Update from NCCPA:
*It’s Not Just About PANRE*

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Director of External Relations
• About NCCPA
• The Latest on PANRE
• The Certification Maintenance Process
  - Focus on Recent Changes to CME Requirements
• Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQ)
• NCCPA Celebrates the PA Profession
Brief Overview of NCCPA
To provide certification programs that reflect standards for clinical knowledge, clinical reasoning and other medical skills and professional behaviors required upon entry into practice and throughout the careers of physician assistants.
Our Mission is More than Creating Exams

NCCPA is committed to helping maximize the safe, productive, and competent practice of medicine by certified PAs.
• Only national certifying body for PAs
• Certifying PAs since 1975
• Passionate about PAs and the patients you serve
  - Rely on PA practice data to inform our certification programs
  - Publish statistical reports to inform employers, policy makers, the media, patients and others
  - Promote qualifications and roles of certified PAs to various audiences (physicians, employers, state medical boards, public, etc.)
  - Engage in significant communications/PR efforts on your behalf: www.PAsDoThat.net
2017 Board of Directors:

Current Composition

11 PAs, 4 physicians and 2 public members

**PA Members**

- 6 PA Directors-at-Large
- 1 nominee from AAPA
- 1 nominee from PAEA
- 1 nominee from FSMB
- Immediate past chair
- President/CEO

**Physician & Public Members**

- 1 nominee from AMA
- 1 nominee from AOA
- 1 nominee from ACP
- 1 nominee from AAP
- 2 public members

But that’s only part of the story...
PA Involvement with NCCPA Adds Up

- **51** PA item writers serve on *item writing committees*, writing questions that appear on PANCE, PANRE and the CAQ exams

- **59** PAs spent three days with us working to identify content that represents *core medical knowledge*

- **15** PAs serve on *promotion and publicity councils*, supporting our efforts to generate story ideas and press coverage for the profession

- In 2016, NCCPA hosted **58 PA team meetings** to develop and validate exam questions, set passing standards
• 72 PAs served on 2015 **Practice Analysis workgroups**, helping identify the knowledge, skills and abilities that were included on that survey

• Approximately **16,000** PAs responded to the **Practice Analysis survey**

• **Over 100,000** PAs have completed the **PA Professional Profile**

• In 2016, **55** PAs participated in a 3-day **focus group** to talk about PANRE

• More than **30,000** participated in nationwide survey of all certified PAs about proposed new PANRE model
The Latest on PANRE
It is critical to our mission to provide a certification/recertification program that is:

- Meaningful and relevant; and
- Provides assurance for patients, employers, state licensing boards, and others regarding PAs’ knowledge and skills.

To do this, we must continuously monitor and evolve the certification process because things change:

- Advances in technology
- Rapid changes in medicine
- Changes in the PA profession
Our Underpinning Principles

1. The first concern must be the public’s interest as we work to determine how we most effectively can deliver a recertification exam process that supports delivery of high quality, affordable, accessible health care.

2. To support the flexibility PAs have to change specialties during their career span and to work in multiple specialties concurrently, it is important to maintain the generalist nature of the PA-C credential.
Other Beliefs that Have Driven Our Re-Evaluation of PANRE

• While ultimately NCCPA’s responsibility, we make better decisions about changes to PANRE with the benefit of input from PAs and other stakeholders.

• While individuals often view issues from their personal perspective, organizations are able to view issues from a more global perspective.

• We must continually re-examine the content and format of our exams while recognizing that change takes several years.

• Health care providers should be held to high standards for maintaining current knowledge and skills.
To make a well informed decision, NCCPA:
  • Conducted research
  • Held focus groups
  • Elicited feedback from several key stakeholder groups
Key Messages from the Public Comment Period

- PAs were very concerned about maintaining their ability to change specialties and did not want to see that threatened.
- PAs were very concerned about the cost and time required to maintain certification (CME and exam requirements).
- If they must take an exam, PAs would prefer one that is more relevant to their practice than today’s PANRE.
- Exams matter to the public, employers and to state medical boards.
Key Messages from the Public Comment Period

Public survey developed with the Citizens Advocacy Center:

Should all PAs be tested on general medical knowledge?

- 97% say “YES”

How should PAs maintain their certification?

- 7% No additional requirements
- 18% CME
- 12% Exam
- 63% CME & Exam
Decisions to Date

- **Decided in 2016,** PANRE content will shift from “General Knowledge” to “Core Knowledge,’’ gradually but steadily over the next several years.

- **Decided in May 2017,** NCCPA will pilot alternatives to the high stakes recertification exam no later than 2020.
Working Definition of Core Medical Knowledge

...the essential, foundational knowledge and cognitive skills required for PAs to provide safe and effective care for patients across the lifespan and across the spectrum of medicine, regardless of the specialty or area of practice.
PA Involvement in Exam Development Process
Certification is a Community Process

- We could not do this without PA participation
- Volunteering can be as short as an ad hoc meeting (2-3 days) to as often as an item writing committee (ongoing, multiple meetings yearly)
- If you’re interested in volunteering, please email volunteer@nccpa.net
Getting Ready to take PANRE?

• Review the Exam Blueprint
• Familiarize yourself with the types of questions you’ll see on the exam with NCCPA Practice Exams

  - 120 questions taken from NCCPA test question banks
  - Can pause and complete exam at later time
  - $50
Certification Maintenance Process
Certification Maintenance Process

- 100 CME credits every two years
  - 50 Category 1 credits
  - Self-assessment CME and PI-CME are now optional
- PANRE every 10 years
NCCPA heard concerns from PAs about the burdens of the certification maintenance process.

Conducted an in-depth review of existing SA/PI activities with particular emphasis on the gaps in availability of practice-relevant options for so many PAs.

- Found inadequate coverage of self-assessment in 31 specialty areas and of PI-CME in 13 specialty areas.
- That means we ran the risk of PAs pursuing CME activities with little or no relevance for them just to meet this NCCPA requirement – never what we intended.
• All approved self-assessment CME activities will be awarded 50% bonus credits by NCCPA

• In each 2-year CME cycle, the first 20 PI-CME credits logged will be doubled

• The weighting is applied by NCCPA

• Weighting will apply to all PAs – whether on the 6-year cycle or the 10-year cycle
Finding Self-Assessment and PI-CME

• Lists of approved self-assessment and PI-CME activities now available on our website.
  - Organized by specialty with details on the number of credits offered and cost.

• To access that list: http://www.nccpa.net/finding-sa-and-pi-cme

• Navigate there through the “Maintain Certification” link at the top of our home page
SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY I CME

FINDING APPROVED PI-CME AND SELF-ASSESSMENT CME ACTIVITIES

Some PI-CME and Self-Assessment CME activities are relevant to all certified PAs (particularly those preparing for PANRE), and others are specialty related. Use the links below to browse the lists that seem most relevant for your area of practice.

Important Note: NCCPA does not endorse any particular CME programs. Inclusion of programs on the lists on the pages below or the order of their appearance within those lists should not be construed as an endorsement by NCCPA.

Activities Relevant to All Certified PAs

Additional Activities by Specialty:

Adolescent Medicine

Critical Care

Emergency Medicine

Anesthesiology

Dermatology

Family Medicine
Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQ)
• PA-C is the **primary credential for all PAs**, giving PAs the credibility and flexibility to change specialties.

• The CAQ program is **voluntary** and well suited for PAs committed to a particular specialty.

• The program has been developed to be **inclusive**, recognizing differences among and within specialties.

• The CAQ is an **added** credential that does not replace the PA-C, hence the name.
What Specialties?

- Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery
- Emergency Medicine
- Hospital Medicine
- Nephrology
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
CAQ Process

1. **Prerequisites:**
   - License
   - PA-C

2. **CME Experience Cases and/or Procedures**

3. **Pass Specialty Exam**

6 years to complete
CAQ Exams

• 120 questions targeted to certified PAs working in the specialty
• 2-hour exam
• Specialty exams are administered nationwide during 2 time windows at Pearson VUE testing centers.
• Cost $250 plus a $100 administrative fee paid when you start the CAQ process
CAQ Exams

- Content blueprints developed using data from practice analysis
  - Identifies set of knowledge, skills and abilities used by PAs in the specialty
  - Available online
- Test committees include PAs and physicians working in the specialty
- Other resources available online
  - Disease and disorder lists
  - Sample test items
  - Practice exam

To view the content blueprint, disease and disorder list, sample items and practice exam, visit www.nccpa.net
1,182 CAQs have been awarded 2011 - 2016

- 644 in emergency medicine
- 205 in psychiatry
- 130 in orthopaedic surgery
- 91 in hospital medicine
- 46 in CVTS
- 45 in pediatrics
- 21 in nephrology
NCCPA Celebrates the PA Profession
Telling the World about Certified PAs

- Ongoing effort to publish articles and garner positive media attention for Certified PAs
- Online hub: www.PAsDoThat.net
Help Spread the Word!

- **Share articles** on social media with **#PAsDoThat**
- **Share and retweet** ours and others’ posts with **#PAsDoThat**
- **Use tools available in the Resources section of the NCCPA website**
  - Presentations
  - Press releases
  - Fliers
  - Videos
  - Articles
Connecting with Employers

- Search hundreds of jobs for Certified PAs
- Upload your résumé
- Set up alerts for new jobs

Click “Career Center” Link at www.nccpa.net
PA-C Emeritus

New recognition for PAs retiring from clinical practice

Eligibility requirements:
- At least 60 years old or unable to practice due to permanent disability
- Retired from clinical practice
- Have been NCCPA-certified at least 20 cumulative years during the PA career
- No reportable actions in NCCPA disciplinary history

Proceeds from the one-time $50 application fee will benefit the PA Foundation to expand the NCCPA Endowed Scholarship awarded to PA students
• Mission: to advance the role of certified PAs in improving health.
• Launched initiatives in health equity, oral health and mental health, including videos and educational tools
• Grants are available for PAs making a difference in their community
• 22 grants issued last year
• For more information, visit www.nccpa.net/foundationpage
The PA History Society shares the history of the development of the PA profession and illustrates how PAs continue to make a difference in our society.
For more information, visit www.pahx.org
For More Information from NCCPA

- Read *NCCPA News*, our monthly e-newsletter
- Visit [www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net)
- Follow us on [social media](http://www.nccpa.net)
Thank you!

Contact: gregt@nccpa.net