What are the requirements to take the progressive care certification test?

- RN with current, unencumbered licensure.
- 1750 hours of direct bedside care of acutely ill patients during the previous two years, with 875 of those hours in the last year.
- Verification of eligibility by a professional associate (RN or MD).

How do I obtain an application?

- Go to www.aacn.org.
- Refer to Certification Exam Handbook, found on the aacn.org site.
- You can apply online or mail in the application.
- You may request a copy of the application via email at certcorp@aacn.org.

Where do I take the test?

- This is a computer based test. Testing sites are available year-round, Monday through Saturday at more than 175 locations across the United States.
- A paper and pencil version of the test is offered each year at the AACN National Teaching and Critical Care Exposition (NTI) and TRENDS educational conferences.

Why should I become certified?

- The Progressive Care Certified Nurse (or PCCN) credential means a nurse has the knowledge to competently care for adult patients within an intermediate care, direct observation, step-down, telemetry, transitional care or emergency care unit at the basic level in the continuum of critical care nursing, of which progressive care is a part.

- Certification is your credential and it goes with you.
- Certified nurses are often sought out by Employers.
- It is also a personal accomplishment.
- Certification can help you move up the clinical ladder, which equates to increased salary.

What should I review for the test?

- Certification Exam Blue Print
  - The PCCN blueprint can be found in the Certification Exam handbook.
  - The test plan is broken down by content area with each assigned a percentage indicating how the topic area is weighted on the exam.
  - The 2.5-hour PCCN Exam contains 125 items; 100 are counted towards your score and 25 are used to gather statistical data on item performance for future exams.
  - Items are based on the AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care, with 80% focusing on Clinical Judgment and 20% focusing on Professional Care and Ethical Practice.
- Self-Assessment Exam are available on-line to purchase.
- Exam Review courses are offered at the AACN’s NTI Conference held each year in May or at Trends Conferences and also on-line.
- The AACN Online Bookstore features a variety of educational and clinical products including video and audio review courses that you may find helpful.
- PCCN Review courses have been held on the LUMC campus. Contact your Certification Liaison to discuss availability.
Become a Progress Care Certified Nurse (PCCN)...

How does Loyola support certification?

- Salary increases are linked to certification. Certification is worth 3 points for a Clinical Ladder Level 3 and is required for a Clinical Ladder Level 4.
- Loyola reimburses certification costs up to $300 for obtaining certification or re-certification.

Once I am certified how often do I have to renew?

- The certification is valid for 3 years
- You may re-take the test in 3 years or collect 100 Synergy CERPs.
  - Nursing CE must be at least 60 in Category A (Clinical Judgment, Clinical Inquiry), and 10 each in Category B (Advocacy & Moral Agency, Caring Practices, Response to Diversity, Facilitation of Learning) and Category C (Collaboration, Systems Thinking).
  - Go to www.aacn.org and select “Renew your certification” for details
  - There is also an ONC-PRO log available at www.oncc.org to keep track of your CE's and then submit automatically online.

What if I am not a member of AACN, should I join?

- The cost of the certification exam varies based on membership status. If you join you would receive the AACN membership benefits in addition to saving $80 more on the exam.
- The cost to join AACN is $78: you will receive 3 journals, with free CE opportunities with each issue, unlimited free on-line CE, a newsletter, and discounts of publications/conferences.

List of Certification Liaisons:

Karen Thomas – 5 Tower

Certified nurses in the Cardiovascular Service Line as of September 2012:

5 Tower
Peggy Doherty
Gemma Jose
Karen Thomas

HVC-Cath Lab
Barbara Mazzura
Eleanor Wetzel

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