



HEALTH MINISTRIES
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HMA FCN Certification Update

Background History:

- In 2010, Health Ministries Association along with College Nursing and Forensic Nursing were invited by ANCC to be a part of exploring and developing a certification by portfolio, something new for ANCC.
- Following that initial meeting and HMA's discernment of the viability of pursuing both with time and financial resources, a formal contract was signed with HMA and ANCC to pursue developing a certification by portfolio process for the professional nursing specialty practice of faith community nursing.
- Teams from across the country were selected by ANCC to serve in various capacities of the portfolio process. Those teams included content experts, evaluators and appraisers. Those members were sent to ANCC for intensive training and education as part of the certification process. Standard requirements for certification and fees were set by ANCC.
- Effective August of 2014, HMA and ANCC announced the certification process by portfolio was now available for the specialty practice of faith community nursing.
- Several members of HMA leadership who were honored to sit at the table for the initial conversation back in 2010, were thrilled to see all of the hard work of so many come to fruition and delighted that there was a mechanism for seasoned faith community nurses to pursue certification.
- From August of 2014 until December 2017, **146** faith community nurses successfully completed the portfolio process and received their certification and are now board certified faith community nurses!
- On October 9th of 2017, HMA, along with 6 other nursing specialties, were notified by the Commission on Certification that a decision had been made to discontinue the portfolio process and that effective November 17th, 2017, no further applications will be processed.

The following notification was posted on the ANCC web site and shared by HMA with our members.

"As of October 10th, 2017, ANCC will not be accepting applications for submission to current Portfolio programs, nor will it explore developing new Portfolio products at this time.

The ANCC Portfolio program for board certification was launched in 2012 as a strategy to certify nurses in specialty areas of practice where an examination was deemed not feasible to develop or did not currently exist. While the Portfolio program has achieved some of its intended goals, applicant volumes have not reached a level whereby any of the programs have achieved financial stability. In addition, persistent low applicant volumes preclude ANCC from applying for external accreditation.

Therefore, the Commission on Certification {COC}, in collaboration with ANCC program leadership, has decided to end the Portfolio Program. Those who are currently certified by portfolio will be able to maintain their certification by meeting ANCC's certification renewal requirements. Those who have current applications under review will receive a certification decision by early December. "

Next Steps for HMA

- HMA convened a work group in spring 2018 to explore next steps. The group consisted of FCNs who participated in some role in the development and implementation of the FCN ANCC Certification by Portfolio program.
- Co-chaired by Nancy Durbin and Ruth Syre, the group reviewed the background, constituency comments, current status, and possible options. HMA has also worked closely with the other nursing specialties that were affected by the cancelled ANCC portfolio process. We are grateful for their feedback and efforts to assist in exploring certification options.

HMA solicited feedback from FCN's that included the following:

- Fees were too expensive{ ANCC determined the cost to align with all of the certifications}
- Many FCN did not meet the required hours set forth as they work very part time
- The ANCC portfolio process required a great deal of time and thought and asked the applicant to document through an exemplar their work versus taking a written exam. It was simply too much work.
- Lack of /and or minimal interest as so many FCN were at the end of their professional career and had no interest to pursue
- Had never pursued certification in any previous nursing specialty

Summary of Findings

A summary of findings is provided below for your consideration:

- The goal of the accredited certification program was to recognize the specialty area of faith community nursing and distinguish such nurses in this unique specialty.
- Building a quality certification program requires considerable investment of resources, not only financial (fees possibly up to ~\$250,000), but also volunteer time from many individuals in the target community (to serve on the Board, establish governance, process/appraise applications).
- Long-term commitment is required to monitor those who complete the process, make changes into program content, respond to address regulatory issues, maintain the scope & standards of practice (recommended to be reviewed/updated every 5 years), etc.
- Credibility, rigor and reputation are critical to establish a sustainable certification program, particularly one that is to be accredited.
- To evaluate psychometric soundness of a program for accreditation, data must be collected for ≥ 2 years on ≥ 100 certificants per year for a portfolio-based program, or ≥ 200 certificants per year for an exam-based certification. **This service was a critical part of what ANCC provided with staff specifically assigned to validating the process.
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Conclusion:

Based on our feedback, which included interviews with the ANCC and other credentialing/accrediting bodies, the following conclusions were reached:

- HMA has made the decision not to continue pursuing a new faith community nurse certification program at this time.
- The need, market, and value of such a program does not justify the required financial and organizational investment to develop and maintain it.
- Certificants who already have the RN-BC credential can contact the Certification Program Manager at ANCC for recertification requests.

Faith Community Nurses who achieved certification through ANCC have the opportunity to renew their certification every 5 years based on the date they successfully completed their certification. Below is the link for renewal information.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/our-certifications/faith-community-nursing-renewal>

- FCNs are encouraged to pursue certification in a related professional nursing specialty that compliments the FCN role, while remaining cognizant of the unique Scope and Standards of this specialty.
- Each FCN is responsible for their own continuing professional development. If a certification in another specialty is pursued, it will be through examination, not portfolio.
- Any FCN interested in pursuing certifications in other areas of professional nursing can refer to the link provided below.

Here is the link to the website for the certifications that the ANCC has to offer.

<http://www.nursecredentialing.org/certification.aspx>

Important Update:

HMA is in the process of developing collaborative opportunities with the American Holistic Nurses Association { the AHNA president was present at the Annual HMA 2018 conference}.

HMA will continue to update all FCN as details become available and HMA will continue to promote education opportunities and competencies development for the specialty practice of faith community nursing

Additional Information for Faith Community Nurses:

The Westberg Institute announced they had partnered with the Spiritual Care Association to offer an on-line training program for faith community nurses to pursue either a FCN chaplaincy certification or pursue a spiritual care generalist certificate{ this is not a certification}

The three options are available for faith community nurses who have attended a Westberg Institute FCN Foundations Course

- Spiritual Care Generalist Certificate
- Credentialed Chaplain{CC}
- Board Certified Chaplain{BCC}

See below for the link:

<https://www.spiritualcareassociation.org/Westberg>

