



AMERICAN BOARD OF CERTIFICATION
FOR GASTROENTEROLOGY NURSES

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE; PASSIONATE ABOUT CARE

RECERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

American Board of Certification for Gastroenterology Nurses

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Recertification Application Instructions

This Recertification Handbook has been published to help you through the recertification process.

You can make the recertification process easier for yourself by following these easy steps:

1. Read through the entire handbook to thoroughly understand each step of the process required.
2. Discard all previous handbooks, since the handbook is reviewed and updated annually.
3. Applications must be submitted electronically at <http://www.abcgcn.org/Recertification>
4. Submit your application between January 1 and December 31 of the year you are due to recertify
5. Only include contact hours earned during the current recertification period. The certification period begins with the date certification is granted (exam date or date noted on last recertification certificate).
6. Use the information provided in this handbook to organize documentation of contact hours and to provide the appropriate documentation for all of the contact hours submitted.

* Note, certificate and back-up documentation is no longer required at initial submission. If a candidate is audited these documents will be requested and must be submitted, reviewed and approved for a candidates to pass recertification. Failure to provide documentation may result in loss of certification.

Do not submit original documentation, make copies to submit and keep originals for your files.

Eligibility Requirements for Recertification

To qualify for recertification, candidates must meet the following criteria:

- At the time of application, candidates must have been employed in a clinical, supervisory, administrative, teaching/education or research capacity in an institutional or private practice setting for a minimum of two years full-time, or its part-time equivalent of 4,000 hours, within the past five years.
- Full-time industry nurses whose focus is at least 40% clinical practice, education or research are eligible. Those whose principal focus is sales are not.
- Candidates must submit a current and unrestricted license as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the United States.

Recertification by Examination

To recertify by examination, candidates will take the current certification examination at the same times and in the same places as candidates for initial certification. When recertifying by exam, candidates must submit an application through the Certification Center and must meet all applicable deadlines and fees. For information regarding test sites and registration deadlines go online to www.abcgcn.org, click the Certify section of the home page, and select the Certification Center button on the landing page. If you have further questions, contact ABCGN at info@abcgcn.org or 855-252-2246.

Recertification by Contact Hours

To qualify for recertification by contact hours, a candidate must:

1. Meet the eligibility requirements listed above
2. Complete the online application and submit payment by December 31 of the year you are due to recertify. The application will close at 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time.
3. Meet the contact hour requirements

Contact Hours Requirements:

- 75 contact hours
- At least 60 of which are GI-specific contact hours
- At least 30 of the 60 GI-specific hours must qualify as category 1: CE-approved nursing seminars and workshops.

One contact hour equals any of the following:

1 CNE (also referred to as CE)
0.1 CEU
1 CME
1 CERP
60 minutes of seminar/workshop time
50 minutes of seminar/workshop time from State Boards of Nursing maintaining that standard

Ten contact hours equal the following:

1.0 CEU credit
1 quarter credit hour

Fifteen contact hours equal the following:

1 semester credit hour

Contact hours that are not approved as nursing contact hours (CNE/CE) can be used towards recertification but cannot be included in Category 1. Read the category descriptions carefully to determine where they belong.

Since contact hours are accepted in lieu of re-examination, approved contact hours must be in specific categories and must include specific content which mirror the content of the examination.

If you choose to submit contact hours from a variety of activities, remember, there are maximums in some categories.

Required Documentation

ABCGN reserves the right to request additional documentation to support an application at any time. You should keep complete records of your contact hours as you earn them. Records should include certificates, brochures, course descriptions, as well as all other documentation mentioned in each category.

Nothing will make completing the Recertification Application easier than complete, concise and careful record keeping. Backup documentation may be requested in addition to certificates in the event your application is selected for audit. These records can help substantiate that portions of programs were GI specific and otherwise help you complete the Recertification Online Application.

You may start your online application at any time and keep track of your contact hours in the online application.

If Certification Expires...

Contact hours will NOT be accepted to regain certified status. The only way to be reinstated as a certified professional is to retake the examination. For this reason, candidates are urged to begin the recertification process early to allow themselves plenty of time to make deadlines and allow time for review.

Hardship Extension

Any candidate who is unable to fulfill the necessary requirements for recertification by the December 31st deadline in any given year due to circumstances of a serious nature may request a hardship extension. The request for extension must be received by ABCGN Headquarters no later than **January 15 of the year following the candidate's December 31 expiration date**. The request must be accompanied with a \$50 fee and proof that 50% of Category 1 GI specific contact hours (15 hours) have been earned. Requests should be mailed to ABCGN, 330 N. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611. If approved, the candidate will be granted a 6-month extension to earn the remaining hours.

Not Certain You Have Enough Hours or the Right Hours?

For those candidates who are not certain that they have sufficient contact hours or that their hours are in the right categories or for those who have other questions, ABCGN offers a pre-review process. For a fee of \$50, experienced members of the ABCGN Recertification Audit Committee will review your application packet (without documentation) and provide feedback.

The \$50 pre-review fee is an additional fee and does not count toward your recertification fee.

***Recertification Pre-Review Applications may be submitted any time before October 31 of the year in which a candidate is due to recertify. This allows enough time for review and for the candidate to earn additional hours if necessary. **Note that the registration deadline for the fall exam is July 31, if you think you may need to retake the exam but choose to submit a pre-review application, it must be submitted before June 30.** For additional information, contact ABCGN headquarters at info@abcdn.org or refer to the [Recertification Pre-View Application](#).

Deadline for Receipt of Materials

Submit your application between January 1 and December 31 of the year your certification expires. Your certification will always expire on December 31 of the year you are due to recertify.

The application will close at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on December 31.

You will be notified of the results of the Recertification Audit Committee's review of your application within 6-8 weeks following submission. Your application will be scanned for completeness, your payment processed and your application prepared for review by staff. Then the application packet will be reviewed by the Recertification Audit Committee. Finally, staff will prepare and send a letter advising you of the results. Successful candidates will also receive their certificate.

All of this must be done very carefully because of its importance to candidates and to ABCGN. Therefore, it takes time. We appreciate your patience.

Fees

SGNA Member: \$350

Non-Member: \$435

The entire payment is due in U.S. dollars upon submission of the completed application. Please note that failure to pay fees is grounds for revocation of certification. Refunds are not available to those who do not achieve recertification by contact hours. Note: fees are subject to change.

Recertification Audits

1 in 10 Applications are randomly selected for audit. Per ABSNC rules, as an accredited certifying board, ABCGN is required to audit every 1 in 10 applications.

Candidates will be notified by email within two weeks following the submission of their application if they are selected for audit.

Audited candidates will be required to submit certificates and all necessary documentation for contact hours listed in their application to ABCGN.

These materials will be reviewed by a member of the Recertification Audit Committee. **The reviewer may request additional documentation, such as brochures, course descriptions, etc. for any contact hours listed.**

Insufficient Contact Hours

If it is determined that insufficient contact hours were submitted the candidates will be notified. If it is prior to December 31, the candidate will be allowed to earn additional contact hours to meet all requirements. If it is after December 31, candidates that do not meet the contact hour requirements will be denied recertification. If CGRN status is to be regained, the exam must be retaken.

You will be notified of the results of the Recertification Audit Committee's review of your application within 6-8 weeks of submitting your certificates and documentation.

Review and Appeal

A review process and an appeal procedure are available for candidates whose applications for recertification by contact hours have been denied or for those whose certifications have been revoked. Please contact ABCGN headquarters for more information regarding the process and policies for review and appeals.

Revocation of Certification

ABCGN has the right to revoke any certificate which it has issued in the event that the recipient engages in past or current conduct found to be not in compliance with the program's procedures or professional standards.

Revocation of certification does not constitute evidence that the practitioner acted wrongly or became incompetent. Gastroenterology certification may be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of the certification or recertification application.
2. Falsification of any information requested by ABCGN.
3. Failure to maintain eligibility requirements.
4. Failure to pay fees.
5. Misrepresentation of SGNA status.
6. Conviction of a felony.
7. Cheating on the examination.

Non-Discrimination

ABCGN does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs disability or national origin.

Confidentiality Policy

ABCGN respects the privacy of all candidates. All materials submitted with applications and the results of any review of application packets will be held in confidence except as required by law.

ABCGN, however, has an obligation to the public. Therefore, it responds to questions from employers, payers and others regarding whether or not an individual is certified. Additionally since publishing and releasing the names of certified nurses and/or successful candidates recognizes those individuals and encourages certification, ABCGN reserves the right, without limitation, to release the names of certified individuals or successful candidates. Application for certification through this program constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of ABCGN's policy with regard to publication and release of names.

Instructions

Submission Guidelines

The Online Recertification application can be started at any time, and can be submitted between January 1 and December 31 of the year certification expires. The date of recertification will be the date the application is submitted, not the date which the certificate is issued. Submitting early will allow more time to earn contact hours for the next recertification as the expiration date will remain the same (December 31 five years later).

Verification of Professional Qualifications Form

On the second page of the application, you will be asked to verify your professional qualifications. This entails providing contact information two individuals that can verify work history, current RN license information including a copy of the RN license, and present and prior employment information.

*If you do not have a copy of your RN license that can be scanned and uploaded, you can verify your license online through your state nursing board or www.nursys.com. Nursys provides a downloadable document which can be uploaded into the Online Recertification Application.

*This page must be complete, including a copy of your RN license, in order to save or continue.

Entering your Contact Hours

Using the specific category descriptions which follow and noting the maximums and minimums, where applicable, organize your documentation by category to complete the form. All materials submitted must be in English or you must supply an accurate translation of the information required by the Recertification Audit Committee. ABCGN will only require copies/documentation of continuing education if audited. Fill out contact hour grids and retain copies/documentation until recertification is granted.

In the appropriate category, click “Add Data.” Enter the information requested, example:

Category 1 Attendance at Nursing CE Approved Seminars/Workshops (Minimum 30 contact hours in GI)

Title*	41 st Annual Course
Date(s)*	May 2 – May 6
Sponsoring Organization*	SGNA
Approved Credits*	30
GI Credits*	22
Non-GI Credits	8

Note: The approved credits should equal the sum of the GI and Non-GI Credits.

Note: For programs which included multiple sessions it is not necessary to list the titles of the individual sessions.

Click “Save Program Information.”

To enter the information for your next program click “Add Data” again, and repeat the process.

Note: Programs can be edited or deleted before the application is submitted. Once the application has been submitted, programs cannot be edited or deleted.

Assessment Criteria to Identify GI Specific Continuing Education Units

Gastroenterology is a medical specialty concerned with the study of digestive diseases. A GI-specific contact hour should provide a knowledge or skill that is essential to providing care to a patient with a gastrointestinal disease or problem. The information imparted should enable the Gastroenterology nurse to anticipate the care and interventions needed to treat the patient; provide the necessary care and interventions, and supply follow-up care and teaching.

- **GI-specific courses** identify the knowledge that the certified gastroenterology nurse is required to know to stay current in the field of gastroenterology.
- **Non-GI specific courses** may relate to gastroenterology, but do not address the science of nursing or medicine as it relates to the field of gastroenterology and digestive disease.

GI-specific criteria identifies:

Aspects of the **science of gastroenterology/hepatology** include:

- ◇ Anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology
- ◇ Diagnostic and therapeutic gastroenterology/hepatology procedures
- ◇ Diagnostic tests which relate to gastroenterology/hepatology

Example: pathology specimen collection specific to endoscopy procedures or to GI diagnosis

- ◇ Research and technology in gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Infection control as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Environmental safety as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Standards of practice as it relates to gastroenterology/hepatology
Example: Standards as they relate to SGNA Standards and Guidelines, SGNA Position Statements
- ◇ Disease Processes that effect or are affected by the GI systems
- ◇ GI related radiological procedures
Example: ERCP, TIPS
- ◇ Radiology use and safety in the GI Lab
- ◇ Patient teaching related to gastroenterology/hepatology
- ◇ Sedation and monitoring including Capnography
- ◇ Cleaning, Disinfection and Reprocessing of equipment and supplies
- ◇ Universal Precautions
Example: Use of PPE during procedures and reprocessing, care of infectious disease patients, handling of body fluid/tissue samples.
- ◇ Standards of Nursing Practice: OSHA, Joint Commission, AAAHC
Example: Reducing Infection Risks Associated with Medical Equipment in the GI setting, Devices, and Supplies
- ◇ Electro surgery/cautery usage and safety
- ◇ Laser training and safety as related to GI/endoscopy
- ◇ Pharmacology as it pertains to digestive disease
- ◇ Nutritional therapy and enteral therapy as it pertains to digestive disease
- ◇ Eating disorders and their effects
- ◇ Surgical Procedures related to gastroenterology
Example: Surgery, post-operative complications, ulcers/strictures, issues with absorption/malabsorption, endoscopic issues post surgery as in change of anatomy.
Bariatric surgery, Gastric Bypass, Gastrectomy would be types of surgeries.
NOTES: (Natural Orifice Trans Endoscopic Surgery if specific to GI
- ◇ Performance Improvement related to the GI Lab
Example: scope culturing, scope reconciliation
- ◇ Holistic Care as it relates to the GI patient
- ◇ Legal Issues as they relate to the GI/Endoscopy setting
- ◇ Competencies as they relate to the GI nurse/staff
- ◇ AIDS/HIV as it relates to GI/Endoscopy

On the other hand, the following topics, while they may be important in the GI practice, do not count as GI-specific, since they cover material not included on the examination:

- IV Therapy
- CQI/QA unless directed specifically to GI
- Pulmonary, including but not limited to Bronchoscopy/EBUS
- TEE

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Basic or Advanced Cardiac Life Support (if audited, copies of cards are not acceptable documentation, copies of certificates of attendance must be provided)

Such contact hours may be included among the 15 non-GI contact hours permitted. You may use the same course more than once on your application, provided you took the two offerings at least one year apart.

- Obesity as a general topic is not GI-specific. Complications of Obesity such as diabetes and hypertension are not GI-specific.
- Benchmarking: most of this falls under management which is not GI-specific.

Category 1

Category 1 covers attending nursing CE-approved seminars or workshops. You must have a minimum of 30 hours in Category 1.

In order to be counted in category 1, contact hours MUST be approved by one of the following:
 ✓ The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC); ✓ An agency, organization, or educational institution accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or whose continuing educational hours are accepted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC); ✓ A state Board of Nursing (all states included); or ✓ A state nurses' association.

If you attended a multi-session conference, such as the SGNA May meeting, it is not necessary to list individual sessions. Simply list the name of the conference, the total number of contact hours for the conference and the number of GI and non-GI hours in the columns provided.

Interactive, live webinars, with appropriate approvers/providers, may be submitted under Category 1.

Rebroadcasts, tapes or online CE's should be included in Category 5.

Contact hours approved as CME, CEU, or by other accredited bodies not specific to nursing may be included in Category 7.

The following DO NOT meet the criteria for recertification and are, therefore, not acceptable:

1. Handwritten accreditation statements or provider numbers.
2. Certificates of attendance without an appropriate accreditation statement and/or acceptable provider or otherwise not including the required information.
3. Contact hours acquired before the beginning of the certification period or after the deadline for submission for recertification by contact hours.

Category 2

Category 2 covers providing presentations at seminars and workshops approved by an accredited provider or approver. Such seminars or workshops need not be approved by a nursing organization, as in Category 1, but may include any allied health provider, any academic institution or other accredited provider. You may submit a maximum of 36 contact hours in this category.

You will receive 3 contact hours for each hour of presentation. If audited, as documentation, please submit a contact hour certificate and a copy of the program which must include title, date, length of program and approver. Highlight the important information on the copy of the program to aid the Recertification Audit Committee in evaluating your submission. Each time you repeat the same presentation (up to two repeats), you may earn an additional contact hour.

Category 3

Contact hours in Category 3 are awarded for authoring articles in professional journals or chapters in textbooks for health care professionals. All authors listed will earn credit. Ten contact hours are awarded for each article or chapter. You may submit a maximum of 40 contact hours in this category.

Category 4

Category 4 covers academic course work offered by an accredited educational institution. The course must be health care-related but need not specifically address nursing. Science courses, social sciences courses, statistics and similar topics are acceptable while general education courses such as history, art, music or English are not. You must earn a grade of "C" or better to count course work. If audited, you will need to submit a copy of your transcript as documentation.

One semester credit counts as 15 contact hours while one quarter credit counts as 10 contact hours. You may submit a maximum of 20 contact hours in Category 4.

Category 5

Category 5 includes independent home-study courses offered by an accredited contact hour provider. Courses must be specific to nursing practice or nursing research. To be acceptable, contact hours in Category 5 MUST be approved by one of the following.

- The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
- An agency, organization, or educational institution accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or whose continuing educational hours are accepted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC);
- A state Board of Nursing (all states included);
- A state nurses' association

You may submit a maximum of 45 contact hours in this category.

Category 6

Contact hours in Category 6 are awarded for participation in the ABCGN Item Writers Workshop. These contact hours are GI-specific. Contact hours awarded may vary. See certificate. You may submit a maximum of 15 contact hours in this category.

Category 7

Category 7 covers allied health education seminars, workshops and home study courses. Such workshops and courses include Continuing Medical Education (CME) offerings approved by the American Medical Association (or one of its affiliates or approved providers) or by the American Osteopathic Association (or one of its affiliates or approved providers) or courses approved by accredited pharmacy, hospital administration or similar providers. These contact hours may not substitute for nursing contact hours described in Category 1 because they have a different focus. For example, CME workshops ordinarily focus on anatomy and pathology only, while nursing workshops include not only physiological, but psychological and social implications for patients and their families. CME, pharmacy and hospital administration seminars and workshops, while worthwhile, do not replace nursing contact hours for the purpose of recertifying in a specialty nursing field.

Candidates may submit a maximum of 20 contact hours in allied health workshops, whether they are GI-specific or non-GI specific.

Category 8

Nursing research projects may be included in Category 8. A candidate may submit up to 20 contact hours in Category 8, with up to 20 contact hours awarded per research project. If audited, the candidate must submit either a published manuscript or proof the manuscript has been accepted for publication or validation by a panel of experts as documentation of research work. This research project may only be submitted once for contact hours and may not be used in a second recertification. The work must be an independently funded project designed to increase the nursing knowledge base or improve patient care and/or safety. If the project is specific to GI, it can be included in the 80 GI-specific hours.

Category 9

Poster presentation may be included in Category 9. A candidate may submit a maximum 6 contact hours in this category as either GI Specific or Non-GI Specific. An Education Poster would qualify for 2 contact hours and a Research Poster would qualify for 3 contact hours. Posters are required to have an Educational/Teaching or Educational/Research component to them. A photo copy of the poster must be submitted along with the Verification Form for Poster Presentations. Credit will be allowed only for the initial poster presentation during the 5-year recertification period. All authors of the poster qualify for contact hours.

Category 10

Precepting activities may be included in Category 10. Five (5) contact hours will be awarded to the CGRN for 80 hours of precepting one RN/LPN/GI tech within a GI work setting. A GI work setting is defined as working in a gastroenterologist or hepatologist office or GI Unit in a hospital, ambulatory or surgery/endoscopy center. The maximum amount awarded is 5 GI

Specific contact hours in a 5-year period. No contact hours will be awarded for Non-GI Specific work settings. Contact hours cannot be split for partial orientation.

Category 11

Volunteer involvement in these professional organizations or publications by ABCGN, SGNA or SIGNEA may be included in Category 11. Three (3) contact hours per year will be awarded for involvement in these GI focused professional organizations as an officer, committee/task force member at the regional or national level or as an appointed publication editor/reviewer. Minimum GI-specific hours granted will be 3, maximum 12. Non-GI specific contact hours will not be awarded. (Item Review Committee and Item Writing Panel use Category 12.)

Category 12

Contact hours in Category 12 are awarded for participation in the ABCGN Item Review Committee and/or Item Writers Panel. Up to 12 GI-specific hours will be accepted per year with a maximum of 36.

Category 13

Involvement in other GI-related organizations or publications may be included in Category 13. Three (3) contact hours per year will be awarded for involvement in other GI focused professional organizations as an officer, committee/task force member at the regional or national level or as an appointed publication editor/reviewer.
(Minimum: None - Maximum: 9)

Please note: Candidates must submit a total of 75 contact hours. Of those, 60 must be GI-specific contact hours, at least 30 of which must be in approved nursing seminars or workshops. Any application not including 60 GI specific contact hours, 30 of which are in approved nursing seminars, will be rejected.

Reminder: Your application must be submitted no later than December 31, of the year you are due to recertify!

Rationale for Recertification Requirements

Recertification requires that the candidate update their knowledge and skills that reflects continuing competence. Recertifying by contact hours requires that nurses actively practice gastroenterology nursing and obtain 75 contact hours of continuing education. Of these 75 hours, 60 must be specifically related to gastroenterology nursing. The rationale for requiring this significant amount of gastroenterology-specific hours is because of the advances in technology in this field. One half of the GI-specific hours must be earned at a live course, so there is the opportunity for interaction. ABCGN feels it is vitally important for candidates to have the opportunity to interact with instructors. There are an additional 12 categories which encourage research, authoring articles, academic course work, participation in item writing and reviewing, precepting, poster presentations and leadership involvement. The rationale for the additional categories is to provide professional growth in all domains of the practice.