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Licensure and Professional Certification Renewal Requirements: 2019 Results

For many years, *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing* has supported continuing education (CE) efforts in nursing by periodically compiling and reporting the renewal requirements for licensure and professional certification. We completed a review of renewal requirements during the Fall of 2019, based on information gleaned from the websites of nursing licensure and certification organizations. Detailed tables summarizing the renewal requirements are available at http://www.Healio.com/jcen/ce_survey. Because changes to local licensure renewal requirements are implemented throughout the year, readers should check the board of nursing website for their state to find the most current information about pertinent renewal processes and time lines.

Prior reviews of CE requirements involved both mining website information and inviting organizations to verify data via surveys; however, the response to the surveys was consistently negligible. For this review, we adjusted our methods to eliminate the survey but incorporated an independent review of each organizational website by two individuals (D.H., J.N.), followed by collaborative review to resolve discrepancies.

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The authors have disclosed no potential conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise.

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doi:10.3928/00220124-20200216-01

The evidence about competence that is required for renewals varies across credentialing organizations. Examples of ways to meet requirements include attendance at educational events, portfolio submission, peer review, mentor or preceptor hours, publications, presentations, practice hours, and formal testing. Licensure and certification requirements often overlap, as certification may be required as evidence for advanced practice licensure renewal, and in some states, certification is accepted as evidence for RN licensure renewal requirements.

The language used to describe similar requirements varies from state to state. In some states, renewal requirements are different for each type of nursing license, whereas other states have set similar renewal requirements for their licensed practical and vocational nurses, RNs, and advanced practice RNs. Some boards of nursing are highly prescriptive about the type of educational program content that must be included, often based on specific legislation in that state, whereas other boards do not specify content at that same level of detail.

Some of the state and professional organization websites were extremely difficult to use, requiring nurses to click through multiple pages or to search through the published state statutes to identify renewal requirements. In some cases, the nursing board shared a complicated website with many other state agencies. After reviewing renewal information and regulatory documents on more than 100 websites, we want to express appreciation for those organizations that have made it easier for nurses to identify the renewal requirements. We encourage those organizations with the more challenging website navigation structures to consider redesigning with their nurse users in mind.