

ANCC issues statement on doctor of nursing practice

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has been closely monitoring the growing numbers of educational institutions offering doctor of nursing practice (DNP) programs and related developments since 2007. The growing popularity of this degree, the publicity surrounding it and the potential impact on the nursing profession and nursing certification are resulting in a wide range of discussions, concerns and perspectives within the nursing community. ANCC has taken proactive steps to understand the full ramifications for certification and to respond in an appropriate manner.

The ANCC Commission on Certification (COC) appointed a task force of thought leaders in the fall of 2007 and convened their first meeting in December 2007 to review the DNP and its implications for all advanced practice nursing certifications. The task force developed a survey aimed at capturing the perspectives of a representative group of stakeholders on the future of advanced practice nursing certification with respect to the DNP. This survey has been posted on the ANCC Web site at www.nursecredentialing.org for response by all nursing professionals and results will be reported publicly when compiled. ANCC wants to ensure that the needs of the profession and the regulatory boards are reflected in our certification examinations.

ANCC will use an evidence-based approach to explore and create the future of its DNP credentialing. While no definitive or authoritative vision of that future has yet been elaborated, ANCC supports an open and inclusive dialogue that considers the interests of all stakeholders, particularly currently certified advanced practice nurses, present and future DNP candidates and graduates, and the many organizations that collaboratively provide the infrastructure by which nurses influence advanced practice nursing. This includes the ANA, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, individual schools of nursing, state boards of nursing, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, specialty nursing organizations, and constituent member associations. All of these play a key role in the evolution of nursing education and practice. Through this deliberative process we will have both the evidence and the time to make thoughtful decisions related to credentialing in the future.

ANCC recognizes the natural evolutionary process of nursing education in today's ever-changing health care environment – the DNP programs are a logical next step. ANCC supports the various efforts made over the years to advance education to meet the demands of practice for advanced practice nurses. We believe that ANCC board certified nurses are prepared for their positions, provide high quality care, and serve their patients well. Current studies support these findings.



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