

Below are the Frequently Asked Questions for CARN and CARN-AP testing and Re-certification:

1. What is Addictions Nursing?

Addictions nursing is the nursing specialty for nurses committed to the prevention, intervention, treatment, and management of addictive disorders. It is based on the nurses' ability to practice within the context of the Addictions Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice, ANA Code of Ethics, and the Addictions Nurses (IntNSA's) Core Curriculum. Addictions Nurses can practice in many different settings (acute care, treatment programs, academic, research).

2. Why do nurses become certified?

Nurses obtain certification for personal and professional reasons. Some nurses work for organizations that require certification. Many agencies increase the salaries of nurses once they are certified. Other nurses believe that credentials legitimize their practice. Nurses who obtain certification as CARN/CARN-AP have demonstrated expertise in the field of Addictions Nursing. Some nurses become certified because they want to be a part of a unique association of nurses who boldly say to the public that they are Addiction Nurses. Specifically, the nurse who is certified has demonstrated expertise in knowledge, skill and practice that provides the context for Addiction Nursing.

3. I'm not sure which certification is best for me. How do I know which one is best for me?

Currently, there are two levels of certification. The Certified Addiction Registered Nurse (CARN) is for RN's who have a minimum of 2000 hours (one year) of nursing experience related to addictions as an RN. The Certified Addiction Registered Nurse – Advance Practice (CARN-AP) is for RN's who have a Master's Degree in Nursing. In both levels of certification, the nurse may work in a variety of positions including, but not limited to, working as staff, administration, teaching, private practice, consultation, counseling, or in a research capacity.

Full Eligibility Criteria for CARN and CARN-AP:

CARN

RN LICENSE:

You must provide evidence that you hold a current, full, and unrestricted license* as a registered nurse (RN) in the United States, its territories or Canada. If licensed in more than one jurisdiction, the candidate must hold full and unrestricted licenses in all jurisdictions where they practice. Non-US or Canadian nurses who meet eligibility criteria are also invited to apply for the CARN examination, but must submit evidence of equivalent licensure as an RN.

***ALTERNATIVE TO DISCIPLINE POLICY:** ANCB recognizes the positive impact nurses in recovery bring to the specialty of addiction nursing. Alternative to Treatment Program Involvement:

1. If a license is surrendered or if the nurse has violated the agreement, the applicant will be found ineligible to sit for the exam.

2. If the nurse has a license with restrictions and is currently in a monitoring program, a letter from the monitoring program will be required before the applicant may sit for the exam. The monitoring program letter will need to support that the license is active, the applicant is complying with his/her agreement and that the monitoring program supports the applicant sitting for the exam.
3. Each applicant will be expected to abide by their state nurse practice act and the laws of their state regarding the alternative to discipline programs.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE:

The applicant must complete documentation (enclosed) verifying a minimum of 2000 hours (one year) of nursing experience related to addictions as an RN in a staff, administrative, teaching, private practice, consultation, counseling, or research capacity. These hours are only valid if they have been accrued within three (3) years of your application submission. This information must be detailed on the enclosed application and signed by a direct supervisor as verification.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CONTACT HOURS:

You need a total of thirty (30) hours of continuing education. These hours are only valid if they are related to addictions nursing, and have been acquired within three (3) years of your application submission. Your contact hour must be detailed on the provided application page. To reduce paper, you need not submit contact hour certificates with your application submission. However, contact hour certificates must be made available if requested by the testing agency or certification board.

CARN-AP

RN LICENSE:

You must hold a current, full, and unrestricted license* as a registered nurse (RN) in the United States, its territories or Canada. If licensed in more than one jurisdiction, the candidate must hold full and unrestricted licenses in all jurisdictions where they practice. Non-US or Canadian nurses who meet eligibility criteria are also invited to apply for the CARN-AP examination, but must submit evidence of equivalent licensure as an RN.

***ALTERNATIVE TO DISCIPLINE POLICY:** ANCB recognizes the positive impact nurses in recovery bring to the specialty of addiction nursing. Alternative to Treatment Program Involvement:

1. If a license is surrendered or if the nurse has violated the agreement, the applicant will be found ineligible to sit for the exam.
2. If the nurse has a license with restrictions and is currently in a monitoring program, a letter from the monitoring program will be required before the applicant may sit for the exam. The monitoring program letter will need to support that the license is active, the applicant is

complying with his/her agreement and that the monitoring program supports the applicant sitting for the exam.

3. Each applicant will be expected to abide by their state nurse practice act and the laws of their state regarding the alternative to discipline programs.

SCHOLASTIC DOCUMENTATION:

You must provide evidence that you hold a master's degree (or higher) in nursing.

VERIFICATION OF CLINICAL HOURS (500):

The applicant must complete documentation (enclosed) verifying a minimum of 500 hours in advanced clinical practice. These hours must be supervised, and must be direct client contact hours, working with individuals and families impacted by addictions/dual diagnoses. Be advised, only hours obtained within the last four (4) years will be considered, and may be from your master's program, or post-masters experience [See below].

DURING MASTERS:

If part or all of the required hours were obtained during a master's program, the applicant must attach a transcript and highlight all the itemized experience hours they wish to submit for consideration. All experience hours must be in addictions/dual diagnosis and obtained within the last 4 years.

AND/OR

POST-MASTERS:

If part or all of the required hours were obtained post-masters, then the candidate must have the enclosed Verification Form completed by a direct supervisor. The Verification Form may be photocopied for distribution to multiple supervisor if needed. All experience hours must meet the above criteria under "Verification of Clinical Hours".

VERIFICATION OF 1,500 ADDITIONAL HOURS:

In addition to the 500 directly supervised clinical hours listed, the applicant must have a minimum of 1,500 hours of nursing experience in addition as an Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) within the last three (3) years prior to submitting the examination application. The hours may be in an administrative, teaching, private practice, consultation, counseling, or research capacity.

CONTACT HOURS

Applicants must have completed forty-five (45) contact hours of approved continuing education in addictions within the three (3) years prior to submitting the exam application. Fifty-one percent of the hours must be specific to addictions nursing, while the remaining hours must be related to addictions nursing, e.g., HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, pain management, etc.

4. Can I hold both certifications?

No, you may hold only one certification. The CARN-AP may only be held by persons who have a Masters in Nursing Degree (MSN). However, one may have a MSN and hold the CARN.

5. What is the difference between CARN and CADC or CADAC? How are those viewed within the profession?

CARN is a Registered Nursing certification – the CADC/CADAC are counseling designations. One may hold both designations; however, one’s nursing license will direct practice.

6. Can a CARN provide counseling services and bill for them independently or, do they have to be working under another provider?

This is determined by the Nurse Practice Act of each state as well as each facility’s regulations, so it will vary, depending on your practice location.

7. Where can I get a copy of the Scope and Standards of Addiction Nursing?

To obtain a copy of the Scope and Standards of Addiction Nursing, you may order it from the IntNSA online store (www.intnsa.org) or directly from the ANA at

8. How do I become certified as a CARN or CARN-AP?

Individuals must complete the certification process, which is delineated in the ANCB Candidate Handbook. This includes filling out the application, providing proof of licensure, continuing education hours, and work hours. For more information, go to the certification page on our web site at www.intnsa.org or to C-NET at <https://www.cnetnurse.com/addictions-nursing>.

9. Where can I find the application for certification?

The application can be found on the certification page of our website at www.intnsa.org or <https://www.cnetnurse.com/addictions-nursing>.

10. If I want to sit for the certification exam, what is a good timeline for me to have in mind?

1. Complete the application and compile all the documents needed.
2. Send the application, required documents, and the testing fee to the testing agency, the Center for Nursing Education and Testing, Inc. (C-NET). The address is provided on the application.

3. Testing is year-round. There are no submission deadlines. Members of IntNSA who are eligible for certification may apply at a reduced fee. Membership to IntNSA must be current through the date of the examination to be eligible for the reduced fee.
4. Once your application has been reviewed and approved, you will be sent an Exam Permit which confirms your eligibility and includes instructions on scheduling your exam.
5. Continue preparation for taking the exam.

10. How is the exam scored and do I get a Score Report?

Scores are available at the testing facility immediately after the exam is completed. A total correct percentage is provided to candidates who pass the exam (approximately 75% of the questions must be answered correctly to receive a passing score). A total correct percentage as well as the correct percentages in each of the major subject areas of concentration (subscores) are provided to candidates who do not pass.

11. Where can I find the exam application periods and deadlines for application submission?

The application and examination registration deadlines can be found on page six (6) of the ANCB Candidate Handbook. A link to the handbook can be found on the certification page at www.intnsa.org or <https://www.cnetnurse.com/addictions-nursing>. There are no deadlines for submission – testing is year-round. *Please allow 3-4 weeks for processing applications. Exam Permits reflecting a 90-day testing window will be mailed to eligible candidates. Candidates will have 90 days to schedule and take the exam.

12. Are there any resources I can use to prepare for the certification exams?

For the most recently updated list of references for the CARN exam, click [HERE](#). For the most recently updated list of references for the CARN-AP exam, click [HERE](#). IntNSA provides the Core Curriculum, which may be found in the online store at www.insta.org. The Scope and Standards of Addiction Nursing may also be purchased from the online store or directly from the ANA at www.nursebooks.org.

13. Can I apply for certification before I complete nursing school?

No, you need to document that you have met the criteria including your academic degree and hold 2000 hours of experience as an RN before you can submit an application.

14. What continuing education courses (CE's) can I use to count toward the certification or Re-Certification?

CARN:

At least 51% of the 30 required CE's for initial certification and the 60 CE's for re-certification must be directly related to Addictions Nursing (addictions, substances, process addictions, addictions in health care professionals, psychiatric, treatment/prevention of addictions) for initial certification and re-certification. The remainder of the CE's for both certification and re-certification should be in related topics (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, pain management, medically oriented as it relates to substances, pharmacology, symptom management as it relates to addictions, therapies used in addictions – motivational interviewing, etc.).

CARN-AP:

At least 51% of the 80 CE's for re-certification must be directly related to Addictions Nursing (addictions, substances, process addictions, addictions in health care professionals, psychiatric, treatment/prevention of addictions) for initial certification and re-certification. The remainder of the CE's for both certification and re-certification should be in related topics (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, pain management, medically oriented as it relates to substances, pharmacology, symptom management as it relates to addictions, therapies used in addictions – motivational interviewing, etc.).

Approved contact hours consist of the following:

- Contact hours (must be approved by an ANCC accredited or approved provider).
- Continuing Medical Education (CME) > One CME = 1.0 contact hour .
- Academic courses that are related to Addiction Nursing.
- Independent study that is approved for CEUs (Self-study and journals) may be used for 100% of contact hours required for certification renewal.
- If a nurse is certified in more than one specialty, contact hours may be used for both specialties provided the majority (51%) of the continuing education credits submitted are directly related to your area of certification.
- Initial certification for ACLS and PALS cannot be used for contact hours unless new content is provided. Credit can only be approved for the new content. BLS and Basic courses are not eligible as they do not meet the criteria for continuing education.
- Nurses enrolled in graduate level courses must identify how course work is related to addictions nursing.

15. What are good sources for Continuing Education Contact Hours?

Almost all nursing journals have some addictions courses (Journal of Addictions Nursing, American Journal of Nursing, RN, Nursing 2015, Journal of Nurse Practitioners). CE's may also be found at NetCE.com, Western Schools.com, MedScape.com, Quantum Units Education Online, ContinuingEducation.com, ce.nurse.com, OASAS, Wild Iris. There are many others that can be found by searching the web, e.g. Google. You can find a running list on C-NET's website, <https://www.cnetnurse.com/addictions-nursing-ce-sites>

16. How long is my certification valid?

The CARN and CARN-AP certifications are valid for a period of 4 (four) years. To re-certify after 4 (four) years, one must complete the re-certification application. The re-certification deadline is June 30th for those certified in the spring, and December 31st for those certified in the fall. *NOTE: Effective November 2016, candidates who are successful on the examination in the current, year-round testing will begin their certification in the month they passed the exam and will expire in the same month after 4 (four) years.

17. How do I obtain a receipt of my payment for the exam or re-certification?

C-NET will send official receipts to candidates who email their request in writing to info@cnetnurse.com. They must include their name, test they registered for and testing period.

18. Is IntNSA and ANCB the same organization?

IntNSA is the professional, educational and membership organization. They offer educational opportunities, conferences, and a journal. ANCB is the certification arm of IntNSA. ANCB offers the only national certification for Addictions Nursing. Although both organizations are dedicated to facilitating the growth of Addictions Nursing, the purpose of both organizations is very different. Because ANCB and IntNSA are closely linked, members of IntNSA are offered a discount on certification fees. For more information, please go to the link for the ANCB Handbook/Application on our information page <https://www.cnetnurse.com/addictions-nursing>.

19. Do I have to change my contact information with CNET and IntNSA?

Yes, it is your responsibility to notify both CNET and IntNSA of any contact information changes. You must notify CNET so that renewal notices are sent to the correct address and to contact CNET if the renewal notice is not received. Failure to receive the renewal notice does not relieve the CARN/CARN-AP of the responsibility to apply for certification or renewal.

20. How often are the certification exams offered?

Year-round testing is offered at close to 300 locations throughout the United States. Once C-Net has approved the application for certification, the applicant will receive an Exam Permit with instructions on how to select the best location and time for the exam within the month they have applied for.

21. If I have questions about the certifications, applications or test administration, who should I contact?

The Center for Nursing and Testing (C-NET) handles all questions regarding applications and administration of the exams. You can reach them by email at <http://www.cnetnurse.com/contact-us/> or by phone at 800-463-0786 x11. Their website address is: <http://www.cnetnurse.com>.

22. Can I mail my application for certification and re-certification to IntNSA?

No, correspondence regarding the certifications must be mailed to CNET:

Addictions Nursing Certifications Board (ANCB)
c/o C-NET
35 Journal Square, Suite 901
Jersey City, NJ 07306

23. If I register for the exam and am unable to take it, what are my options?

You cannot transfer between testing periods or be refunded once you have submitted your application. If there is a circumstance (death in family, hospitalization, or other, extenuating circumstance) that prevents you from taking the exam during the period you chose to test, you must provide documentation of that circumstance to C-NET. C-NET will evaluate and handle these special circumstances on an individual basis.

24. If my certification lapses, do I have to re-take the exam?

Yes, if you allow your certification to lapse, then you must take the test to certify.

25. I'm getting ready to retire; does ANCB offer a Retired Status for the certification credential?

Yes, there is a retired status. To apply, the certified individual must complete the application for Retired Certification Status and must submit a copy of the applicant's government issued photo ID. The applicant must have previously held an ANCB credential (CARN or CARN-AP) for at least two consecutive certification periods (8 uninterrupted years), and must not be actively practicing. Applications for Retired Certification Status must be received prior to the certification expiration date, no later than the last day of the month in which your certification expires. If approved, the applicant may use the Retired Certification Status to acknowledge a previously active credential, and the accomplishments thus signified, in correspondence, and in attendance at International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA) membership events or at addictions continuing education activities. If the applicant chooses to return to practice and wishes to again hold the active credential, he/she must meet current eligibility criteria and again certify by examination. For an Retied Status Application, please contact C-NET at info@cnetnurse.com.