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ANCC Renames the CNS in Public/Community Health Certification and Credentials

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Commission on Certification (COC) has engaged in extensive dialogue with key public and community health stakeholders regarding the future of certification for public and community health (PH/CH) nurses at the advanced level. Discussions included potential, beneficial changes to the eligibility criteria.

Simultaneously, key nursing stakeholder groups recently met to discuss the future advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) model for regulation as proposed by the APN Consensus Workgroup for APRN Regulation. The model includes four key areas: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education. Following are outcomes of this national dialogue. Advanced practice is based upon direct care provided to individuals. For regulatory purposes, the nurse must complete separate graduate courses in advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology, and advanced pharmacology. The advanced practice nurse is prepared in one of these four roles: clinical nurse specialist, nurse anesthetist, nurse mid-wife, or nurse practitioner.

As a result, the ANCC COC decided in March 2008 to align the current Clinical Nurse Specialist in Public/Community Health nursing certification examination title with the model, by renaming it *Public Health Nursing, Advanced*. Recognizing that most PH/CH programs do not meet the national program criteria for a clinical nurse specialist focus, there will be changes in eligibility requirements for the exam that are expected to benefit many graduates of non-CNS public health graduate programs as well as nurse candidates working in public health who did not qualify under the current criteria. The examination name change is effective after the May 17, 2008 test administration. There is no change to the test content outline and/or the exam content except for removal of reference to clinical nurse specialist terminology.

Credentials for advanced public health nursing will also change. Any nurse who will have passed the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Public/Community exam on or before May 17, 2008 will be permitted to hold and use the credential Public/Community Health Clinical Nurse Specialist Board Certified (PHCNS-BC) as long as they maintain an active certification. **After the May 17, 2008 test administration, nurses will take the Public Health Nursing, Advanced exam. Those achieving a passing score will earn the credential *Advanced Public Health Nurse Board Certified (APHN-BC)*.**

Members of the Quad Council on Public Health Nursing have been notified of this change. ANCC will continue to seek input from these key stakeholders on revisions to the exam eligibility criteria over the next few weeks. An official announcement will be provided when the new eligibility criteria are complete.

About ANCC

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), provides individuals and organizations throughout the nursing profession with the resources they need to achieve practice excellence. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify nurses in specialty practice areas; recognize healthcare organizations for promoting safe, positive work environments through the Magnet Recognition Program® and the Pathway to Excellence Program™; and accredit providers of continuing nursing education. In addition, ANCC provides leading-edge information and education services and products to support its core credentialing programs.

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