

AACN  

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CERTIFICATION  
CORPORATION

*Certification Organization for the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses*

## **AACN's Advocacy Role for Acute Care APRNs**

The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) and AACN Certification Corporation led the advocacy efforts to retain acute care graduate education and certification competency testing for APRNs within the licensure tier throughout the development of the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education*. As the organization representing the interests of, and setting standards for, acute and critical care nurses, we know the indispensable role that APRNs play in meeting the healthcare needs of America's most medically fragile patient populations and, therefore, believe that protecting the role is imperative.

AACN Certification Corporation has participated in the development of the Model since 2004 as a member of the Alliance for Nursing Accreditation, the group which responded to a proposal from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) to establish a process to develop a consensus statement on the credentialing of advanced practice nurses (APNs).

An invitation to participate in a national APN consensus process was sent to 50 organizations that were identified as having an interest in advanced practice nursing. Thirty-two organizations participated in the APN Consensus Conference in Washington, D.C. in June 2004. The focus of the one-day meeting was to initiate an in-depth examination of issues related to APN definition, specialization, sub-specialization, and regulation, which includes accreditation, education, certification, and licensure. At this meeting, AACN Certification Corporation presented an educational session on the Evolution of the Role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Acute and Critical Care.

Based on recommendations generated in the June 2004 APN Consensus Conference, the Alliance formed a smaller work group made up of designees from 23 organizations with broad representation of APN certification, licensure, education, accreditation and practice. The charge of the work group was to develop a statement that addresses the issues, delineated during the APN Consensus Conference, with the goal of envisioning a future model for APNs. Between October 2004 and July 2007, the Alliance APN Consensus Work Group convened for 16 days of intensive discussion.

AACN Certification Corporation participated as a member of the Consensus Work Group and continues to represent the interests of acute care APRNs throughout implementation of the Model, as a member of the LACE Work Group and an ongoing member of the Alliance, now renamed the Alliance for APRN Credentialing.