



## The National Certification Corporation Annual Review State of the Organization 2020 MILESTONES

**107,139 STRONG:** ...NCC has certified over 180,000 professionals since 1975. Of the 11,344 who registered and were eligible for the exams in 2020, 9,440 took the exam and of these, 8,144 passed the exam. (An overall 86% pass rate). The Inpatient Obstetric Nursing exam and the Electronic Fetal Monitoring exam continue to bring in the largest number of new professionals with over 2,000 in INPT and over 4,400 in EFM taking the exam in 2020.

**Response to COVID 19:** In addition to the new work of NCC, there was a lot of decisions and work done to assist candidates and certificants during the pandemic as we dealt with stay-at-home orders, additional work for our health care providers, and closure of the test centers. NCC embraced the challenge of COVID 19 and has been nationally involved working to stay on top of changes and opportunities. The major changes made for both candidates and certificants were as follows:

- All candidate eligibility windows for taking an NCC Exam were extended to July 30, 2020. The decision to move the date was due to the closure of the test center and secondary to the new work/life demands for health care providers.
- All certified candidates due June 15, 2020 were provided with free 90-day extensions if they are unable to maintain by this deadline.
- NCC worked with all those who had organized paper pencil exams at hospital or through a review program to change the testing dates for paper/pencil exams and realign registration windows. Allowing them to

- reset the dates and moving candidates to the new date at no charge for the change.
- NCC put forward all eight of our accredited NCC examinations for delivery by Live Remote Proctoring to NCCA. This required addressing NCCA standards that would be impacted by using Live Remote Proctoring (LRP). NCC was approved within 3 days of submission without questions.
  - NCC worked together with NONPF, NCSBN, national organizations, and certification and licensing groups to develop a statement for required direct care clinical hours during APRN education. This was posted on the website and sent to all our program directors. With limited clinical sites and student clinical cancellations it was agreed the 500 direct patient care hours were required but additional hours could be met using other options such as telemedicine and simulations.
  - Candidate information was provided regarding unexpected test site closures due to COVID 19 and also how to find out what sites were open and the distance to those sites prior to registration for the exam.
  - Due to the increased use of the internet, NCC put information out about power and internet issues that could impact testing and how these issues were being handled.

**Maintenance and Reinstatement:** Over 26,514 maintained in 2020. NCC does a 3% random audit for all maintenance applications and audits reinstatement applications. If an application is audited the certificant must provide a description of the offering and the CE certificate. Candidates who use NCC CE do not have to upload these items since NCC has our CE information on file. Candidates who use all NCC CE for maintenance are not audited since the descriptions and CE certificates are in their file. For maintenance audits, 12,739 applications were maintained using all NCC CE which do not require an audit. Of the remaining applications 494 were randomly selected for audit with a 94% approval rate. All candidates who let their certification lapse can reinstate their certification within 12 months of their maintenance due date. 915 reinstatement applications were submitted with 598 candidates using all NCC CE. All remaining applications were audited and all were approved. The alternate maintenance options is used by some who do not want to take a self-assessment. It requires CE across every core area and all applications are audited. 104 alternate maintenance applications were submitted in 2020. All NCC CE was used in 50 of

these applications which does not require audit. All other applications where audited and 99% where approved.

**Continuing Competency Initiative** – Over 203,000 have participated in this innovative program since 2010. The use of assessment and the development of an individualized educational plan is a strong approach to certification maintenance. The use of a continued competency assessment with a focus on core areas has demonstrated a continued decrease need for CE over time. The initial assessments showed that 63% of those certified required 45 CE across all core areas to maintain. This has dropped to 42% (a decrease of 39%). Ten percent of certificants only require 15 CE. Currently, less than 1% are taking alternate maintenance. NCC provided a free CE module in 2020 on COVID 19 that was completed by over 24,000 licensed professionals. A new 2021 COVID 19 module for maternal and neonatal health is now posted and free to all providers.

**Alternative Certification Program (ACP)** – NCC launched the ACP program in 2016. This program was designed for APRNs who hold graduate degrees in the role and population but are not within the 8-year rule from graduation to sit for the examination. We had 10 apply in 2020 and a total of 48 have passed the program since starting it in 2016. (Seven NNPs and 41 WHNPs). Of those not qualifying for the program, this is usually due to lack of a graduate degree or graduation from a program not approved by NCC at any time in the past.

**PR Outreach to the Public** –NCC spent 2019 working on the campaign “Trained to be Different” in a partnership with the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board. This new public service announcement (PSA) was launched in 2020 and showcases the skills and roles of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners and Pediatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioners to the general public, employers and institutions. NCC provided the budget for creative, filming and editing and this will be launched in 2020. There have been over 6,722 broadcasts and can also be seen in airports with over 5.4 million impressions. NCC will be working on a PSA for NIC and LRN certifications to launch in 2022.

**APRN Advocacy Efforts** continue with NCC’s ongoing participation in activities to promote the Consensus Model to achieve congruity between education, accreditation, certification, and licensure of nurse practitioners. NCC has representatives at the National Council of state Boards of Nurse Round table, the

national LACE initiative, the NONPF meeting and participated in the committee to develop common APRN Doctoral level competencies. NCC is involved with advocacy for legislative bills being submitted across the US regarding certification. In addition, NCC worked with NANN/NANNP on a workforce salary survey for NNPs and the executive summary should be out in 2021.

NCC is a member of the Professional Certification Coalition. This organization addresses efforts to enact state legislation that would undermine the activities or recognition of certifications developed or offered by non-governmental, private certification organizations. Recent occupational licensing reform legislation considered in various states has alerted private certification organizations to significant threats to their activities in including protection of the term “certified” or “registered” and the establishment of governmental certification programs in place of private certification programs. They monitor for any barriers to state professional licensure laws recognizing or requiring certifications from private organizations. The organization has been successful in educating legislators about the value of private certifications and achieving modifications to potential legislation to protect the value and use of private certification.

NCC is working with NPWH (initiative leader) and other nursing organizations working in women’s, maternal, and child health, to develop an action plan for nursing education, research, practice, and policy regarding the intersection of women’s and maternal child health and the environment. This work will begin in 2021.

**NCC Bulletin** – NCC moved to Bulletin Health Care in 2020 with a weekly Bulletin the provides links to top issues impacting the health of mothers and babies. This practice resource has been received positively by the constituents and helps to provide up-to-date information. This resource is provided free to you weekly and highlights hot topics in Obstetrics, Gynecology, Neonatology and Women’s Health.

**Special Projects** –NCC has begun work on its third publication “Neurological Care of the Neonate”. NCC hopes to launch the book in 2022. NCC has two current books, “Neonatal Imaging book” and “Golden Hours: Care of the Very Low Birth Weight Infant, “which is in its second edition. The current publications can be purchased on Amazon and both have CE available on the NCC website. These

books are teaching resource for all providers in the NICU. Some institutions are purchasing the Golden Hours book and CE and adding it to the NRP requirements to improve care to this very special population of babies. The book is also being used as a resource for the ELBW examination.

Three websites are available by NCC and provide free resources and opportunities. These include:

- EFM Toolkit website: [ncc-efm.org](http://ncc-efm.org)
- Quality and Safety.org website: [ncc-qualityandsafety.org](http://ncc-qualityandsafety.org)
- Neonatal Educational Resources: [NeonatalEducationalResources.org/](http://NeonatalEducationalResources.org/)

The EFM toolkit has a free EFM tracings game to test your knowledge. Over 688,000 tracings have been played by over 55,000 health care professionals including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, physician assistants and registered nurses. NCC has also launch the new 2021 EFM monograph “Fetal Assessment and Safe Labor Management”.

### **Work of the NCC** – Some of other updates and activities to watch for

- **Verifications**- Over 20,000 maintenance verifications were done by individuals, state boards and employers in 2020. The majority of these were for looking up and downloading a certification verification.
- **New exams**- NCC is currently working on a Antepartum exam with the hopes to launch the exam in the fall of 2021. The Obstetric and Neonatal Quality and Safety exam standard setting was completed in August of 2020. To date over 598 candidates are registered and 449 have tested with an 84% pass rate. NCC is always looking for volunteers to help with these new exams.
- **Institutional Payment Programs**- NCC continues to offer institutional programs that offer a fee discount and or a “second chance free” promotion for their staff based on total numbers of bulk purchases. The exams are offered by computer using either computer test centers or live remote proctoring. NCC works with institutions to set up computers for testing at the hospital as well. This will be launched in 2021.
- **Certification Review Courses**: Certification programs who guarantee 500 NCC Certification exam registrations a year can provide a discount fee or “second chance free” promotion to those who take their review program. This will be launched in 2021. NCC does not endorse any review programs and has no input into any certification preparation endeavor. Candidates

should carefully review any certification preparation opportunities before participating.

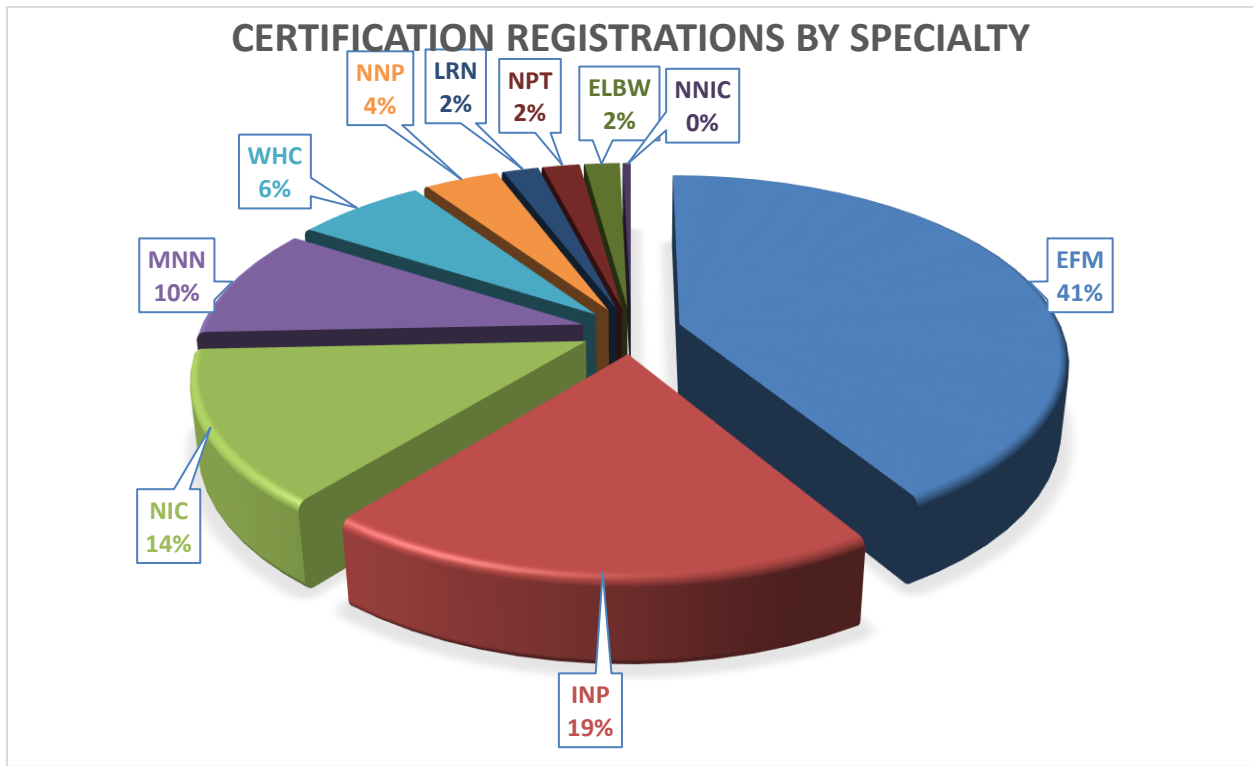
- **LIVE Remote Proctoring**- NCC completed a national study with computer testing comparing remote proctoring to test center testing. 892 candidates took the EFM exam using LRP during the 2-month study trial. The results were compared to 555 test center candidates up until the test centers closed. (Retrospective/prospective comparison). There was no significant difference in the mean, standard deviation, Standard error of the mean or passing scores. No differential item function (DIF) was found using Chi square analysis showing  $\chi^2=0.000$ ,  $p=0.995$ ,  $df=1$ . The  $\chi^2$  for items was 0.001 or 0.001. Post surveys of exam experience showed that 93% who selected LRP to the exam at home. Although LRP candidates appeared somewhat less satisfied overall (84% compared to 98% for test centers) perhaps due to technical issues, almost all would select that modality of testing again. Statistical analysis suggests that outcomes in either proctoring modality do not differ; and candidate satisfaction with the process appears to be similar in most respects. Based on these findings, all accredited NCC certifications were offered by remote proctoring or at a computer test center since April of 2020. Remote proctoring was used by 25% of candidates. Most candidates still choose computer test centers (69%) with the remaining taking exams by paper. Paper/pencil exams were discontinued in 2021. NCC has submitted compliance reports to NCCA for all remote proctoring exams.
- **Free CE**- Over 5,938 hours of CE was provided for free in 2019 to certificants who took Pretests. Pretest are provided to certified professional in their certification. The pretest program provides an opportunity for you to assist NCC in testing newly developed questions and earn CE for free. Certificants currently certified by NCC in a core or subspecialty certification are provided with 50 questions to answer. Questions can cover one topic area or multiple areas and completion provide the certificant with 1 CE to apply to maintenance. Certificants can earn up to 5 CE a year completing pretests.
- **National CE**- NCC CE modules are low-cost CE for all health care providers working in the perinatal/neonatal field. CE is often required for on-going nursing licensure and not everyone can travel to conferences to meet their CE needs. NCC offers the available CE modules to everyone in the perinatal/neonatal/women's health field and it does not require

certification to obtain CE from NCC. Over 94,000 modules were sold in 2020.

- **National Volunteer Committee**- NCC is always looking for new volunteers for the National Volunteer Committee. Individuals take a short item writing course to be part of the National Volunteer group. This item writing course is on-line and taken at your own pace. It provides CE once completed. Once the item writing course is completed certificants can be asked to join the item writing team. When NCC has projects, job analysis, standard setting or content team needs, individuals from the National volunteer group are asked to participate. It is a great opportunity to get involved nationally. To submit your interest, visit <https://www.nccwebsite.org/faculty-students-state-boards-volunteers/volunteer-opportunities>
- **NCC-E**: 152 certificants placed their certification on Emeritus status in 2020. In-line with the 2019 numbers. Emeritus is a one-time fee for life and recognizes your commitment to certification after retirement. It holds the credential of NCC-E.
- **New Test Grids and Exams**- NCC completed national job analysis surveys for all its certifications in 2019. Twenty-two new exams went live in 2020 based on the new grids. Old exams were retired.
- **Pretests and Preview Tests**: NCC offers Preview tests for those who are considering an NCC certification. NCC also has a pretest program for free CE to all NCC Certified professionals. A pretest consists of 50 questions being pretested for exams and provide 1 CE to the certified professional that is applied to maintenance. Information on pretest can be found under the “Continuing Education” tab on the website.

**ACCREDITATION**: NCC is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC). The NCCA Commission/Council made the decision to accredit all 8 of NCC’s certification programs for another 5-year period. This was a huge honor and accomplishment. NCC has submitted the “Care of the Extremely Low Birth Weight Neonate” exam to NCCA for accreditation and will be submitting Obstetric and Neonatal Quality and Safety this spring. NCC received approval from ABSNC to provide the NNP and the WHNP certification exam using live remote proctoring. The full ABSNC accreditation is due in 2021 on these two exams.

# 2020 EXAM REGISTRATION

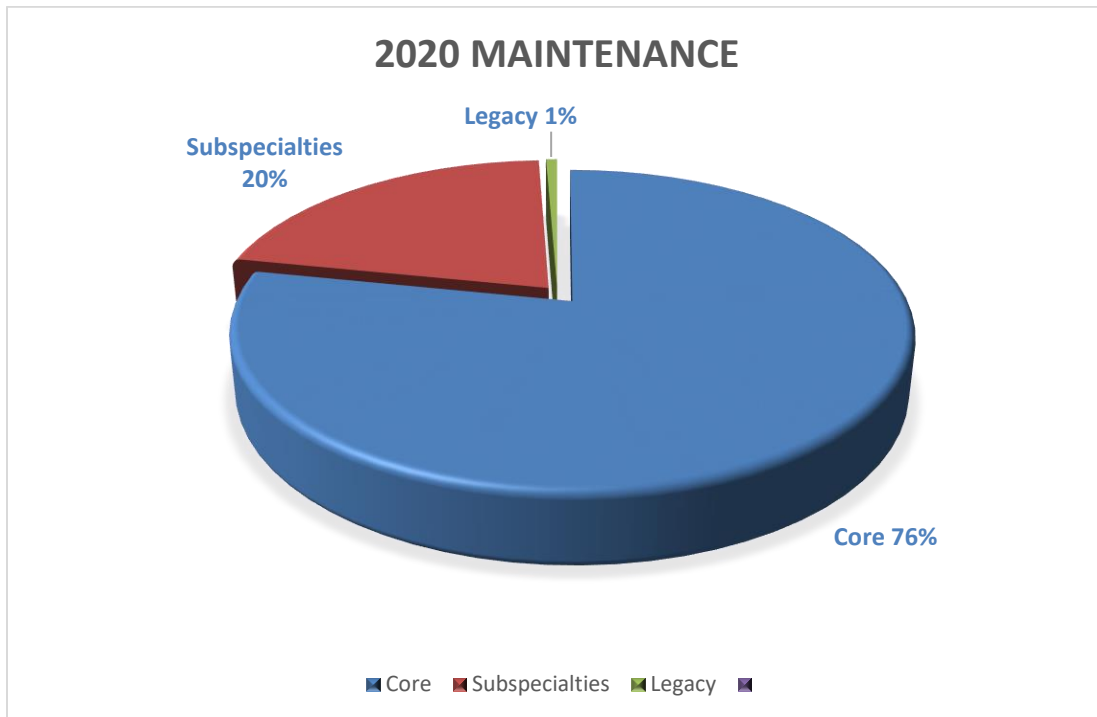


EFM	Electronic Fetal Monitoring
ELBW	Care of the Extremely Low Birth Weight Infant
INP	Inpatient Obstetric Nursing
NIC	Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing
MN	Maternal Newborn Nursing
WHNP	Women's Health Care Nurse Practitioner
LRN	Low Risk Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing
NNP	Neonatal Nurse Practitioner
NPT	Neonatal Pediatric Transport
NNIC	Neonatal Neuro-Intensive Care

**Total Participation 11,344 with an overall 85% pass rate.**



# 2020 MAINTENANCE

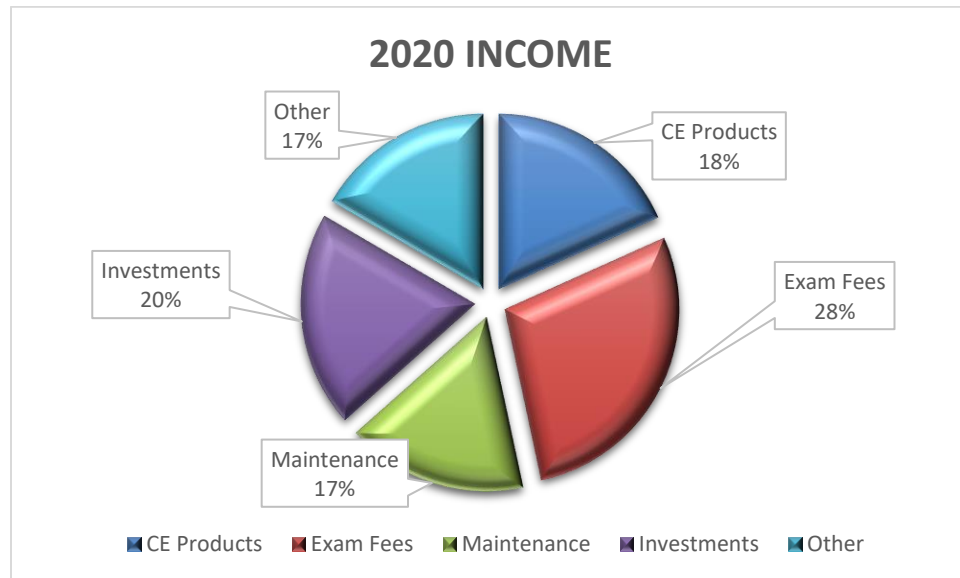


**Total Participation: 25,757**

- Core Maintenance – Maintenance of those holding an RNC or NP credential.
- Subspecialty Maintenance – Maintenance of those holding the current subspecialty certificates of added qualifications in Electronic Fetal Monitoring and Neonatal-Pediatric Transport. There are also legacy holders for those credentials as well.
- Legacy – This includes the legacy exams which are no longer currently offered.

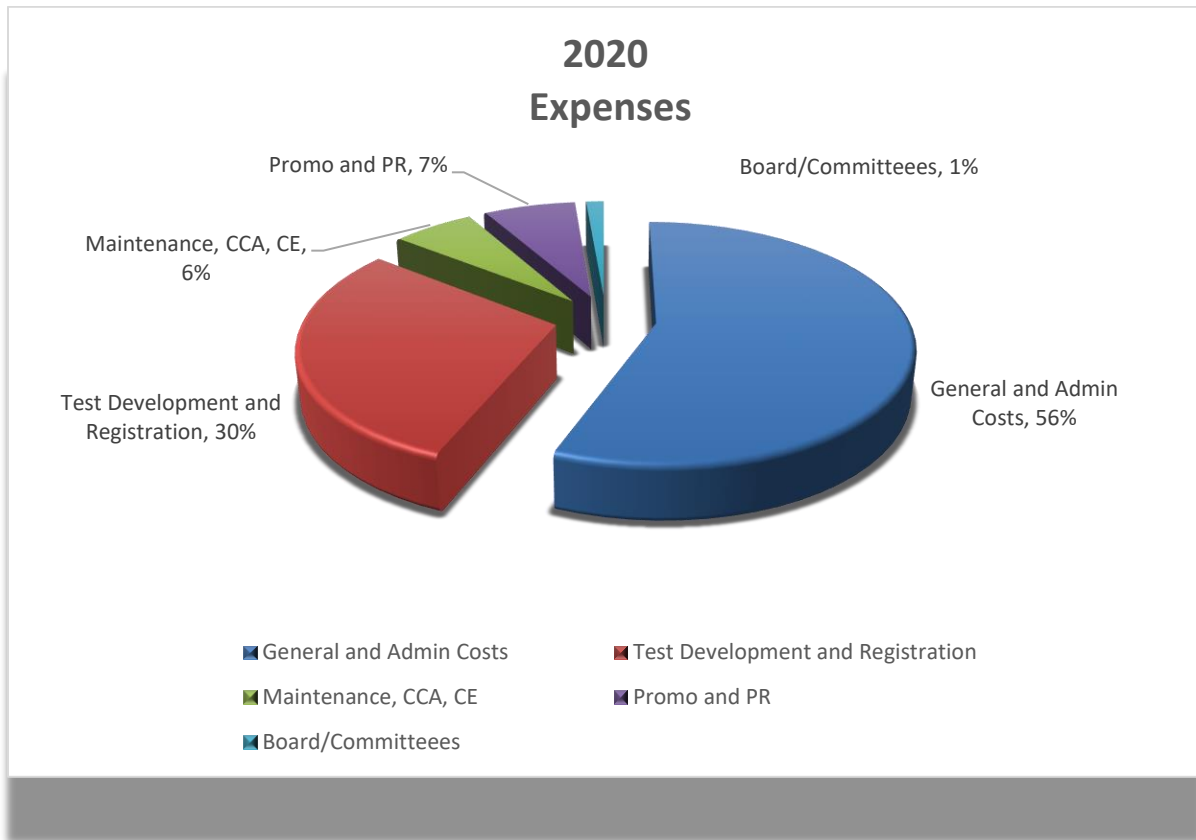
***Reinstatement – Allows individuals, whose certifications have lapsed, to come back into the system without retesting. This is time limited, within 1 year of the original maintenance due date. 933 Certificates reinstated in 2020. (3.5% of all those who maintained)***

## 2020 INCOME



- Exam Fees: 28 %: Exam fees from all programs, computer, ICP, PEC
- Maintenance Fees: 17 %: Maintenance, reinstatement, extensions, deferrals and preapproval fees
- CE Products: 18%: Sales from CE modules
- Investments and Interest: 20%
- Other Fees: 17%: Certification verification fees, branded merchandise website, recognition certificates, pins & plaques, and other miscellaneous fees

# 2020 EXPENSES



- Board/Committees: 1%: Meetings, activities of the board, committees, and representation on allied organizations
- Test Development/ Registration & Administration: 30%: Test development and administration costs for all NCC exams in all modes (Computer, ICP, PEC, paper/pencil).
- General Operations & Admin 56%: Staff personnel, office equipment, fees, Video and conferencing, website management, updates and development and contract payments, rental and all office operations via contract with HAB Associates, Inc
- Maintenance/CCI/Modules: 6%: CCI platform and evaluation of data
- Promo & PR: 7%: promotional activities, toolkits for certified nurse’s week, press releases, PSA’s such as “Trained to be Different” and promotional items.