



8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

1.800.284.2378
301.628.5000 *tel*
301.628.5004 *fax*

www.nursecredentialing.org

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TO: ANCC Accredited Organizations

FROM: Jeanne M. Floyd PhD, RN, CAE
MaryMoon Allison BSN, RN, MHSE, CAE

RE: Updates to the ANCC Accreditation Program

As ANCC approaches its 20th year, the Board of Directors has charged us with moving to a refined business model. This reflects the nature of ANCC's work and positions the organization for continued growth. To meet this charge in the most effective manner, ANCC has undertaken a full review of the organization's programs, operations, and governance. Staff, volunteers, and prestigious leaders such as Kathy Malloch, PhD, MBA, RN, FAAN, and Tim Porter-Grady, DM, EdD, GCNS-BC, NEA-BC, FAAN, have been included in the discussions.

This restructure will provide strong support to ANCC in its pursuit of innovation and global growth. However, all transitions require change, flexibility, patience, and trust.

The Accreditation Program is one of the areas that will see a significant amount of change. To better capitalize on messaging and programmatic synergies, the Accreditation Program leadership will join into an internal strategic partnership with the leadership of the Magnet Recognition Program® and the Pathway to Excellence® Program. The program operations will be streamlined with a renewed emphasis on evidence and scoring. We expect that these changes will be swift and will be embraced by both current and potential accredited organizations. We are committed to communicating changes with you on a regular basis.

Key operational changes include:

Elimination of site visits. Beginning with applications for the spring 2010 review cycle, ANCC will no longer be conducting site visits as a requirement for accreditation. The application will be revised later this year and applicants will be scored for accreditation/denial based on their responses. Mechanisms for requesting additional information will be included in the revised process. Best practices from the Magnet Recognition Program and Pathway to Excellence Program will be used to re-build the application process, providing cost savings for constituents.

Transition to a four year accreditation period. Effective for new spring 2010 applicants — and for current accredited organizations at the time of their renewal — the shorter cycle will allow the COA to better implement criteria updates and reflect contemporary practice.

Additional application review cycle. A streamlined application process and elimination of the site visit will allow the program staff to add an additional application review cycle. Opening a third cycle during the year for application submission is a direct benefit to organizations looking at becoming ANCC accredited. The cycles will likely be scheduled for March, July, and November.

Applicants will send the self-study documents directly to the appraisers. Eliminating this staff review and paper re-packaging step will allow appraisers to more quickly begin the application evaluation process. Since the reviewer information is currently provided to applicants, this administrative change will save time and effort for all.

Staffing Updates. There will be several staff changes within the program; most notable is that it will be led by an Assistant Director, with the assistance of Senior Accreditation Specialist Barbara Feild. The Assistant Director will report to Dr. Karen Drenkard, Senior Director of Credentialing Operations. She will lead the partnership of the organizational credentialing programs which include the Magnet Recognition Program, the Accreditation Program, and the Pathway to Excellence Program.

Former Accreditation Program Director MaryMoon Allison will move into a new role leading ANCC's internal and external quality and accreditation efforts as the new Director of Quality Management Systems. Her new charges include ANCC's ISO:9001 journey and the ABNS and NCCA accreditations of the Certification program. She will be assisted by Staff Specialist Adrienne Evans. Administrative Assistant Charmaine Baxter has decided to pursue opportunities outside of ANCC.

A critical component of the transition to a refined business model is for ANCC to become a staff-driven organization. As such, the role of the COA will be refocused on strategic direction of the program, criteria determination, accreditation award decisions, and program governance. Staff will be responsible for operations and for determining the best ways of implementing the strategic goals.

These changes are expected to be in place by the end of 2009.

The Accreditation Program is often a first step to ANCC's credentialing programs. Streamlining and simplifying the accreditation application and review processes will make this program even more appealing to potential and renewing organizations. This restructure will strengthen the value of ANCC's brand and enhance its prominence in the field of credentialing.

We appreciate your commitment to continuing nursing education, your suggestions and comments that have led to strengthening of the accreditation program, and your ongoing support during this transition.

As the details are determined, we commit to communicate regularly to you regarding how the changes will positively impact you. The Commission on Accreditation is working with the program staff in a positive and proactive manner to improve our services and we appreciate your ongoing support of these efforts. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact MaryMoon Allison at 301.628.5261, 1.800.284.2378 Ext. 5261, or marymoon.allison@ana.org. We look forward to advancing together to excellence in continuing nursing education.