



American Board of Certification
for Gastroenterology Nurses

Committed to Excellence; Passionate about Care

Recertification Handbook

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Recertification Application Instructions

This Recertification Handbook has been published to help you through the recertification process.

You can make the recertification process easier for yourself by following these easy steps:

1. Read through the entire handbook before beginning to thoroughly understand each step of the process required.
2. Discard all previous handbooks and forms since the handbook is reviewed and updated annually.
3. Type or print all information legibly.
4. Submit your materials by the appropriate deadline and include only contact hours earned during the current recertification period. The certification period begins with the date certification is granted (exam date or date noted on last recertification certificate).
5. Use the information provided in this handbook to organize documentation of contact hours and to provide the appropriate documentation for all of the contact hours submitted.

A completed application package includes:

- √ An Application Form including contact and demographic information, affirmation and signature.
- √ A Verification of Professional Qualifications Form, with an attached copy of RN license .
- √ A Payment Form with an attached check made payable to "ABCGN," or a signed charge authorization for applicable fees.
- √ A Recertification Verification Form including listings of categories 1 – 12.

* Note, certificate and back-up documentation is no longer required at initial submission. If a candidate is audited this information/document will be requested and must be submitted, reviewed and approved for a candidates to pass recertification. Failure to provide documentation may result in loss of certification.

****Do not submit original documentation, make copies to submit and keep originals for your files.****

Eligibility Requirements for Recertification

To qualify for recertification, candidates must meet the following criteria:

- √ At the time of application, candidates must have been employed in a clinical, supervisory, administrative, teaching/education or research capacity in an institutional or private practice setting for a minimum of two years full-time, or its part-time equivalent of 4000 hours, within the past five years.
- √ Full time industry nurses whose focus is at least 40% clinical practice, education or research are eligible. Those whose principal focus is sales are not.
- √ The professional practice requirement for recertification is different than that required for initial Certification. ABCGN recognizes that gastroenterology/endoscopy is an evolving specialty and that experienced CGRN's often assume roles other than that required for initial certification.

Recertification By Examination

To recertify by examination, certified Registered Nurses take the then current certification examination at the same times and in the same places as candidates for initial certification and must meet the same deadlines and fees. For information regarding test sites and registration deadline either contact ABCGN at 800-245-7462 or go online to www.abcgcn.org.

Recertification By Contact Hours

To qualify for recertification by contact hours, a candidate must:

1. Meet the eligibility requirements listed above;
2. Complete an application package including:
 - application form
 - verification of Professional Qualifications Form, with an attached copy of RN
 - payment
 - recertification verification form and attachments including listings of categories 1–12.
3. Return the application packet including all of the above by the published deadline.

Mail your packet to:
ABCGN Headquarters
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611-4267

Since contact hours are accepted in lieu of re-examination, approved contact hours must be in specific categories and must include specific content which mirror the content of the examination.

If you choose to submit contact hours from a variety of activities, remember, there are maximums in some categories. Of the required 100 contact hours, you must meet the minimums of 80 GI-specific contact hours, 40 of which must be from CE-approved nursing seminars and workshops.

One contact hours equals any of the following:

0.1 CEU

1 CME credit

1 CERP

60 minutes of seminar/workshop time

50 minutes of seminar/workshop time from State Boards of Nursing maintaining that standard

Ten contact hours equal the following:

1.0 CEU credit

1 quarter credit hour

Fifteen contact hours equal 1 semester credit hour

Keeping Track of Contact Hours

ABCGN reserves the right to request additional documentation to support an application at any time. You should keep complete records of your contact hours as you earn them.

Nothing will make completing the Recertification Verification Form easier than complete, concise and careful record keeping. It is a good idea to keep programs from all seminars and workshops attended, course descriptions from academic course work and similar backup documentation. Maintaining a detailed record of your contact hours can help substantiate that portions of programs were GI-specific and otherwise help you complete the Recertification Verification Form.

If Certification Expires. . .

Contact hours will NOT be accepted to regain certified status. The only way to be reinstated as a certified professional is to retake the examination. For this reason, candidates are urged to begin the recertification process early to allow themselves plenty of time to make deadlines and plenty of options.

Hardship Extension

Any candidate who is unable to fulfill the necessary requirements for recertification by the December 31st deadline in any given year due to circumstances of a serious nature may request a hardship extension. A candidate must have 50% of Category 1 GI Specific contact hours to be eligible for a hardship extension. Please submit your request in writing to ABCGN explaining the circumstances along with a \$50 fee. Requests should be mailed to ABCGN, 401 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611.

Not Certain You Have Enough Hours or the Right Hours?

For those candidates who are not certain that they have sufficient contact hours or that their hours are in the right categories or for those who have other questions, ABCGN offers a pre-review process. For a fee of \$50.00, experienced members of the ABCGN Recertification Audit Committee will review your application packet (without documentation) and provide feedback.

The \$50 pre-review fee is an additional fee and does not count toward your recertification fee.

***Recertification Pre-Review Applications may be submitted at any time; however, please

allow sufficient time for the Recertification Audit Committee to review your application and respond to you so that you can, if necessary, register for the exam or correct deficiencies prior to the deadline for recertification by contact hours. For additional information, contact ABCGN headquarters at info@abcdn.org, or refer to the [Recertification Pre-View Application](#).

Deadline for Receipt of Materials

The deadline for receipt of completed application packages for recertification by contact hours is December 31st on the year of expiration.

Materials postmarked after this date will be returned without processing. ABCGN cannot be responsible for the timely performance of the postal service or for correspondence lost in the mail. Therefore, we recommend that you copy your application prior to mailing and mail your application packet by certified mail, return receipt requested.

If all recertification materials are completed and submitted in compliance with the application instructions, you will be notified of the results of the Recertification Audit Committee's review of your application within 6-8 weeks following the deadline. Remember, your application will be scanned for completeness, your check or charge processed and your application prepared for review by staff. Then the application packet will be reviewed by the Recertification Audit Committee. Finally, staff will prepare and send a letter advising you of the results.

All of this must be done very carefully because of its importance to candidates and to ABCGN. Therefore, it takes time. We appreciate your patience.

Fees

The entire amount due in U.S. dollars must accompany the completed application. Applications accompanied by incorrect fees will not be processed and will be returned. There is a \$35.00 fee for returned checks. Please note that failure to pay fees is grounds for revocation of certification. Refunds are not available to those who do not achieve recertification by contact hours. Note: fees and subject to change.

Review and Appeal

A review process and an appeal procedure are available for candidates whose applications for recertification by contact hours have been denied or for those whose certifications have been revoked. Please contact ABCGN headquarters for more information regarding the process and policies for review and appeals.

Revocation of Certification

ABCGN has the right to revoke any certificate which it has issued in the event that the recipient engages in past or current conduct found to be not in compliance with the program's procedures or professional standards.

Revocation of certification does not constitute evidence that the practitioner acted wrongly or became incompetent. Gastroenterology certification may be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of the certification or recertification application.
2. Falsification of any information requested by ABCGN.
3. Failure to maintain eligibility requirements.

4. Failure to pay fees.
5. Misrepresentation of SGNA status.
6. Conviction of a felony.
7. Cheating on the examination.

Non-Discrimination

ABCGN does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs, disability or national origin.

Confidentiality Policy

ABCGN respects the privacy of all applicants. All materials submitted with applications and the results of any review of application packets will be held in confidence except as required by law.

ABCGN, however, has an obligation to the public. Therefore it responds to questions from employers, payers and others regarding whether or not an individual is certified. Additionally since publishing and releasing the names of certified nurses and/or successful candidates recognizes those individuals and encourages certification, ABCGN reserves the right, without limitation, to release the names of certified individuals or successful candidates. Application for certification through this program constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of ABCGN's policy with regard to publication and release of names.

Instructions

Verification of Professional Qualifications Form The Verification of Professional Qualifications Form requests each candidate to submit verification of gastroenterology and gastroenterology endoscopy practice, current RN license, and present and prior employment.

On side 1, secure the names, addresses and signatures of two professionals currently active in the field of gastroenterology or gastroenterology endoscopy to verify your professional qualifications. These may be nursing colleagues, physicians or administrators or you may request verification from personnel in the human relations department of your place of employment.

List your license number, and attach a photocopy of your license prominently marked "COPY".

In the spaces provided in the "Present Employer" section, print the name and address of your present employer and the years/months worked there.

In the spaces provided in the "Previous Employment" section, print the names and addresses of your past employers (up to four), if applicable, and years/months worked there.

Payment Form Please indicate whether or not you are an SGNA member. Then, circle the appropriate recertification fee and write in the correct amount submitted with your application.

You may pay by check or charge. If paying by check, make your check payable to: ABCGN. If paying by charge, complete the authorization form by providing your charge card number, expiration date and signature authorizing ABCGN to charge your account. The charge will appear as "Association Headquarters" on your statement.

The Recertification Verification Form requests each candidate to identify and categorize all continuing education activities to be submitted for approval.

Using the specific category descriptions which follow and noting the maximums and minimums, where applicable, organize your documentation by category to complete the form. All materials submitted must be in English or you must supply an accurate translation of the information required by the Recertification Committee. If additional space is needed, make extra copies of the Recertification Verification Form. ABCGN will only require copies/documentation of continuing education if audited. DO NOT send materials with initial application. Fill out contact hour grids and retain copies/documentation until recertification is granted.

Since the ABCGN certification is in the field of gastroenterology and gastroenterology endoscopy nursing, emphasis is placed on contact hours in nursing CE approved seminars or workshops. A candidate must submit a minimum of 40 GI-specific hours in Category 1.

To be acceptable, contact hours in "**Category 1 - Attendance at Nursing CE Approved Seminars or Workshops**" MUST be approved by one of the following. ✓ The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC); ✓ An agency, organization, or educational institution accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or whose continuing educational hours are accepted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC); ✓ A state Board of Nursing (all states included); or ✓ A state nurses' association.

If you attended a multi-session conference, such as the SGNA May meeting, it is not necessary to list individual sessions. Simply list the name of the conference, the total number of contact hours for the conference and the number of GI and non-GI hours in the columns provided.

Interactive, live audio or video seminars, with appropriate approvers, may be submitted under Category 1. Rebroadcasts or tapes should be included in Category 5.

The following DO NOT meet the criteria for recertification and are, therefore, not acceptable:

1. Any program approvals or providers not listed above.
2. Handwritten accreditation statements or provider numbers.
3. Certificates of attendance without an appropriate accreditation statement and/or acceptable provider or otherwise not including the required information.
4. Contact hours acquired before the beginning of the certification period or after the deadline for submission for recertification by contact hours.

Assessment Criteria to Identify GI Specific Continuing Education Units

Gastroenterology is a medical specialty concerned with the study of digestive diseases. A GI Specific contact hour should provide 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.

Category 2

Category 2 covers providing presentations at seminars and workshops approved by an accredited provider. Such seminars or workshops need not be approved by a nursing organization, as in Category 1, but may include any allied health provider, any academic institution or other accredited provider. You may submit a maximum of 50 contact hours in this category.

You will receive 3 contact hours for each hour of presentation. If audited, as documentation, please submit a contact hours certificate and a copy of the program which must include title, date, length of program and approver. Highlight the important information on the copy of the program to aid the Recertification Audit Committee in evaluating your submission. Each time you repeat the same presentation (up to two repeats), you may earn an additional contact hour.

Category 3

Contact hours in Category 3 are awarded for authoring articles in professional journals or chapters in textbooks for health care professionals. All authors listed will earn credit. Ten contact hours are awarded for each article or chapter. You may submit a maximum of 50 contact hours in this category.

Category 4

Category 4 covers academic course work offered by an accredited educational institution. The course must be health care-related but need not specifically address nursing. Science courses, social sciences courses, statistics and similar topics are acceptable while general education courses such as history, art, music or English are not. You must earn a grade of "C" or better to count course work. If audited, you will need to submit a copy of your transcript as documentation.

One semester credit counts as 15 contact hours while one quarter credit counts as 10 contact hours. You may submit a maximum of 20 contact hours in Category 4.

Category 5

Category 5 includes independent home study courses offered by an accredited contact hour provider. Courses must be specific to nursing practice or nursing research. To be acceptable, contact hours in Category 5 MUST be approved by one of the following.

- The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
- An agency, organization, or educational institution accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or whose continuing educational hours are accepted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC);
- A state Board of Nursing (all states included);
- A state nurses' association

You may submit a maximum of 60 contact hours in this category.

Category 6

Contact hours in Category 6 are awarded for participation in the ABCGN Item Writers Workshop. These contact hours are GI-specific. Contact hours awarded may vary. See certificate. You may submit a maximum of 20 contact hours in this category. Use the certificate provided by ABCGN as documentation of your participation.

Category 7

Category 7 covers allied health education seminars, workshops, and home study courses. Such workshops and courses include Continuing Medical Education (CME) offerings approved by the American Medical Association (or one of its affiliates or approved providers) or by the American Osteopathic Association (or one of its affiliates or approved providers) or courses approved by accredited pharmacy, hospital administration or similar providers. These contact hours may not substitute for nursing contact hours described in Category 1 because they have a different focus. For example, CME workshops ordinarily focus on anatomy and pathology only, while nursing workshops include not only physiological, but psychological and social implications for patients and their families. CME, pharmacy and hospital administration seminars and workshops, while worthwhile, do not replace nursing contact hours for the purpose of recertifying in a specialty nursing field.

Candidates may submit a maximum of 30 contact hours in allied health workshops, whether they are GI-specific or non-GI-specific.

Category 8

Nursing research projects may be included in Category 8. A candidate may submit up to 40 contact hours in Category 8, with up to 20 contact hours awarded per research project. If audited the candidate must submit a published manuscript or validation by a panel of experts as documentation of research work. The work must be an independently funded project designed to increase the nursing knowledge base or improve patient care and/or safety. If the project is specific to GI, it can be included in the 80 GI-specific hours.

Category 9

Poster presentation may be included in Category 9. A candidate may submit a maximum 10 contact hours in this category as either GI Specific or Non-GI Specific. An Education Poster

would qualify for 2 contact hours and a Research Poster would qualify for 3 contact hours. Posters are required to have an Educational/Teaching or Educational/Research component to them. A photo copy of the poster must be submitted along with the Verification Form for Poster Presentations. Credit will be allowed only for the initial poster presentation during the 5 year recertification period. All authors of the poster qualify for contact hours.

Category 10

Precepting activities may be included in Category 10. Five (5) contact hours will be awarded to the CGRN for 80 hours of precepting one RN/LPN/GI tech within a GI work setting. A GI work setting is defined as working in a Gastroenterologist Office or GI Unit (Hospital or Ambulatory Surgery/Endoscopy Center). The maximum amount awarded is 5 GI Specific contact hours in a 5 year period. No contact hours will be awarded for Non-GI Specific work settings. Contact hours cannot be split for partial orientation.

Category 11

Volunteer involvement in these professional organizations or publications by ABCGN, SGNA, or SIGNEA may be included in Category 11.

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 3, maximum 15. Non-GI specific contact hours will not be awarded. (Item Review Committee and Item Writing Panel use Category 12.)

Category 12

Contact hours in Category 12 are awarded for participation in the ABCGN Item Review Committee and/or Item Writers Panel. Up to 12 GI Specific hours will be accepted per year with a maximum of 48. Use the certificate provided by ABCGN as documentation of your participation.

Please note: Candidates must submit a total of 100 contact hours. Of those, 80 must be GI-specific contact hours, at least 40 of which must be in approved nursing seminars or workshops. Any application not including 80 GI-specific contact hours, 40 of which are in approved nursing seminars, will be rejected.

ABCGN Recertification Checklist

The checklist below is included to assist you in reviewing your recertification application materials. An incomplete package and/or missing or incomplete supporting documentation will incur a resubmission fee and may result in a delay in processing your application or affect your eligibility for recertification.

STOP!

Have you:

1. Provided all information requested on the Application, Verification of Professional Qualifications, and Recertification Verification Forms?
2. Completed and signed the Application.
3. Provided the names, addresses, and signatures of two responsible practitioners active in gastroenterology/endoscopy to verify your professional qualifications?
4. Attached a photocopy of your RN license?
5. Completed the Payment Form, together with a check (personal or employer accepted) or money

- order, payable to ABCGN, or signed the charge authorization for the correct amount?
6. Attached all forms, documentation and fees to your application package?
 7. Photocopied your application?
 8. Placed your application packet in the envelope and affixed appropriate postage for certified mail with return receipt?

Submit the original pages of all forms and keep a photocopy for your records. Submit copies of all documentation and keep the originals for your records. Your application must be postmarked no later than the published deadline for recertification by contact hours (December 31st) in the year your certification expires.