Inside you will learn

- Why Is Certification Important for the Rehabilitation Nurse?
- How Do I Know if the CRRN® Certification Is Right for Me?
- What Are the Eligibility Requirements?
- When Is the Exam Offered?
- About the CRRN Program
Why Is Certification Important for the Rehabilitation Nurse?

Attaining the Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse (CRRN®) certification validates your professional standing as an experienced rehabilitation nurse with a documented level of knowledge in this specialized area of practice. It sets you apart professionally from your colleagues who are not certified, indicating your commitment to lifelong learning in your field of specialty. As a CRRN, you demonstrate your personal investment in your rehabilitation nursing practice and gain both personal and professional rewards.

Employers value the competitive edge and assurance of quality that certified nurses bring to their institutions. In fact, a landmark research study* found that facilities with more CRRNs on staff had a lower average length of stay for their patients.

Certification can also boost patients’ confidence in their caregivers and offer reassurance at a time when patients need it most. Certification signals to patients that the nurse is not just a caregiver, but a qualified caregiver.


“Over the years, my CRRN certification validated to employers that I am knowledgeable and committed to rehabilitation nursing; provided credibility to patients and families, my peers in nursing, as well as to other team members in rehabilitation; and opened professional volunteer opportunities.”

–Theresa Pietsch, MSN RN CRRN
How Do I Know if the CRRN Certification Is Right for Me?

If you are a nurse with a commitment to excellence in caring for people with physical disabilities and chronic illnesses, you may be eligible. Rehabilitation nursing is a philosophy of practice and not confined to any one practice setting. Feel free to call the Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board (RNCB) to discuss whether becoming a CRRN is right for you. There are more than 10,000 CRRNs who serve in a variety of roles and settings, including:

**Roles**
- Administrator
- Case manager
- Clinical nurse specialist
- Community nurse
- Consultant
- Educator
- Home health nurse
- Insurance nurse
- Nurse manager
- Nurse practitioner
- Staff nurse

**Practice Settings**
- Clinic
- Community health agency
- Educational institution
- Home health agency
- Hospital (with or without a rehabilitation unit)
- Insurance company
- Inpatient rehabilitation facility
- Long-term care facility
- Long-term acute care hospital
- Post-acute care facility
- Private company
- Private practice
- Outpatient rehabilitation facility
- Subacute care organization

What Are the Eligibility Requirements?

Certification is achieved by meeting the eligibility requirements and then passing a multiple-choice examination. To be eligible, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Current, unrestricted RN license
2. Completion of at least one of the following at the time of application:
   - Within the 5 years preceding the examination, completion of 2 years of practice as a registered professional nurse in rehabilitation nursing
   - Within the 5 years preceding the examination, completion of 1 year of practice as a registered professional nurse in rehabilitation nursing and 1 year of advanced study (beyond baccalaureate) in nursing.

Certification is valid for 5 years. To receive more information and a certification application handbook, please visit www.rehabnurse.org or call 800/229-7530. The handbook includes a list of preparatory resources, registration information, and an application form.

How Is the Examination Conducted?

The CRRN examination consists of 175 multiple-choice questions administered online at a test site. Candidates have 3 hours to complete the examination, which covers four major domains:

- rehabilitation nursing models and theories
- functional health patterns: theories, physiology, assessment, standards of care, and interventions
- the rehabilitation team and community re-entry
- legislative, economical, ethical, and legal issues.

A detailed content outline is available at www.rehabnurse.org.

When Is the Exam Offered?

The examination is offered at more than 170 sites in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico throughout June and December. Application deadlines are April 15 for the June examination and October 15 for the December examination.
About the CRRN Program

The CRRN program was initially developed by ARN, and the first examination was offered in 1984. The CRRN credential is administered by the Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board (RNCB), a component of ARN. The RNCB is an autonomous board with a mission of promoting excellence in care by validating qualifications and specialized knowledge in rehabilitation nursing. The CRRN program is accredited by the American Board of Nursing Specialties.

“Having the CRRN credential shows prospective employers that you are willing to put in the extra hours learning the specialty area to obtain the certification. It demonstrates dedication to nursing practice in the rehabilitation area and goal setting in the individual RN.”

–Lorraine Agold-Rich, MSN RN CRRN

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