

Specialty Nursing Certification Advocacy Project Moves Nursing Forward ^[1]

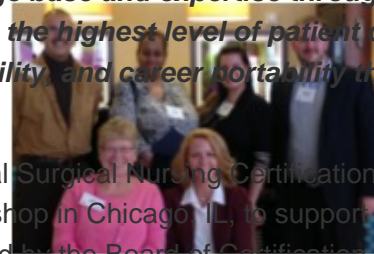
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Submitted by Nicole Ervin and Gentry Brown

Specialty nursing certification validates possession of a knowledge base and expertise through qualification and competency. Certification shows commitment to the highest level of patient care and empowers individuals by increasing their personal growth, credibility, and career portability through lifelong learning.

This past April, we were among nine advocates selected by the Medical Surgical Nursing Certification Board (MSNCB) to attend the Specialty Nursing Certification Advocacy Workshop in Chicago, IL, to support the Specialty Nursing Certification Advocacy Project. The workshop was led by the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN).



Several MSNCB advocates at the workshop.

The project was designed with the goal of having specialty nursing certifications and their requirements replace state mandated continuing nursing education (CNE) requirements.

From left, front row: Ann Moore and Hope Sloan; back row: Wes Foster, Cord Palmer, Nicole Ervin, and Gentry Brown.

Two environmental scans were conducted and revealed that 29 states had pathways set up to provide coverage of CNE or continued competence (CC) requirements. Five states allow education to obtain certification only to count toward requirements, and three states do not have CNE requirements but instead CC requirements. Some states even allow for the certification to be used toward CNE/CC requirements. Two states, Missouri and Oregon, do not require CNE/CC requirements.

The major goals of the project are to enhance the hiring of nurses with specialty certifications, to work with legislation with the end of using certifications in lieu of CNE/CC requirements, and to spread the word for certification utilization in lieu of CNE/CC requirements in those states that already have certification recognition toward CNE/CC requirements in place.

This project has reinforced the significance of lifelong learning as a core ethical value in nursing and nursing

specialties. We hope that your specialty nursing certifications and ongoing education in nursing will serve you as well as it has served us. We wish you all the best!

Look for continued success of the Specialty Nursing Certification Advocacy Project!

CMSRN Specialty Nursing Certification Advocates

Arizona representative:	Charles Westley Foster, MSN, BA, RN, CMSRN
Illinois representative:	Cora Palmer, BSN, RN-BC, CMSRN
Maryland representative:	Stacey Lynn Trotman, BSN, RN, CMSRN
Missouri representative:	Gentry Brown, MSN, MBA, RN, PCCN, CMSRN
New Jersey representative:	Nicole Ervin, BSN, RN, CMSRN
Oregon representative:	Valorie Davis, BSN, RN, CMSRN
Texas representative:	Anne-Gret V. Friedrich-Cuntz, RN, CMSRN
Virginia representative:	Hope M. Sloane, MSN/MHA, RN-BC, CMSRN
Washington representative:	Ann Nelson Moore, RN, CMSRN



Members of the BCEN, MSNCB, and Kar Associates, Inc. certification advocacy groups at the workshop.

Their Personal Stories

All of the nurses returned from the event charged with energy and ready to be change agents. We decided to each write personal statements and share them with MSNCB so others would be understand our efforts and the Advocacy Project goals.

Personal Statement: Nicole Ervin, BSN, RN, CMSRN; MSNCB Specialty Nursing Certification Advocate, NJ; Assistant Nurse Manager, Kennedy University Health System

I have been a Certified Medical-Surgical Registered Nurse (CMSRN) for over 5 years and proudly sign 'CMSRN' with my credentials.

Obtaining this certification validated that I was keeping up with the evolving

specialty nursing practice and had the specific medical-surgical practice knowledge necessary to provide ongoing, competent nursing care.

This year my health institution kicked off [Medical-Surgical Nurses Week](#) ^[2] by enrolling in the [MSNCB FailSafe Certification Program](#) ^[3]™, a program that gives nurses more than one chance to pass the exam and also does not charge their health care facility until they pass.

In June, we hit the 6-month mark for the FailSafe Program, and I am extremely proud to say we have already doubled our number of CMSRNs! Our medical-surgical nurses have set the bar high for their colleagues to obtain other specialty certifications. We are excited to demonstrate to our patients and the community that our health institution has highly skilled and experienced nurses!

Personal Statement: Gentry Brown, MSN, MBA RN, PCCN, CMSRN; MSNCB Specialty Nursing Certification Advocate, MO; Interim Chair of Nursing, Breckinridge School of Nursing and Health Sciences, ITT-Technical Institute, Overland Park Campus

After working as a nurse for only 2 years, I decided to pursue my CMSRN credential. Within a few short years, the CMSRN certification has helped me improve my own nursing care and support students through clinical and didactic instruction.

I get to use my expertise both on the unit with students and in the classroom to prepare them for NCLEX exam questions. I have picked up some valuable test-taking strategies after being exposed to several quality test questions in the NCLEX, PCCN (Certified Progressive Care Nurse), and CMSRN exams and can pass these strategies on to my students.

Holding specialty nursing certification has been helpful in propelling my career growth and providing job portability.

Remember, medical surgical nurses are needed in all acute care settings. By setting ourselves apart as certified nurses, we have specialized knowledge, skills, and experience in promoting optimal health outcomes.

Every nurse has the potential to change a patient's world through support of shared governance, students, our many collaborative relationships at work, and, most importantly, through our own personal expertise and caring.

Lifelong learning is an ethical responsibility for all nurses and it is critical in

providing excellent and competent patient care in our rapidly changing health care system.

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Affiliate Organizations

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