CCRN
PCCN
Renewal

It’s
simpler
than
you think!

CCRN
PCCN

AACN
CERTIFICATION CORPORATION
Certification Organization for the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
CERPs = Continuing Education Recognition Points

CERPs consist of both learning topics and activities.

Learning Topics

• Have you attended in-services required by your hospital, such as infection control, injury prevention, patient safety or HIPAA?
• Have you attended a class, conference or seminar and received CEs or CMEs?
• Have you attended a class, conference or seminar on any topic that did not award credit?
• Have you taken an academic course for credit?

Activities

• Are you a member of a professional nursing association (e.g., AACN, ANA, etc.)?
• Do you participate on committees or advisory teams?
• Are you a member of a community or advisory team, or do you volunteer within your institution or community?
• Have you precepted and/or mentored?
• Have you published?

There are a few basic requirements:

1. Learning topics and activities must be within the certification period.
2. Learning topics and activities must be related to nursing practice.

Contact AACN Customer Care:
800-899-2226
or
certcorp@aacn.org

Have questions? Not sure if it counts? We’re here to help.
## CCRN or PCCN Renewal

A total of 100 CERPs must be completed in the 3-year certification period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Category</td>
<td>60 CERPs</td>
<td>80 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Category</td>
<td>10 CERPs</td>
<td>30 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Category</td>
<td>10 CERPs</td>
<td>30 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Category</td>
<td>20 CERPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total = 100 CERPs

Following are examples of how CERPs are categorized in the Renewal by Synergy CERPs program. These include, but are not limited to, the examples provided.

### Clinical Judgment and Clinical Inquiry

**Examples:**
- Lab values
- BLS
- ACLS
- PALS
- NRP
- ECG
- IV therapy
- Heart failure
- Pharmacology
- Assessment
- Pathophysiology
- Technical skills/new equipment
- Statistics
- Clinical research
- Evidence-based practice
- Auditing
- Publishing
- Practice protocols
- QI/QA
- Clinical aspects of bioterrorism
- Exam review courses
- CCRN/CCRN-E/CCRN-K or PCCN/PCCN-K Self-Assessment Exams (SAEs)

### Advocacy & Moral Agency, Caring Practices, Response to Diversity, Facilitation of Learning

**Examples:**
- Safety/restraints
- Legal or ethical issues
- Charting/documentation
- Reducing medication errors
- Preceptorship
- Public policy
- HIPAA
- The Joint Commission
- Patient support groups
- Cultural aspects of care
- Diversity
- Medical Spanish
- Therapeutic communication
- Psychosocial aspects of care
- Mental illness
- Geriatric care
- Spiritual considerations
- Addiction/recovery
- Violence/abuse
- End-of-life care

### Collaboration and Systems Thinking

**Examples:**
- Communication skills
- Teamwork
- Healthy work environments
- AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care
- Redesigning hospital care
- Disaster/emergency planning
- Developing policies or procedures
- Community resources
- Committees
- Leadership
- Management
- Risk management
- Case management
- AACN membership
Clinical Judgment and Clinical Inquiry

### Examples

- Lab values
- BLS
- ACLS
- PALS
- NRP
- ECG
- IV therapy
- Heart failure
- Pharmacology
- Assessment
- Pathophysiology
- Technical skills/new equipment
- Statistics
- Clinical research
- Evidence-based practice
- Auditing
- Publishing
- Practice protocols
- QI/QA
- Clinical aspects of bioterrorism
- Exam review courses
- CCRN/CCRN-E/CCRN-K or PCCN/PCCN-K Self-Assessment Exams (SAEs)

### Learning Topics & Activities

All categories have both learning topics and activities that may be counted for CERPs. CERPs are grouped as they relate to the nurse characteristics of the AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care. Refer to www.aacn.org for more about the Synergy Model.

### Clinical Judgment

Clinical reasoning, which includes clinical decision making, critical thinking and a global grasp of the situation, coupled with nursing skills acquired through a process of integrating education, experiential knowledge and evidence-based guidelines.

### LEARNING TOPICS:

| Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to body systems, monitoring, physical assessment, anatomy and physiology, nursing interventions, lab values, pharmacology, ABG interpretation, diagnostic tests, therapies, fluid dynamics, BLS, ACLS, PALS, NRP, ECG interpretation, nutritional support, bariatric surgery, IV therapy, clinical implications of bioterrorism, technical skills, new equipment, core review and exam review programs. |
| Calculate CERPs |
| 1 hour of education = 1 CERP |
| 1 academic credit = 15 CERPs |

### ACTIVITIES:

| CCRN/CCRN-E/CCRN-K Self-Assessment Exam (SAE) |
| CERPs once per renewal period with 70% passing score |
| 5 CERPs |

| PCCN/PCCN-K Self-Assessment Exam (SAE) |
| CERPs once per renewal period with 70% passing score |
| 5 CERPs |

| Participation on an AACN Certification Corporation committee or task force (Practice Analysis, Item Writer, Exam Development, SAE or Practice Exam Reviewer) |
| 30 CERPs |

| Appeals Panel |
| 5 CERPs |

Renew your certification at [www.aacn.org/certification](http://www.aacn.org/certification)
**Clinical Inquiry**
The ongoing process of questioning and evaluating practice and providing informed practice. Creating changes through evidence-based practice, research utilization and experiential knowledge.

**LEARNING TOPICS:**
Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to research and research process, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, how to do an audit or prevalence study, how to evaluate nursing care and how to publish an article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERP</th>
<th>✔</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calculate CERPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 hour of education = 1 CERP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 academic credit = 15 CERPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIVITIES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERP</th>
<th>✔</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop best practices, standards of practice or standard nursing care plans for specific patient populations; original authorship</td>
<td>3 CERPs (revised 1 CERP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop evaluation tools based on outcome criteria in behavioral terms; original authorship</td>
<td>3 CERPs (revised 1 CERP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop or revise practice protocol; original authorship</td>
<td>3 CERPs (revised 1 CERP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditing activities</td>
<td>3 CERPs per year (min. 8 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality improvement activities</td>
<td>3 CERPs per year (min. 8 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research activities</td>
<td>3 CERPs per year (min. 8 hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Publications:**
Responsibility in the publication may be authorship, co-authorship or editorial. The item to be published may be a book, chapter in a book, paper, article, abstract, book review, etc. Professionally authored multimedia aids are acceptable. Note: CERPs for joint authorships are determined by dividing the number of CERPs to be awarded by the number of authors. **A maximum of 30 CERPs per renewal period is allowed in this area.**

**ACTIVITIES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERP</th>
<th>✔</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial in a journal</td>
<td>2 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a column for a journal</td>
<td>5 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article in a local newsletter or AACN chapter newsletter</td>
<td>2 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original research article (peer reviewed)</td>
<td>15 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook or chapter author or editor</td>
<td>2 CERPs per 10 pages (max. 30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionally authored multimedia aids</td>
<td>15 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research abstract</td>
<td>5 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal article (peer reviewed)</td>
<td>10 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal reviewer (review of articles or book chapters)</td>
<td>5 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>2 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s thesis or project</td>
<td>10 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNP capstone</td>
<td>20 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral dissertation</td>
<td>30 CERPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service on editorial boards</td>
<td>5 CERPs per board, per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Advocacy & Moral Agency

Working on another’s behalf and representing the concerns of the patient/family and nursing staff; serving as a moral agent in identifying and helping to resolve ethical and clinical concerns within and outside the clinical setting.

#### LEARNING TOPICS:

Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to patient rights, value of certification, advance directives, informed consent, ethics, ethical issues, regulatory issues (HIPAA, The Joint Commission), insurance and reimbursement, legal aspects of nursing practice, public policy and sexual harassment training.

#### ACTIVITIES:

- Participation on an ethics committee: 5 CERPs per year

### Caring Practices

Nursing activities that create a compassionate, supportive and therapeutic environment for patients and staff, with the aim of promoting comfort and healing and preventing unnecessary suffering. These caring behaviors include, but are not limited to, vigilance, engagement and responsiveness of caregivers. Caregivers include family and healthcare personnel.

#### LEARNING TOPICS:

Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to comfort measures, therapeutic touch, therapeutic communications, palliative care, grief and loss, patient safety (including infection control, fall prevention, body mechanics), stress management and burnout, and pet therapy.

#### ACTIVITIES:

- Facilitate a patient or family support group (e.g., Mended Hearts, bariatric or transplant support groups): 6 CERPs per year (min. 6 hours)
- Participation in pet visitation program for hospital or nursing home: 5 CERPs per year (min. 5 hours)
- Facilitate a critical incident debriefing with staff involved: 5 CERPs per year (min. 5 hours spent on incident)

---

Renew your certification at [www.aacn.org/certification](http://www.aacn.org/certification)
### Response to Diversity

The sensitivity to recognize, appreciate and incorporate differences into the provision of care. Differences may include, but are not limited to, individual, cultural, spiritual, gender, race, ethnicity, lifestyle, socioeconomic, age and values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LEARNING TOPICS:</strong></th>
<th><strong>CERP</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to cultural diversity, developmental stages, medical Spanish, spiritual considerations of the dying patient, psychosocial issues in diverse populations and outcomes/health disparities related to diverse populations.</td>
<td>Calculate CERPs 1 hour of education = 1 CERP 1 academic credit = 15 CERP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ACTIVITIES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CERP</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation on an advisory team or committee related to diversity (e.g., multigenerational work environment, cultural aspects of care, special needs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer community service for diverse patient populations (e.g., HIV hospice, migrant health clinics, free clinics). Minimum 4 visits/service contacts per year. Activity must involve nursing clinical judgment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Facilitation of Learning

(or Patient/Family Educator)

The ability to facilitate learning for patients/families, nursing staff, other members of the healthcare team and the community. Includes both formal and informal facilitation of learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LEARNING TOPICS:</strong></th>
<th><strong>CERP</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to learning theory, mentoring, precepting, assessing learning needs and health literacy projects.</td>
<td>Calculate CERPs 1 hour of education = 1 CERP 1 academic credit = 15 CERP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ACTIVITIES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CERP</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preceptorship/mentorship (includes checking skills for staff competency). A minimum of 80 hours per year of preceptorship is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing informational aids intended for use as references in the clinical area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing patient educational aids, booklets or audiovisual projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing a multimedia learning module (e.g., patient teaching program on PowerPoint)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Presentations:**

Encompasses the certificant’s participation as an instructor delivering content to nurses, other healthcare professionals or the public. The presentation must be delivered within a structured framework of teaching/learning.

A presentation includes a seminar, in-service, clinical conference, patient/family education program, consumer education program, Basic Cardiac Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, AACN chapter educational activities and/or presenting an original paper or poster. The participant may be a primary instructor, member of a team, guest lecturer or member of a panel. Check-in stations during a skills lab also count in this category.

3 CERPs are granted for each contact hour of lecture given. Each repeat presentation is granted 1 CERP per contact hour for a maximum of 2 times within a renewal period.

If the program is co-taught, the number of CERPs to be awarded is determined by dividing CERPs by the number of instructors.

A maximum of 10 CERPs per year will be granted for professional presentations.
## Collaboration and Systems Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Learning Topics &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Communication skills  
• Teamwork  
• Healthy work environments  
• AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care  
• Redesigning hospital care  
• Disaster/emergency planning  
• Developing policies or procedures | All categories have both learning topics and activities that may be counted for CERPs. CERPs are grouped as they relate to the nurse characteristics of the AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care. Refer to www.aacn.org for more about the Synergy Model. |

### Collaboration

Working with others (e.g., patients, families, healthcare providers) in a way that promotes/encourages each person’s contributions toward achieving optimal/realistic patient/family goals. Collaboration involves intra- and interdisciplinary work with colleagues and the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING TOPICS:</th>
<th>CERP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to communication skills, dealing with conflict, dealing with difficult people, crucial conversations, and improving interdepartmental or inter- and intraprofessional communication. | Calculate CERPs  
1 hour of education = 1 CERP  
1 academic credit = 15 CERPs |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES:</th>
<th>CERP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current membership in a professional nursing healthcare organization (e.g., AACN, ANA, etc.)</td>
<td>3 CERPs per year per organization (max. 6 CERPs per year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The following applies for AACN or other national organizations:

- Participation on a Chapter Advisory Team: 15 CERPs per year
- Participation as a Learning Connection Mentor: 5 CERPs per year
- Participation on a review panel (e.g., grants, scholarships, etc.): 5 CERPs per year
- Participation in a focus group: 10 CERPs per year
- Participation in a work group: 10 CERPs per year
- Participation as an AACN Ambassador: 5 CERPs per year
- Participation on a non-AACN national committee: 10 CERPs per year
- Volunteering in a healthcare mission (e.g., Flying SAMS, Project Concern, health fairs, manning a first-aid booth at a community event). Activity must utilize nursing clinical judgment: 1 CERP per hour (max. 8 CERPs per renewal period)

---

Renew your certification at [www.aacn.org/certification](http://www.aacn.org/certification)
### Systems Thinking

The body of knowledge and tools that allow the nurse to manage whatever environmental and system resources that exist for the patient/family and staff within or across healthcare systems and non-healthcare systems.

#### LEARNING TOPICS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>CERP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes all CE, academic, e-learning or CME courses and/or in-services related to care across many departments, settings, facilities, participants, regions; discharge planning; standards of excellence; management and leadership skills; healthy work environments; AACN Synergy Model for Patient Care; risk management; natural disaster/emergency planning and coordination; exploring community resources, etc.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CERPs

- 1 hour of education = 1 CERP
- 1 academic credit = 15 CERPs

#### ACTIVITIES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>CERP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in activities/teams/committees that solve or prevent complex problems and improve care across many participants, multiple departments, settings, facilities or regions (e.g., spearheading a major patient care improvement)</td>
<td>5 CERPs per activity per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in leadership responsibilities or committee involvement at a chapter/regional level</td>
<td>8 CERPs per committee per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership responsibilities or committee involvement in professional or health-related organizations</td>
<td>8 CERPs per committee per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation as an AACN or AACN Certification Corporation board member</td>
<td>20 CERPs per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating or leading an interdisciplinary team to solve a patient care problem, or leading a case conference</td>
<td>5 CERPs per team meeting/case conference (max. 5 CERPs per year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing or revising nursing policy or procedure</td>
<td>3 CERPs for original, 1 CERP for revision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CCRN or PCCN Renewal

Certification Period

A total of **100 CERPs must be completed in the 3-year certification period**, with at least 60 CERPs in Category A and 10 CERPs each in Categories B and C - plus 20 CERPs in the category of your choice.

Certification Renewal Eligibility

1. **Current, unencumbered licensure** as an RN or APRN in the U.S.
2. **Completion of 432 hours** of direct care within the 3-year certification period, with 144 of those hours accrued in the year preceding the scheduled renewal date.
3. **Eligible practice hours** are those focused on the patient population in alignment with the certification held.
4. **Complete** the Renewal by Synergy CERPs program, or take and pass the exam.

For complete eligibility requirements, refer to the renewal handbook for your certification, available at [www.aacn.org/certification](http://www.aacn.org/certification).

Key Parts of Documenting

- Your name
- Dates completed (within 3-year renewal period)
- Course title or topic
- Name of the organization, institution or hospital where the learning topic or activity took place
- Hours of CE or in-service
- Signature of educator, course director or supervisor

How to Calculate CERPs

CERPs are calculated according to the educational contact hour for seminars or lectures. For purposes of certification renewal, **one (1) hour of education time is equal to 1 CERP**. For example, a 1-hour in-service would be worth 1 CERP; an education program that awarded 6 contact hours, 6 CEs or 6 CMEs would be worth 6 CERPs.

CERPs are not awarded for registration, introductions, breaks, lunch, clinical time or completion of certification exams.

For academic credit courses, **1 credit is worth 15 CERPs**. For example, a 3-credit course would be worth 45 CERPs.

To support you in the renewal process, AACN offers **unlimited free CEs** to AACN members. Explore Continuing Education Activities at [www.aacn.org/ce](http://www.aacn.org/ce), where you can search by CERP type or topic. Track your CE hours and maintain your transcript through your AACN dashboard.
Examples of How to Document CERPs

If the content of a program falls into more than one category, the content that makes up the majority of the program should be used to determine the category for awarding CERPs. If the content is equally divided between 2 categories, you may select the category in which to award CERPs.

### Learning Topics:

- **CE/CME** - Copy of certificate that has your name, date(s) of attendance, title of course and contact hours.
- **In-service/program not providing CEs** - If the program was not formally granted contact hours (e.g., hospital or unit in-services), submit written verification of attendance, including name of participant, date(s) of attendance, title of course and hours of course (minus breaks and lunch), signed by educator or course director.
- **ACLS, BLS, PALS, NRP** - Provide documentation of hours, with course date(s) and title, your name and signature of an educator, course director or supervisor, so the total number of CERPs may be calculated. Copies of cards are not sufficient for audit, as they do not include actual class time, which varies.
- **Academic course** - Copy or online printout of formal transcript or grade report. If course title or subject is not identifiable as relating to assigned CERP category, include course description or brief profile of content. Must include time or CEs awarded.

### Activities:

- **Membership in professional organization** - Copy of membership card.
- **Project/Activity/Committee** - Written verification of project, activity or committee/board involvement, including date(s); (e.g., precepting). Include name of team, years on team and topics discussed.
- **Leadership activities** - Written verification from organization on initiative or leadership role on team to solve patient care problem.
- **Publication** - Copy of title page and table of contents. Publisher’s notice of acceptance for publication should be submitted if CERPs are to be granted before printing.
- **SAE** - Copy of SAE score report showing passing score of at least 70%.
- **Professional presentation** - Evidence of participation in presentation (e.g., brochure, announcement or written statement) and contact hours.
- **Facilitation of group** - Written verification by manager of facilitation of critical incident debriefing or support group with date(s) and number of staff/patient/family involved.
- **Volunteer participation with national organization** - Written verification from organization; should include date(s) of participation.
- **Volunteer activities** - Written documentation or brochure of volunteer organization’s values and mission statement.

The list of examples is not all-inclusive; other learning topics and activities that are similar and fall within the category descriptions will also qualify for CERPs.