries.

NOTES: (Natural Orifice Trans Endoscopic Surgery if specific to GI

◇ Performance Improvement related to the GI Lab

Example: scope culturing, scope reconciliation

◇ Holistic Care as it relates to the GI patient

◇ Legal Issues as they relate to the GI/Endoscopy setting

◇ Competencies as they relate to the GI nurse/staff

◇ AIDS/HIV as it relates to GI/Endoscopy

On the other hand, the following topics, while they may be important in the GI practice, do not count as GI-specific since they cover material not included on the examination:

- IV Therapy
- CQI/QA unless directed specifically to GI
- Bronchoscopy
- TEE
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Basic or Advanced Cardiac Life Support (if audited, copies of cards are not acceptable documentation, copies of certificates of attendance must be provided)

Such contact hours may be included among the 20 non-GI contact hours permitted. You may use the same course more than once on your application, provided you took the two offerings at least one year apart.

- Obesity as a general topic is not GI specific. Complications of Obesity such as diabetes and hypertension are not GI specific.
- Benchmarking: most of this falls under management which is not GI specific.

All of this information and more can be found in the Recertification Handbook, located on www.abcgcn.org. [Click here](#) to access.

Board Approves Changes in Recertification Categories

In November of this year, the ABCGN Board approved the following changes in recertification:

Category 3 - Authoring Articles

Category 3 has been amended to award contact hours to all authors listed on an article or chapter in a textbook. Ten (10) contact hours will be awarded for each article or chapter. You may submit a maximum of 50 contact hours in this category.

Category 11 - Volunteer Involvement

Category 11 has been amended to award contact hours for serving as a publication editor/reviewer for ABCGN, SGNA or SIGNEA. Three (3) contact hours per year will be awarded for involvement in these GI focused professional organizations as an officer, committee/task force member at the regional or national level or as an appointed publication editor/reviewer. Minimum GI specific hours granted will be three (3), maximum 15. ABCGN is continuously reviewing the recertification categories to improve and provide superior services to our membership and to encourage you to recertify.

Learn More about the Certification Process at the SGNA Annual Course

Start making your plans to be in Indianapolis, IN this spring for the 38th Annual Course - *SGNA: The Link Between Practice and Care*, which will take place May 6-11, 2011 at the Indiana Convention Center. This is a great opportunity to learn more about certification, earn contact hours at the great educational sessions and network with friends and colleagues.

If you plan to take the certification examination in 2011 or 2012, ABCGN offers a course to learn about the benefits of being a certified gastroenterology nurse as well as how the exam is constructed. Nancy Eisemon, RN MPH APRN/CNS CGRN, will discuss the “**Value and Opportunities of Professional Nursing Certification.**” Actual test construction with the number of questions in each category or domain will be discussed. Sample questions will be reviewed. Test taking tips and ideas will help you prepare for the examination. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions.

If you are already a certified nurse and would like to learn the strategies of writing questions for the examination, ABCGN offers an “**Item Writers Workshop**” optional course, which guides you through a step-by-step process on how to develop quality questions. Attendees who register for this session must meet the eligibility requirements to serve as a volunteer on ABCGN’s Item Writing Panel, Item Review Committee, Panel of Experts for Job Analysis and Passing Score Panel. There is also opportunity to meet ABCGN Board Members and members of the Item Review Committee. Join us for this session and learn, network and discover new volunteer opportunities with ABCGN.

You can also celebrate ABCGN’s 25th anniversary at its annual ABCGN Certification Recognition Dinner on Monday, May 9, from 8:00-10:00 pm. Sponsored by Cook Medical, the ABCGN Certification Recognition Dinner is our opportunity to honor all those holding the CGRN certification. There is no charge for attending if you are actively certified. Please note your attendance on the Annual Course registration form.

For additional information on the Annual Course, visit www.sgna.org.

Recertification: What You Need to Know!

Join us at the Annual Course in Indianapolis, Tuesday afternoon, May 10 as the ABCGN Recertification Committee presents this concurrent session at the Annual Course. This one hour presentation will review the requirements and process for recertification and the options available. Continuing education categories will be outlined including the minimum or maximum contact hours allowed for each. Tips for application completion, submit per year and online submission will be discussed. This session is for any CGRN planning to recertify within the next five years. Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions and learn more information about this process as you prepare for recertification.

We hope to see you there!

Jeanie Ebbert RN CGRN
Chair, Recertification Audit Committee

2011 Election Results

In a very close race, Anne Ragsdale of Woodland Hills, CA, was elected for her second term as ABCGN's Public Member. Anne is a K-8 Independent Study Teacher in the Woodland Joint Unified School District; she teaches seventh and eighth grade home study students.

Required by our accrediting body, ABNS, the Public Member is a rather unique position. The Public Member represents the public by continually assessing and prompting a certification climate that is responsive to the needs of the public. The Public Member attends all board meetings and is assigned to at least one committee and has voting rights. The Public Member shall not be a nurse or associate. Therefore, the Public Member shall not be eligible for certification, shall not be married to any person eligible to be certified by the ABCGN, and shall not employ or be employed by any person eligible to be certified by ABCGN. The Public Member shall represent the interests of consumers and shall protect the interests of the public at large. Anne's second term begins in May following the Annual Course. Congratulations, Anne!

Beginning in May 2011, your ABCGN Board of Directors:

Kathryn Miller, RN CGRN, President
Barbara Schwant, BSN RN CGRN, Immediate Past President
Jenny Parkhurst, RN CGRN, President-elect
Jeanie Ebbert, RN CGRN, Treasurer

Deborah Copeland, BSN RN CGRN, Secretary
Sandra Brentnall, RN CGRN, Director
Shirley Flowers, BSN RN CGRN, Director
Janet Hannah, RN CGRN, Director
Nancy Todd, ARNP NP-C CGRN RN-BC, Director
Kendall Yoshisato, BS MS RN CGRN, Director
Anne Ragsdale, Public Member

NEW! Employer's Guide to Certified Gastroenterology Registered Nurse (CGRN)

This new guide is filled with information on the CGRN that can be shared with your employer. Whether you're a staff nurse or nurse manager, this guide is for you. It includes tips on why the CGRN certification is important and what employers can do to support certification and recognize those who proudly use the CGRN designation. Print our PDF version, located on our Web site at www.abcgcn.org and share it with your employer.

ABCGN Proposes Bylaw Changes

Over the course of the year, the ABCGN Board of Directors has amended its Bylaws as shown below. ABCGN members have the opportunity to repeal these changes at the ABCGN Business Meeting, which takes place during the Annual Course in Indianapolis, IN on Sunday, May 8. Per ABCGN Bylaws, you are being notified of these changes 30 days prior to the meeting.

The current Bylaw is stated below, along with the proposed change; a brief rationale is also included.

Proposed Bylaw Changes

1. Article IV. Sections 4.2.2. and 5 Election Procedures and Term

Current: Election of directors shall be by vote of the members present in person or represented by proxy at a meeting of the members or by vote by written mail ballot, with each member having one vote for each office.

Proposed: Election of directors shall be by electronic ballot, with each member having one vote for each office.

Rationale: ABCGN conducts its voting via electronic ballot. These sections need to be cleaned up to reflect current practice.

2. Article V. Board of Directors, Section 4. Annual Elections.

Current: Election of officers shall take place at the Annual Board of Directors meeting. Members desiring to suggest candidates for office shall submit their names and appropriate documentation of qualification, willingness and ability to serve, as required by policy, to the most Immediate Past President available to serve who shall chair the Nominating Committee by publicized date. The Nominating Committee will submit official board report for the Annual Meeting. If there is a single candidate for any office, no report will be necessary for that office.

Proposed: Annual elections by the Board of Directors shall be conducted to elect the officers of the Society. Election of officers shall be by vote of the Board of Directors by the Board members present in person at a meeting of the Board of Directors with each Board member having one vote for each officer position to be filled. A plurality shall elect. In case of a tie for any office, the election shall be decided by a run-off election between the two tying candidates.. Results of elections of officers, directors and members of the Committee on Nominations and Elections shall be tabulated and communicated to members.

Rationale: Clarification on the election of officers.

If you have any questions about these proposed changes, please send them to Erin Butler at ebutler@smithbucklin.com.