

News Release

National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc.
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NCSBN CONVENES PANELS OF EXPERTS TO STUDY CONTINUED COMPETENCE IN NURSING

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) recently initiated practice analysis studies: one for post entry-level registered nurses (RNs) and one for post entry-level licensed practical and vocational nurses (LPN/VNs). Designed to describe post entry-level nursing practice and delineate the interface between entry-level practice and continued competence in practice, NCSBN convened panels of experts, two for RNs and another for LPN/VNs, to develop nursing activity statements that will be used in the practice analysis questionnaires.

Throughout its 27-year history NCSBN has advanced the position that nurses must remain competent throughout their professional careers. To assist boards of nursing in addressing continued competence, NCSBN is spearheading an initiative to develop an assessment instrument to measure continued competence of RNs and LPN/VNs. This past summer NCSBN convened the panels of RN and LPN/VN subject matter experts who were drawn from a wide spectrum of nursing organizations representing major practice and specialty settings, education programs as well as geographic locations and major employing facilities. The panel members used their expertise to create a list of nursing activity statements that could be used to describe post entry-level practice.

Commenting on the importance of the task assigned to them Panelist Candace Melancon, an LPN from Louisiana, remarked, "Developing structured, consistent competencies (nursing activity statements) is crucial for the successful future of nurses."

Each of the panels worked to refine a list of nursing activities until they had developed a comprehensive list of nursing competencies that reflected post-entry level practice throughout the country. Shirley Fields-McCoy, MSN, RN, noted that, "Continued competency must be addressed to ensure that each nurse maintains and augments the necessary knowledge and skills to be current in practice. Representing my colleagues in the American Nurses Association has been an honor. Continued competence is a professional responsibility for all nurses who maintain their licensure."

The nursing professionals who will respond to the surveys will be asked to determine the importance of each of the activities listed in the post entry-level nursing activity statements. Data collection for the LPN/VN survey began in October 2005 with the collection process for RNs anticipated to begin in



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January 2006. All nurses receiving the survey are strongly encouraged to complete and return it as their participation in this study offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the nursing profession.

For more information about NCSBN's work on continued competence for nurses, access the NCSBN Web site at www.ncsbn.org.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN) is a not-for-profit organization whose membership comprises the boards of nursing in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five United States territories - American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Mission: The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), composed of Member Boards, provides leadership to advance regulatory excellence for public protection.

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