State and Certifying Boards/Associations: CE and Competency Requirements

This is the 23rd annual survey of state boards of nursing (SBNs) and selected national professional certifying boards/associations (NPCB/As). The survey is conducted electronically in the fall of the prior year. The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing: Continuing Competence for the Future conducted this survey electronically by e-mailing a survey to SBNs (N = 55) and NPCB/As (N = 48). Each recipient was asked to update the most recently published information. A respondent could choose not to respond, knowing that no response resulted in printing previously collected information. Twenty-one (21) SBNs responded (38.2% return rate); the NPCB/As responses totaled 6 (12.5% return rate). These response rates were the same as or lower than a year ago, respectively.

Many organizations, including those in nursing, are viewing competence on a wide scale. Continuing education remains one of the more common approaches, but several other strategies exist. The strategies cited by respondents included providing continuing education to others, portfolio review, peer review, certification in a specialty, continuing education, publications, a specified number of hours in practice, and a specially focused competency test.

SBNs were asked about requirements for renewals or re-registration of a license to practice nursing and re-entry into active practice for both registered nurses and licensed practical/vocational nurses. They were asked to respond if specific requirements existed for nurses in advanced practice roles. States were asked about groups that are recognized as the state’s approver/accreditor and whether plans existed to change current requirements.

Similarly, the certifying boards/associations were asked about current continuing education requirements for certification and recertification, including plans for the future.

The following three tables provide a summary of the information related to continuing education/competence for state licensure as registered or licensed practical/vocational nurses or advanced practice registered nurses and for certification and recertification requirements.

This summary provides numerous groups and individuals with the most current collected information about certification and licensure requirements for continuing education. Readers are referred to each state and certification board/association for more detailed information. We are always grateful to the staff who took time to respond to this survey. These tables are available at our website: slackjournals.com/jcen.

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