2015
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Role Delineation Study Executive Summary

November 2015
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Executive Summary

In 2015, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) conducted a Role Delineation Study (RDS) of the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner role. The study included a focus on entry-level practice and involved a collection of current data on the roles and responsibilities of adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioners. A key outcome of this study was an update to the test content outline and item distribution of ANCC's Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Examination. The study was conducted with two main parts: a national survey and a linking activity. To assist with the work of this study, ANCC selected nine content experts with expertise as Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioners to participate in an RDS Content Expert Panel (CEP). All Content Expert applications are reviewed by a Registered Nurse (RN) to determine if the applicant meets the basic criteria to be considered a content expert in the specialty to which they are applying.

The 2015 Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner RDS involved two sets of activities that ran concurrently: a national web-based survey and a linking activity. The purpose of the development and administration of the national survey was to collect information on the work activities Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioners actually perform in practice. The CEP met June 1-3, 2015, to draft a pilot version of the survey and construct the initial map of the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) relevant to the work activities included in the survey. The panel then convened for a conference call in August 2015 to review the results of the pilot survey and finalize the national survey.

The national web-based survey was administered from August to September 2015 and consisted of 91 work activities. A total of 1,500 Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioners were invited via alert letter to participate in the study. A total of 343 eligible respondents completed the survey (response rate = 22.87%) and indicated that they currently work as an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. Data analyses were conducted solely on these 343 respondents.

Concurrent with the survey administration, the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner CEP participated in a linking activity. In this activity, each panel member identified links between the work activities listed in the survey and the KSAs that are required to successfully perform the work activities. The results from the survey became the basis for discussion of the test content outline for the updated certification examination, and the linking activity results determined the relative weightings of the content domains. Results from the demographic portion of the survey indicated that although more than 98% of respondents were practicing as an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, some respondents reported practicing as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (17%). Moreover, some respondents reported being certified in another advanced practice specialty (13%). With respect to highest level of education obtained, the majority of respondents (91%) reported holding a Master’s in Nursing and 94% graduated from an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program.

The respondents rated each work activity on the survey using three scales, which were frequency, performance expectation, and consequences. The responses were then combined and recoded into a new overall criticality scale with scores that ranged from one to
41. The higher the score on the criticality scale, the more critical the work activity was considered for practice. A total of 22 of the 91 work activities were rated as highly critical by respondents with an overall criticality rating of 32 or higher.

The panel, along with staff from ANCC, convened for a two-day meeting on November 12-13, 2015. The purpose of this second RDS meeting was for the CEP to review the results of the national survey, examine the activity weight structures derived from the survey data and linking activity, and to revise the test content outline and item distribution for ANCC’s Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Certification Examination accordingly.
The mission of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), is to promote excellence in nursing and health care globally through credentialing programs. ANCC’s internationally renowned credentialing programs certify and recognize individual nurses in various practice areas. It recognizes health care organizations that promote nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes, while providing safe, positive work environments. In addition, ANCC accredits health care organizations that provide and approve continuing nursing education. It also offers educational materials to support nurses and organizations as they work toward their credentials.