CRRN Examination

Your next opportunity to take the CRRN examination is June 1–30, 2011, or December 1–30, 2011. The application receipt deadlines are April 15, 2011, and October 15, 2011, respectively. Don't miss this chance to demonstrate your skill and commitment to caring for individuals with physical disability or chronic illness.

The application handbook is available here.

The 2010 American Nurses Credentialing Center's Magnet Conference

Beth Harlan, MSN RN CRRN CNL

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) 2010 Magnet Conference took place in October. This was the third year the Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board (RNCB) has exhibited at this conference. During the conference, we promoted the value of rehabilitation certification to nurses and healthcare executives. We also promoted the landmark study conducted by Nelson and colleagues (2007) evaluating the effects of nurse staffing on patient outcomes. Visitors to our booth learned about the different rehabilitation roles filled by our members—from staff nurse to nurse manager, from case manager to advanced practice nurse, from nurse educator to nurse researcher, from nurses working in pediatrics to nurses working in skilled nursing facilities and home health, there's a place for all of us in ARN.

This year we felt as if we were more well known to the conference's attendees. People weren't as surprised to learn that rehabilitation is a specialty. Several chief nursing officers expressed how proud they were of their CRRNs. Several CRRNs expressed how proud they were to be certified. I heard from many rehabilitation nurses that they were proud the RNCB was present and promoting our specialty. I heard from other certifying organizations that were excited to be working collaboratively with the RNCB.
on the American Board of Nursing Specialties' research studying how certification has a positive impact on patient outcomes. It was a pleasure and an honor to be representing and promoting rehabilitation nurses.

**Meet the Newest RNCB Member**

*Jane Bruton, MSN RN CRRN CCM*

I am from Mobile, AL, and I am the director of the Nursing/Rehabilitation Division at Mobile Infirmary Medical Center. I have been a rehabilitation nurse for 28 years and certified in rehabilitation nursing for 24 years. In 1986, when I first took the exam to become certified, I had to travel from Mobile, AL, to New Orleans, LA, to take the test! There was one other registered nurse tackling the exam that day in New Orleans, and she was from Florida. I consider certification the best way to demonstrate expertise in rehabilitation nursing, and I require the liaison/admission nursing staff at my facility to be certified. I hold these nurses out to the community as experts, and certification supports that.

I have been appointed to the Mobile Advisory Commission for the Disabled, sit on the Advisory Board for the Alabama Impaired Driver's Trust Fund, and for many years have been one of the nurses at Camp Rap-A-Hope, a week-long camp for children with cancer. I look forward to this new experience of working and serving with the RNCB.

**Certification Quick Links**

*Time to renew?* Click here to find out.

*New CRRNs.* Click here.
Celebrate Certified Nurses

Certified Nurses Day is March 19.

Proud to Be a CRRN

Dorothy V. McGarry, BSN RN CRRN

I began nursing school because I knew that with a nurse’s salary I could find work that paid enough to support my two children. I received a small monetary grant from a local hospital with the stipulation that I would work for them for 18 months after graduation. Much to my dismay, I was placed on their acute inpatient rehabilitation unit. My peers told me I would never get the medical/surgical experience I needed there.

My first day on the rehabilitation unit, I was invited to observe a transfer. Five people were assisting a strapping police sergeant from his wheelchair into bed. Teddy was a bilateral amputee and was crying like a baby. And so, I began my obligatory payback. I worked every day with this gentleman—comforting, cheering, supporting, and watching as he gathered strength from deep within and from without. He became independent. When he walked out of our unit on two artificial legs, smiling broadly, I was forever “hooked.” I will never forget Teddy.

Shortly after I was hired, we got a new nurse manager. She was much younger than I was. When I first saw her, she looked fearful. I wondered what this young girl could teach me. She cautioned us about “too much laughing and socialization on the unit.” By that time I knew that joking and laughing with patients were just as therapeutic as therapy. Soon, she came to know this, too. She had absolutely no rehabilitation experience. She observed and sought out opportunities to learn about rehabilitation. She pursued her master’s degree and her rehabilitation certification. It turned out she was one of the smartest people I’ve ever met. She knew how to mentor. She led by example, by
excellence. She encouraged me to pursue certification and to step into her position when she left to become director of nursing for a very large free-standing rehabilitation. I am forever grateful to her for inspiring me to reach outside my comfort zone toward excellence.

I took a certification preparation course and studied with my peers. I took the exam and did well. I worked in rehabilitation for 20 years until my body could no longer tolerate the pushing, pulling, and lifting. I took my wealth of medical/surgical and rehabilitation experience and began to work for an insurance company authorizing acute rehabilitation stays. Because of my background, I was able to advocate for people in need of acute rehabilitation services. I am currently employed by a disability, life, accidental death, and dismemberment insurance provider. I like the job because it provides an opportunity for learning about everything from “soup to nuts.” I believe my rehabilitation experience, in addition to a comprehensive understanding of medical/surgical nursing that I achieved while on the rehabilitation unit, has made me more versatile and valuable than nurses without rehabilitation experience. I continue to maintain my rehabilitation certification. My career as a rehabilitation nurse has enabled me to live a comfortable life and raise my children independently to become the fine individuals they are. Looking back over my professional career, I am forever thankful for the opportunity to have helped human beings realize their maximum potential. Rehabilitation nursing has been everything I hoped for and more! I am so very proud to sign my name Dorothy V. McGarry, RN BSN CRRN.

A Wonderful Journey in Rehabilitation Nursing

*Margaret Riccardi, MS BS GNP-C CRRN*

In 1974 the first president of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN), Sue Novak, and other ARN leaders came from Illinois to Rusk Institute in New York seeking interested persons to join ARN and form a chapter. A small group of RNs joined, and we
formed the first New York chapter. I was the second president of this chapter, and, needless to say, am a charter member of ARN. I continued to be very active, recruiting rehabilitation nurses not only at Rusk but other NY rehabilitation and acute care facilities. I frequently took on more than one office as officers “dropped out.” As a member of ARN, I was chosen to participate in developing the first Standards of Rehabilitation Nursing Practice in conjunction with the American Nurses Association. I will never forget feeling very important during that trip to Chicago. Little did anyone know how great and essential to rehabilitation nursing ARN would become. Upon moving to Florida in 1987, I joined FSARN, then one of the districts, Broward Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, (BARN), and, subsequently, assisted with the formation of the Palm Coast Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (PCARN), becoming the second president and serving as its treasurer for 3 years. In 2009, due to circumstances beyond anyone’s control, we had to disband PCARN, and I am now an active member of BARN once again.

My love and devotion to rehabilitation nursing has grown throughout the years. When the certified rehabilitation registered nurse (CRRN®) designation came about in 1984, I, along with several other nurses from Rusk, attended several review classes offered at Rusk and sat for the first exam. I was very fortunate, after much studying, to pass the first time, thereby becoming a CRRN. It has been very important to me to keep up this certification every 5 years because rehabilitation nursing has affected every aspect of my career. I have worked as a staff nurse, nurse manager, supervisor in an acute rehabilitation facility, rehabilitation educator, rehabilitation coordinator for home health, case manager, expert file reviewer, supervisor in a long-term care facility, and researcher, and am now a gerontological nurse practitioner. Becoming a rehabilitation nurse, maintaining certification as a CRRN, and remaining involved in ARN, FSARN, BARN, and PCARN have only added to my success as a nurse. I love rehabilitation nursing. Professionally, we use rehabilitation techniques and principles in every aspect of nursing. How fortunate that I chose such a field!
I have witnessed firsthand the changes of rehabilitation nursing and how it has been affected by changes in the insurance industry. It has become necessary to be very creative and find innovative ways to include rehabilitation principles in care as the reimbursement factor diminished through the years. For example, although rehabilitation used to be conducted almost solely in acute rehabilitation facilities, it is now performed in skilled nursing facilities or in the home.

In conclusion, my ultimate goal and purpose in becoming a nurse is to increase and maintain a person’s optimal level of functioning both mentally and physically and, subsequently, to decrease their years of morbidity. Choosing rehabilitation nursing at the beginning of my career, becoming a charter member of ARN, becoming certified as a rehabilitation nurse and maintaining my CRRN certification, and continuing with rehabilitation principles have allowed me to achieve that goal. I strongly believe that people trained and working in rehabilitation can apply rehabilitation principles and be successful in every aspect of the nursing profession. Studying for and becoming a CRRN has only added to my success.