

After 13 years of medical – surgical nursing, I felt my professional life was stagnant. I desired professional growth and challenge, as well as recognition for my dedication to quality patient care. I researched regarding certification exams for nurses, the impact on job satisfaction, sense of empowerment, and enhancement of quality patient care. After much consideration, and despite only minimal support from fellow coworkers, I became certified in medical-surgical nursing in 1998. Some of my personal goals were achieved, but I didn't see the professional growth I was searching for. That same year, I was afforded the opportunity to transfer to Endoscopy. I became quite passionate towards GI patients. In 1999, I became a member of SGNA. I read books and literature to learn as much as I could about GI nursing. In 2000, my manager and coworkers encouraged me to sit for the GI nursing exam. I passed! Soon thereafter, I saw professional growth. I became a key member on the clinical ladder committee which developed the program for the organization. I included certification as a requirement for level three and four nurses. I also promoted more public recognition for those who became certified. In 2006, I earned my Master's in nursing, and in 2007, became certified as an adult nurse practitioner. Certification increases self-confidence leading to empowerment, professional growth, and higher quality of patient care. A positive environment is essential to achieve certification by conveying the importance through networking with fellow coworkers, nursing students, and administrative personnel.