

Certification Eligibility Requirement Rationales

Initial Certification

Requirement: The applicant must hold a full and unrestricted RN license in the United States or its territories and meet state requirements to perform as an APRN.

Rationale: This is a standard requirement for most APRN specialist examination applications.

Requirement: The applicant must hold a current national certification in the APRN role.

Rationale: This is a standard requirement for most APRN specialist examination applications.

Requirement: The applicant must completed 2500 professional practice hours as an APRN working with older adults or suitable alternative practice hours within the last five (5) years prior to application.

Rationale: The required hours (2,500) is the equivalent of 1.25 years of full-time practice employment in the field. It is within the range of other APRN specialist examination requirements which vary from 500 (Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner) to 3,000 (Dermatology Nurse Practitioner) hours. This threshold was selected through expert panel review because of the scope of settings where older adults live and receive health care and the anticipated amount of experience required to move from basic competence to proficiency in caring for this population.

Requirement: The applicant must complete a total of fifty (50) gerontology specific* ANCC contact hours within the last three (3) years. For initial GS-C certification by examination, continuing education contact hours include online or on-campus coursework, attending conferences, lectures, etc., where the applicant is the learner. Continuing education hours must be accredited by a provider or approver of continuing nursing education, or medical education. Examples include the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a state board of nursing, nursing association, Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), or American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP).

Rationale: The continuing geriatric education requirement is included because the APRN Consensus Model failed to define baseline competence in geriatric-specific knowledge and academic preparatory programs do not have uniform requirements for their geriatric content. This requirement was designed by expert panel review to ensure that applicants have received a minimum of fifty (50) hours of geriatric-specific content prior to sitting for the initial certification exam.



Recertification

Requirement: Applicant must hold a current GS-C.

Rationale: One must hold a valid certification demonstrating continued competence throughout the five year period in order to be eligible for recertification for the following five years.

Requirement: Have accrued a minimum of 1000 hours of gerontological practice during the 5-year certification period, or professional proficiency alternative hours of equivalency. GNCC recognizes three (3) distinctive components of gerontological practice: service, education, and research.

Practice may be direct or indirect, and may include:

- Acute or Long-Term Care
- Clinics or Offices
- Home Care or Community Health Care
- Surgery
- Education
- Research
- Administration
- Advocacy
- Consulting

Rationale: The 1,000 hours in 5 years is an industry standard based on review of similar credentialing programs. The time frame is reviewed periodically in conjunction with subsequent practice analyses.

Requirement: Have acquired eighty (80) continuing education hours during the 5-year certification period with a minimum of fifty (50) continuing education hours in gerontological health care specific topics. The remaining thirty (30) continuing education hours can be a combination of general nursing, health care, and academic settings.

Rationale: Knowledge and skills required for proficient APRNs evolve over time. These APRNs must stay informed on current information, knowledge and evidence-based practice affecting the care of older adults Participating in advanced practice related continuing education activities on a regular basis allows certificants to demonstrate maintenance of knowledge and skills in the specialty.