

# Continuing Competency Initiative **Stage 2** Has Started!

In December 2010, NCC initiated the Continuing Competency Initiative which is being implemented in two stages. **Stage 1** is ongoing for those due 2012-2013 and **Stage 2** starts for those with maintenance due dates 2014 or later.

## CONTINUING COMPETENCY INITIATIVE



***ncc***

The National Certification Corporation



# CCI Quick Reference Action Sheet

## Stage 1 information

**\* If you are due to maintain in 2012 or 2013**

### You need to...

- 1** Take the assessment in your current cycle and before you maintain.
- 2** Review your Stage 1 Education Plan generated by the assessment - this plan is for orientation purposes only and not binding in this cycle. *(The plan is in your NCC account)*
- 3** Earn 45 hours of CE in any core competency area in your certification specialty anytime within your current period of certification. *(You will earn 5 hours of CE towards your maintenance for taking the assessment!)*
- 4** File your maintenance application online in the purple "Maintain your Certification" section of the NCC website.
- 5** Continue reading this booklet and become familiar with the requirements for maintaining in 2014 and beyond.

Access the **Continuing Competency Assessment** at [www.NCCwebsite.org](http://www.NCCwebsite.org)

**Continuing  
competency  
specialty  
assessment**

[Learn more »](#)

**Take assessment**

- Sign in first with your email and password.
- Once signed in, the site automatically knows if you are in Stage 1 or Stage 2

Submit your **Maintenance Application** at [www.NCCwebsite.org](http://www.NCCwebsite.org)

**Maintain your  
certification**

[Learn more »](#)

**Submit application**

- Sign in first with your email and password.
- In Stage 1, you can record your CE any time in your online maintenance application during your current certification cycle and on an ongoing basis.
- Your CE entries will reside in your application until you are ready to submit your online maintenance application.

# CCI Quick Reference Action Sheet

## Stage 2 information

### \* If you are due to maintain in 2014 and beyond (includes those newly certified)

#### You need to...

- 1 Take the assessment as early as possible in your current maintenance cycle so you have the maximum time to earn continuing education for maintenance.
- 2 Review your Stage 2 Education Plan generated by the assessment.  
*(The plan is in your NCC account)*
- 3 In Stage 2, you can only record earned CE in your online maintenance application AFTER you take the specialty assessment. **If you enter CE into your online maintenance application prior to taking the continuing competency specialty assessment, you will automatically be assigned to the alternative maintenance, see page 17 for full details.**
- 4 Earn the required amount of CE as defined by your Education Plan. The plan is individualized to you, identifies the number of CE hours you need and in what specified certification core competency content areas.  
*(maximum requirement is 45 CE hours)*
- 5 **Only CE earned after you take the assessment can be used towards your maintenance.**
- 6 File your maintenance application online at the NCC website. *(You will earn 5 hours of CE towards your maintenance for taking the assessment!)*

Access the **Continuing Competency Assessment** at [www.NCCwebsite.org](http://www.NCCwebsite.org)

**Continuing competency specialty assessment**

[Learn more »](#)

**Take assessment**

- Sign in first with your email and password.
- Once signed in, the site automatically assigns you the correct assessment

Submit your **Maintenance Application** at [www.NCCwebsite.org](http://www.NCCwebsite.org)

**Maintain your certification**

[Learn more »](#)

**Submit application**

- Sign in first with your email and password.
- In Stage 2, you can only record CE you earn in your online maintenance application AFTER you take the Continuing Competency specialty assessment. This CE can be entered on an ongoing basis.
- If you enter CE into your online maintenance application prior to taking the continuing competency assessment, you will automatically be assigned to the alternative maintenance, see page 17 for full details.
- These CE entries will reside in your application until you are ready to submit your online maintenance application.
- When you have accrued the CE as designated in your education plan, submit your maintenance application online at the NCC website



Continuing  
competency  
specialty  
assessment

[Learn more »](#)

Take assessment

## Taking the Specialty Assessment

### How Does It Work?

- There is **NO fee** to take the specialty assessment.
- The specialty assessment is available on demand and can be taken at any time the certified nurse chooses.
- The specialty assessment can be taken from any computer or any setting that meet the computer requirements.
- You need to take the assessment in one sitting (you cannot exit and return to finish later)
- You will have 2 hours and 15 minutes to take it.

#### > Access your Specialty Assessment from the NCC website

- Visit [www.nccwebsite.org](http://www.nccwebsite.org)
- Login to your personal NCC account
- Click "Take assessment" in the green "Continuing competency specialty assessment" box
- Scroll to the bottom and click on the Specialty Assessment you are qualified to take
- The specialty assessment is composed of 125 questions.
- The purpose of this evaluation process is to assist in identifying areas of core competency specialty knowledge strengths and gaps.
- Each specialty assessment will cover topics that reflect the major specialty knowledge competencies tested on the core certification exam for the specified specialty.
- **There is no pass/fail and you are not required to earn a minimum score to maintain your certification. Results will not affect certification status.**
- Following the specialty assessment, you will receive a Specialty Index Report with Education Plan. The report will use a scale of 0-10 to provide feedback on your core certification specialty knowledge competencies. (see below for an explanation of the report)
- The Specialty Index Report and Education Plan **are disclosed to you and you ONLY.**
- You will earn 5 continuing education hours toward your certification each time you take the assessment.

## The Specialty Index Report

### What Does it Mean?

The Specialty Index Report contains the ratings for each core competency area within a specialty and the results reflect in which core competency area ( if any) the standard of 7.5 has been met. The specialty index report is not based upon a grading system but uses mathematical calculations to provide a scaled 1-10 conversion based upon the type and amount of content within each core specialty's competency content area. Core competency areas with ratings of less than 7.5 (shown on the report in red type) have not met the standard and continuing education in those competency areas will have to be earned for Stage 2 maintenance. The Specialty Index ratings are transferred to develop the personalized Education Plan. Examples of the Specialty Index Report, Education Plan and Specialty Content for each specialty are provided on pages 6-11.



## The Education Plan

### How Do I Use It?

For Stage 1 this Education Plan is for informative purposes ONLY. For Stage 2 this Education Plan is BINDING and must be followed to maintain your NCC certification.

For purposes of establishing the need for additional CE in a core competency area, ratings of 7.5 or higher have been determined to “meet the standard” An individual does not need to earn continuing education for purposes of NCC certification maintenance in those areas.

Core competency areas with ratings of less than 7.5 (shown on the report in red type) will generate Missed Keywords. These Missed Keywords show which topics had incorrect responses within a core competency area.

The Education Plan also provides links to NCC self assessment CE modules that meet the Education Plan’s requirements. There is no requirement to use NCC CE modules, the links are provided as a convenience. Any NCC approved continuing education activity that falls within a needed core competency area can be used for maintenance. Visit the NCC website and review the CORE maintenance booklet for the rules of using “Academic Credit” and “Other Recognized Educational Activities.”

The 5 hours of CE awarded by NCC for completion of the assessment tool is deducted from the CE hour total. You can count that 5 hours awarded by NCC toward any Education Plan CE need. Examples of the Specialty Index Report, Education Plan and Specialty Content for each specialty are provided on pages 6-11.

## Missed Keywords

### What are they?

Missed Keywords are generated for core competency areas with ratings of 7.5 or less and are listed in your Education Plan. They show which topics had incorrect responses within a core competency area.

Missed Keywords are an excellent way to provide some guidance for continuing education topics. They are broad in scope and you are not required to cover all keywords or topics for your NCC certification maintenance. They are intended to show what specific topics, within a core competency area, had a knowledge gap on the Specialty Assessment. This approach allows for a more personalized experience and is more helpful overall in supporting personal professional development.

# RECOGNITION

of the expanding knowledge base needed to function in an increasingly complex health environment.



## Specialty Content and Sample Specialty Index Reports with Education Plan

### What is Specialty Content?

You will need to code your continuing education activities on your online maintenance application to correspond with the specialty codes reflecting the core competency areas for your specialty certification. Specialty hours are those continuing education activities that relate to content tested on the certification examinations and patient populations related to a specific NCC certification specialty.

Please don't over think this process. For example breastfeeding would fall under postpartum, epidural anesthesia would fall under pain management, TPN would fall under nutrition, etc. Content that would NOT be applicable includes any content in general nursing management, e.g., IV maintenance, general patient safety, e.g., use of restraints, bioterrorism protocols or nursing content that would be expected of any nurse regardless of specialty.

**This is not a change in content for each specialty but rather how the content is categorized.**

### Where is the information I need for the coding system?

NCC has created coding booklets specific to each core certification and has an online coding portal for browsing content categories and assigning the proper maintenance code.

To access content coding tools:

- Visit [www.nccwebsite.org](http://www.nccwebsite.org)
- Click "Learn More" in the purple "Maintain your certification" box
- Scroll down to Documenting CE & specialty codes
- Click "Is my CE acceptable?"
- Or select from the right hand column the coding brochure specific to your specialty

The following pages have samples of Specialty Index Reports with Education Plan and content listings for each specialty

## DETERMINE

that each certified nurse has maintained core certification specialty knowledge competencies related to the certification specialty role.

## INP Core Competency Area

### Fetal Assessment (Code 1)

\*10 hours

- Antepartum assessment
- Electronic fetal monitoring
- Non-electronic fetal monitoring
- Acid-base assessment
- Fetal and placental development

### Labor and Delivery (Code 2)

\*15 hours

#### Labor and Delivery

- Physiology of labor
- Labor management
- Obstetrical procedures
- Pain management

### Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3)

\*10 hours

#### Pregnancy Complications

- Maternal diseases affecting the fetus and newborn
- Lifestyle and environmental pregnancy risks

#### Obstetric Complications

- Labor and placental disorders
- Multiple gestation
- Preterm Labor
- Prolonged pregnancy

### Postpartum (Code 4)

\*5 hours

- Physiology of the postpartum woman
- Family adaptation
- Lactation
- Complications of the postpartum period
- Discharge planning and home care

### Newborn (Code 5)

\*5 hours

- Adaptation to extrauterine life
- Physical assessment
- Pathophysiologic conditions
- Infant nutrition
- Resuscitation and Stabilization

### Professional Practice (Code 6)

\*5 hours

#### Research

- Definitions
- Application to practice

#### Legal/Ethical Issues

- Definitions
- Application to practice
- Informed consent
- Legal issues affecting inpatient obstetric nursing practice

#### Patient Safety

# Speciality Index: Inpatient Obstetric Nursing Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Fetal Assessment (Code 1)	<b>7.62</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Labor and Delivery (Code 2)	<b>7.83</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3)	<b>6.84</b>	10 hours
Postpartum (Code 4)	<b>7.27</b>	5 hours
Newborn (Code 5)	<b>2.86</b>	5 hours
Professional Practice (Code 6)	<b>5</b>	5 hours

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Disease processes affecting mother/fetus/newborn, Labor/Placental Disorders, Multiple gestation, Pregnancy Risks, Preterm labor, Prolonged pregnancy <a href="#">Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3) Self Assessment modules »</a>	10 hours
Postpartum (Code 4) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Anatomy and physiology of lactation, Postpartum complications, Postpartum physiology, Postpartum Psychosocial Adaptation <a href="#">Postpartum (Code 4) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
Newborn (Code 5) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Adaptation to Extrauterine Life, Infant Nutrition, Newborn Complications, Newborn Resuscitation <a href="#">Newborn (Code 5) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
Professional Practice (Code 6) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Ethical Principles and Theories, Patient Safety <a href="#">Professional Practice (Code 6) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

## LRN Core Competency Area

### Mother/Fetus (Code 1)

\*5 hours

#### Mother/Fetus

- Assess Intrauterine Environment
- Antepartum Tests of Fetal Well Being
- Fetal and Placental Development

### Maternal Complications Affecting the Newborn

- Preexisting Maternal Conditions
- Pregnancy Related Conditions
- Environmental and Lifestyle Factors

### Physical Assessment, Thermoregulation and Normal Management (Code 2)

\*15 hours

#### Physical Assessment

- Gestational Age Assessment
- Diagnostic Laboratory Studies
- Physical and Behavioral Assessment
- Basic physiology and anatomy
- Resuscitation and Stabilization

#### Thermoregulation

- Physiology
- Mechanisms of heat loss
- Temperature Management

#### Neonatal Nutrition

- Breastfeeding
- Neonatal Nutrition and Feeding

#### Normal Management

- Neonatal Transition
- General Care
- Parent Education

### Neonatal Complications (Code 3)

\*20 hours

#### Management of Complications

- Cardiac
- Respiratory
- Gastrointestinal
- Renal
- Genitourinary
- Hematopoietic
- Neurological
- Immunology
- Endocrine
- Musculoskeletal
- Skin
- Genetics
- Head, Ears, Eyes, Nose and Throat
- Perinatal Substance Abuse
- Hyperbilirubinemia

### Pharmacology (Code 4)

\*5 hours

#### Pharmacokinetics

- General Principles
- Routes of Administration
- Pharmacokinetics, Drug Therapies

# Speciality Index: Low Risk Neonatal Nursing Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Mother/Fetus (Code 1)	<b>7.89</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Physical Assessment, Thermoregulation and Normal Management (Code 2)	<b>6.77</b>	15 hours
Neonatal Complications (Code 3)	<b>8.23</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Pharmacology (Code 4)	<b>6</b>	5 hours
Professional Practice (Code 6)	<b>6.67</b>	5 hours

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
Physical Assessment, Thermoregulation and Normal Management (Code 2) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Behavioral assessment, Breastfeeding, Gestational age assessment, Laboratory test evaluation, Neonatal nutrition, Thermoregulation <a href="#">Physical Assessment, Thermoregulation and Normal Management (Code 2) Self Assessment modules »</a>	15 hours
Pharmacology (Code 4) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Breastfeeding and Medication, Drug Therapies, Hyperbilirubinemia, Perinatal Substance Abuse, Pharmacokinetics <a href="#">Pharmacology (Code 4) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
Professional Practice (Code 5) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Legal Issues, Legal/Ethical Issues, Patient Safety, Research <a href="#">Professional Practice (Code 5) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

#### Drug Therapies

- Vitamin K
- Eye prophylaxis
- Antibiotics
- Hepatitis vaccine
- Other Vaccines

#### Pain Management

- Pharmacologic
- Nonpharmacologic
- GI motility drugs

### Professional Practice (Code 5)

\*5 hours

#### Patient Safety

- Interprofessional communication
- Continuing Competency
- Medication Error Prevention

#### Ethical Principles and Theories

- Patient advocacy

#### Legal Issues Affecting Newborn Nursing

- Impaired nurse
- Scope of practice
- Expert witness

#### Informed Consent

#### Professional Practice Standards

#### Research

- Common terms
- Application of research to practice
- Evidence Based Practice

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

## MNN Core Competency Area

### Maternal/Neonatal Factors Affecting Outcomes (Code 1)

\*5 hours

#### Factors Affecting Maternal/Neonatal Outcomes

- Antepartum risk factors and complications
- Intrapartal factors
- Medications used in labor
- Methods of delivery

### Postpartum Assessment and Management (Code 2)

\*20 hours

#### Maternal Assessment and Management in the Postpartum Delivery Period (Delivery through Six Weeks)

- Physiological changes and laboratory values
- Nursing care and education
- Common postpartum medications
- Postoperative care
- Management of common problems
- Patient education for new mother
- Lactation and newborn feeding
- Postpartum complications
- Family Dynamics After Childbirth

### Newborn Assessment and Management (Code 3)

\*20 hours

#### Transition to Extrauterine Life

- Thermoregulation
- Laboratory findings
- Physiologic changes

#### Physical Assessment of the Newborn

- Gestational age assessment
- Neurobehavioral assessment
- Systems review

#### Nursing Care and Family Education of the Newborn

#### Commonly Used Medications in Neonates

#### Neonatal Complications by Body System

### Professional Practice (Code 4)

\*5 hours

#### Professional Practice

- Patient Safety
- Ethical principles and theories
- Legal Issues affecting maternal newborn nursing
- Professional practice standards
- Research

# Speciality Index: Maternal Newborn Nursing Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Maternal/Neonatal Factors Affecting Outcomes (Code 1)	<b>5.71</b>	5 hours
Postpartum Assessment and Management (Code 2)	<b>7.66</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Newborn Assessment and Management (Code 3)	<b>6.73</b>	20 hours
Pharmacology (Code 4)	<b>10</b>	<i>Standard met</i>

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
Maternal/Neonatal Factors Affecting Outcomes (Code 1) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Antepartal Factors, Intrapartal Factors <a href="#">Maternal/Neonatal Factors Affecting Outcomes (Code 1) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
Newborn Assessment and Management (Code 3) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Newborn Complications, Newborn Management and Family Education, Transition to Extrauterine Life <a href="#">Newborn Assessment and Management (Code 3) Self Assessment modules »</a>	20 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

## NIC Core Competency Area

### General Assessment (Code 1)

\*15 hours

#### General Assessment

- Physical and Gestational Age Assessment
- Maternal Factors Affecting Neonatal Outcomes
- Risk Assessment
- Thermoregulation
- Fluids and Electrolytes
- Nutrition and Feeding
- Oxygenation and Acid Homeostasis
- Developmental Care

### Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2)

\*20 hours

#### Physiology and Pathophysiology

- Cardiac
- Respiratory
- Gastrointestinal (GI)
- Genitourinary (GU)
- Hematopoietic
- Neurologic
- Infectious Diseases
- Metabolic
- Genetics
- Head, Ears, Eyes, Nose and Throat
- Discharge Planning and Follow up
- Grieving Process and Family Integration

### Pharmacology (Code 3)

\*10 hours

#### Pharmacology

- Drug Therapies
- Pharmacokinetic Principles

### Professional Practice (Code 4)

\*5 hours

#### Patient Safety

- Interprofessional communication
- Medication error prevention
- System error prevention

### Ethical Principles and Theories

### Legal Issues Affecting Neonatal Care Nursing

- Scope of practice
- Impaired nurse
- Legal terms
- Informed consent

### Professional Practice Standards

- Evidence Based Practice

### Research

- Terminology
- Incorporation into Practice

# Speciality Index: Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
General Assessment (Code 1)	<b>6.34</b>	15 hours
Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2)	<b>7.74</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Pharmacology (Code 3)	<b>6.67</b>	10 hours
Professional Practice (Code 4)	<b>10</b>	<i>Standard met</i>

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
General Assessment (Code 1) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Developmental care, Fluid and electrolyte management, Gestational age assessment, Nutrition, Oxygenation and Homeostasis, Physical Examination, Resuscitation, Risk Assessment, Thermoregulation <a href="#">General Assessment (Code 1) Self Assessment modules »</a>	15 hours
Pharmacology (Code 3) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Drug Therapies, Pharmacologic Principles <a href="#">Pharmacology (Code 3) Self Assessment modules »</a>	10 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

## NNP Core Competency Area

### Physical Assessment (Code 1)

\*5 hours

#### General Assessment

- Maternal factors affecting the newborn
- Physical examination
- Diagnostic procedures & laboratory evaluation
- Gestational age assessment

### Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2)

\*20 hours

#### Disease Management

- Cardiac
- Respiratory
- Gastrointestinal (GI)
- Renal
- Hematopoietic
- Neurological
- Infectious diseases
- Endocrine
- Musculoskeletal
- Skin
- Genetics
- Head, ears, eyes, nose and throat
- Intrauterine drug exposure

### General Management (Code 3)

\*10 hours

- Developmental care
- Fluids and electrolytes
- Nutrition
- Thermoregulation
- Resuscitation and Stabilization
- Family integration
- Discharge Planning and Follow Up

### Pharmacology (Code 4)

\*10 hours

#### Pharmacology

- Drug therapies
- Pharmacokinetic principles

### Professional Practice (Code 5)

\*5 hours

#### Professional Practice

- Patient safety
- Ethical principles and theories
- Legal issues affecting neonatal intensive care nursing
- Professional practice standards
- Research

# Speciality Index: Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Physical Assessment (Code 1)	<b>7.69</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2)	<b>7.16</b>	20 hours
General Management (Code 3)	<b>8.33</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Pharmacology (Code 4)	<b>7.92</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Professional Practice (Code 5)	<b>6.67</b>	5 hours

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Cardiac, EENT, Endocrine, Genetics, GI, Hematopoietic, Infectious Diseases, Intrauterine drug exposure, Musculoskeletal, Neurological, Renal, Respiratory, Skin, Thermoregulation <a href="#">Physiology and Pathophysiology (Code 2) Self Assessment modules »</a>	20 hours
Professional Practice (Code 5) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Ethical Principles and Theories, Patient Safety, Research <a href="#">Professional Practice (Code 5) Self Assessment modules »</a>	5 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

## WHC Core Competency Area

### Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1) \*10 hours

#### Primary Care

- Health promotion
- Risk assessment
- Disease prevention
- National screening guidelines
- Preconceptual counseling

#### Obstetrics

- Maternal adaptation to pregnancy
- Prenatal care
- Routine postpartum care
- Lactation and breastfeeding

#### Gynecology

- Puberty
- Menstrual cycle
- Conception
- Climacteric changes
- Pregnancy prevention and fertility control
- Postmenopause changes

### Pathophysiology (Code 2) \*20 hours

*Feedback in the specific pathophysiologic areas of gynecology, obstetrics and primary care will be provided in your Education Plan.*

#### Gynecology

##### Gynecologic Disorders/Deviations

- Menstrual disorders
- STDs and vaginal infections (female/male)
- Urinary tract infections
- Pelvic pain and related disorders
- Infertility (female/male)
- Benign reproductive disorders
- Malignant reproductive disorders
- Breast disorders
- Pelvic organ relaxation and prolapse
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome
- Vulvar dystrophies and dermatoses

### Male Factors Affecting Women's Health

- Sexuality and sexual dysfunction
- Contraception
- Infertility
- STDs

#### Obstetrics

##### Complications of Pregnancy

- Preexisting conditions
- Placental abnormalities
- Pregnancy specific conditions
- Postpartum complications

#### Primary Care

- Recognition, basic management and/or referral of common health problems
- Disorders by physiologic system

### Physical Assessment & Diagnostic Tools (Code 3) \*5 hours

#### Health History

- Risk assessment
- Medical history
- Social history
- Family history

\*Number of CE hours required if you do not achieve a specialty index of 7.5 or more in the content area.

# Speciality Index: Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Continuing Competency Assessment

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	YOUR SPECIALTY INDEX	CE HOURS REQUIRED
Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1)	<b>6.5</b>	10 hours
Pathophysiology (Code 2)	<b>7.76</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Physical Assessment & Diagnostic Tools (Code 3)	<b>7.5</b>	<i>Standard met</i>
Pharmacology (Code 4)	<b>6.15</b>	10 hours
Professional Practice (Code 5)	<b>8</b>	<i>Standard met</i>

#### Your education plan

CORE COMPETENCY AREA	CE HOURS
Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Fertility control, Gynecology, Health Promotion, Obstetrics, Postpartum, Prenatal Care <a href="#">Normal Physiology and Management (Code 1) Self Assessment modules »</a>	10 hours
Pharmacology (Code 4) <b>Missed keywords:</b> Drug Therapy, Pharmacokinetics <a href="#">Pharmacology (Code 4) Self Assessment modules »</a>	10 hours
15 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	15 hours
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours
<b>Total hours required</b>	<b>35 hours</b>

### Physical Assessment and Examination

- General body system review
- Physiology and anatomy of reproductive organs
- Pelvic exam
- Obstetric exam
- Fetal Assessment

### Diagnostic Tests and Studies

- Hematologic studies
- Serologic studies
- Kidney function studies
- Lipid profile
- Body fluids and excretion analyses
- Endoscopic procedures
- Imaging studies
- Biopsies
- Genetic screening and testing

### Pharmacology (Code 4) \*10 hours

#### Pharmacology

- Pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics
- Drug interactions
- Mechanisms of action

### Pharmacotherapeutics (prescription and OTC)

- Drugs categories
- Drug indications/contraindications
- Side effects
- Patient education

### Professional Practice (Code 5) \*5 hours

#### Evidence Based Practice

- Research design
- Application of research findings to clinical practice
- Statistical evaluation of research studies
- Ethical considerations in research

#### Legal/Ethical Issues

- Informed consent
- Patient confidentiality
- Risk management
- Scope of practice
- Ethical principles

#### Patient Safety

- Interprofessional communication
- Medication errors
- Preventive strategies to reduce medical errors
- Documentation



## NCC Maintenance Application for Stage 2

### How do I complete it?

- All certification maintenance applications must be filed online.
- Your education plan will be recapped in your online maintenance application.
- You may access your online maintenance application any time after you take Stage 2 assessment and keep track of your earned CE credits by saving them to the application.
- As you add CE in the required certification core competency areas, the plan will be populated with the entered hours (e.g. if you take a course in Continuing Competency for 2 hours, when you enter that activity, the 0 hours in Professional Practice will be updated to 2 hours.)
- The 5 CE hours earned for completing the Specialty Assessment is automatically entered into the application.
- Any NCC self assessment continuing education taken online will be coded correctly and entered into the application automatically.
- Once your Education Plan is completely populated, you will automatically go to the payment page.

**PLEASE NOTE:** For those who maintain their Stage 2 maintenance early, the assessment is available for three months prior to the start of the 2014, 2015 and 2016 cycles so if you are planning to take education and in the first weeks of your Stage 2 cycle, you can take the assessment “early” to determine if any the planned education is applicable.

**REMEMBER:** CE can only be earned during your current cycle, so even if take the assessment early – CE can only be earned once your new cycle starts.

## DEMONSTRATE

maintenance of core certification specialty knowledge competencies currently outlined and tested for their certification specialty.



## Sample Online NCC Maintenance Application

### Maintenance application

Certification to maintain » Personal information » Contact hours » Payment » Review

#### Your education plan

Core Competency Area	Hours required	Hours entered
Fetal Assessment (Code 1)	10 hours	0 hours
Labor and Delivery (Code 2)	15 hours	10 hours
Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3)	10 hours	4 hours
Postpartum (Code 4)	5 hours	0 hours
Newborn (Code 5)	5 hours	5 hours
Professional Practice (Code 6)	5 hours	2 hours
5 Continuing Education hours in any of your content specific specialty areas	5 hours	
Credit for taking this assessment (may be applied to your total required hours)	-5 hours	
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>45 hours</b>	<b>21 hours</b>

Any CE hours you have earned from NCC online self assessment modules are included in the list below. If you have earned other CE hours, you will need to add them to the list below by completing the requested information.

List the date, name, CE hours, and sponsoring/ accrediting organization for CE activities you are using to maintain your certification according to your education plan. You do not need to submit copies of your CE certificates.

*If the hours you earned from NCC self assessment modules are not shown, please add them in the additional activity section.*

### CE hours

	Date	Activity	Core Competency Area
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Remove</a>	1/15/2011	<b>Labor Support and The Family in Childbirth</b> 10 hour(s)   Accreditor: NCC	Labor and Delivery (Code 2)
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Remove</a>	4/3/2011	<b>PP1101 The Late Preterm Infant</b> 5 hour(s)   Accreditor: NCC	Newborn (Code 5)
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Remove</a>	9/17/2011	<b>Course 207 Pregnancy and Diabetes</b> 4 hour(s)   Accreditor: University of Chicago	Pregnancy and Obstetric Complications (Code 3)
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Remove</a>	10/22/2011	<b>WB1320 Continuing Competency Initiative (CCI)</b> 2 hour(s)   Accreditor: NCC	Professional Practice (Code 6)
<b>Total hours: 21</b>			

### Additional activity

Program/Activity name (please be specific)

Date you received your CE hours (mm/dd/yyyy)

Number of hours awarded

Sponsor or accrediting agency/organization

[Add activity](#)

Core Competency Area Which one do I pick?

- Fetal Assessment (Code 1) [more info](#)
- Labor and Delivery (Code 2) [more info](#)
- Pregnancy & Obstetric Complications (Code 3) [more info](#)
- Postpartum (Code 4) [more info](#)
- Newborn (Code 5) [more info](#)
- Professional Practice (Code 6) [more info](#)
- Universal Hours (Code 9) [more info](#)
- NCC Pretest Participant (Code 21) [more info](#)
- NCC Item Writer (Code 22) [more info](#)
- NCC Self Assessment Reviewer or Author (Code 23) [more info](#)

## Frequently Asked Questions About Stage 2 of the Continuing Competency Initiative

### **What if I don't want to take the specialty assessment evaluation?**

While we highly encourage you to participate, you can opt out but your continuing education requirements will be increased to 50 hours and they must be earned in all content areas of your specialty. The maintenance fee will be \$175 and you will be required to submit additional documentation of your activities. No NCC self assessment price discounts will apply.

### **Why is there a higher fee if I don't take the specialty assessment evaluation?**

In order for NCC to assess that you have maintained competency in the major certification competencies, we will have to review additional information about the CE you have earned which takes more resources and time to accomplish. The cost for that will be borne by the individual.

### **What happens if I get 7.5 specialty index in all content areas?**

Your continuing education requirement would then be 15 continuing education hours in your certification specialty area, the specified topics would be of your choosing.

### **What if there is no continuing education in the content area the specialty assessment evaluation indicates I need?**

NCC offers CE modules for all of the core content areas for each specialty, but no one is required to use NCC CE modules to meet the continuing education requirements.

### **What will happen if I don't take the specialty assessment evaluation in time and don't have enough time to meet my continuing education requirement?**

The same options will be available to you as they are now. If you need additional time, then you can request an extension for a fee. If you don't file your maintenance on time, you will have one year to reinstate for a fee.

### **If I don't earn continuing education in the required areas but have at least 50 hours, can I still maintain?**

No, you have to meet both the hour and content requirements. If you don't, you will have to extend or reinstate whichever applies.

## Frequently Asked Questions About Stage 2 of the Continuing Competency Initiative

**I guess I really don't understand this. If I take the specialty assessment evaluation and get a 7.5 specialty index in all areas, I really only have to earn 10 continuing education hours to maintain my certification?**

Yes, that is correct. While the requirement is 15 continuing education hours, because you earn 5 continuing education hours for the specialty assessment, that makes your continuing education commitment 10 continuing education hours in the certification specialty area of your choosing.

**Do I have to study for the specialty assessment evaluation?  
Will NCC provide study guides?**

The specialty assessment is not a pass/fail situation. It is an assessment to provide individualized feedback for directing continuing education in support of your certification maintenance based on areas of strength and knowledge gaps relative to your area of certification. Since the specialty assessment's use is as an evaluation tool for certification maintenance purposes only, no study is required and NCC will not be providing study guides.

**I have been certified as a WHNP for 10 years but my practice now deals almost exclusively in gynecologic patients with a subspecialty in cancer patients? I know I won't do well in the obstetric part. I don't think it is fair to judge me on practices I don't do.**

Certification is not tied to anyone's specific practice but to a standard of knowledge that all certified nurses or NPs in a specific specialty should know. Your maintenance of certification states that you have maintained your knowledge in all the areas of certification not just 1 or 2. Tomorrow, you could accept a position that is just the opposite where you exclusively see obstetric patients and both the employer and regulators assume that NCC is assuring that you have maintained your knowledge competencies in these areas and can make the job change without having to retake your certification examination.

**I'm Maternal Newborn Nursing certified but my hospital requires me to float to the L&D if needed. So I take a lot L&D courses mandated by the hospital. I can use them to maintain my Maternal Newborn Nursing certification, right?**

No, while individual practices may broaden or narrow within the core certification knowledge competencies, the continuing education used for your maintenance must be in your certification specialty. If you now perform significant L&D management, it may be time to consider taking the inpatient obstetric nursing exam if your practice has changed over time.

## Frequently Asked Questions About Stage 2 of the Continuing Competency Initiative

**I'm no longer working as an inpatient obstetric nurse but I love the area and have maintained even though I don't work in it any more. I hope to return to it one day and I never want to take the certification exam again? What's going to happen to me?**

NCC does not require a work requirement to maintain, but realistically, if you are not working in the area any longer, it would be conceivable that your specialty index would not be as high as someone who does and therefore, your continuing education commitments might be greater. But you still have the opportunity to maintain.

**I don't have access to a computer so will you provide a paper specialty assessment evaluation for me?**

No, to maintain the specialty assessment as a secure evaluation tool, everyone will have to take the assessment online. If you don't own a personal computer, your options will be to seek computer access for the time required to complete the assessment from a friend or your employer. Other options include use of services such as an internet cafe. There may be additional fees for some of these services but the cost will have to be borne by the individual certified nurse or NP.

**I won't use the internet for money transactions so how will I participate in this program?**

There is no fee to take the specialty assessment evaluation so that is not an issue.

**If you have questions or comments, send them to  
[continuingcompetency@nccnet.org](mailto:continuingcompetency@nccnet.org)**

## UNDERLYING CONCEPT

to validate how well an individual maintains core certification specialty knowledge competencies using clinical practice experience, educational endeavors and/or professional development activities.



## Alternative Maintenance

### Alternatives to the Professional Development Certification Maintenance Program (Beginning in 2014)

For those who do not wish to use the new Professional Development Certification Maintenance program or re-take the certification exam, the continuing education requirement will be:

- 50 hours in specific content categories. (see website for specifics)
- The maintenance fee will be increased to \$175 for those participating in alternative maintenance process. No NCC self assessment discounts will apply.
- Additional documentation of each CE activity will be required. See website for details. This process will be available in the spring of 2012.
- All continuing education must be accredited.
- All CE must be coded to the specified specialty codes provided in this booklet and on the NCC website and earned during the current maintenance cycle.
- Acceptable accrediting agencies include: state boards of nursing, CME credits, ANCC or academic credit. NCC self assessment modules can be used to meet specialty hour requirements.



## History of CCI

### What is It

The Continuing Competency Initiative adds an assessment mechanism to the maintenance process. Individuals with core certification will be required to take a 125 question assessment which will generate an education plan that will outline the amount and nature of CE the individual needs to earn to maintain their certification.

#### Stage 1 (orientation)

In Stage 1 the assessment is taken as an orientation to the new process and the resulting education plan is non-binding. In Stage 1, the maintenance requirements remain the same 45 hours of CE in the certification specialty (*any core competency area*).

#### Stage 2 (implementation)

In Stage 2, the assessment is taken and the resulting education plan identifies the amount of CE hours that must be earned in the specific core certification specialty areas designated on the education plan.

### Following Stage 2

Once Stage 2 of the new program is completed, the new requirement of taking the continuing competency assessment will become an integral part of maintaining your NCC certification. The generated education plan from the assessment will outline the number of CE hours and will designate in what core competency specialty areas the CE will need to be earned for maintenance. The assessment will be taken at the beginning of each certification cycle and will be a guide for the educational activities for maintenance for each NCC certified nurse and nurse practitioner.



## Why were changes made?

The changes in the maintenance program were made in recognition of the expanding knowledge base needed to function in an increasingly complex health care environment. This approach also brings greater accountability and transparency to the certification maintenance process; while providing employers and the public a valid measure of assurance regarding the ongoing competency of nurses certified by NCC. It also aligns NCC with other professions who have added continuing competency components to their maintenance processes including physicians, pharmacists, physical therapists and nurses in Great Britain, Australia and Canada. Many state boards of nursing are also introducing continuing competency measures for nursing re-licensure.

The focus of the certification maintenance program is to determine that each certified nurse has maintained knowledge competencies related to the certification specialty role. Maintenance should validate knowledge competencies of NCC certified nurses\* by establishing requirements that are consistent with current education curricula (where appropriate), national standards of practice and current specialty practice as determined by the NCC content validation studies. Certification is a process that functions on a continuum throughout the nurse's career supported by life-long learning and ongoing professional development which includes maintenance of their core certification specialty knowledge competencies. In many cases, health care professionals may expand their role or perhaps narrow their practice in a subspecialty area over time resulting in the evolution of new competencies or a shift in competency focus to meet the individual practice role. While these changes are appropriate, maintenance of the NCC certification requires that the certified nurse demonstrate maintenance of the core certification specialty knowledge competencies as they are currently outlined and tested for their certification specialty. Since regulators, employers and other interested parties use certification to identify and validate the knowledge competencies and clinical expertise in the identified specialty, it is the responsibility of each NCC certified nurse to maintain the stated core certification specialty knowledge competencies through active participation in the Professional Development Certification Maintenance Program.

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\* refers to any individual holding a core NCC certification as a RNC, WHNP-BC or NNP-BC