



Direct Care RNs with Specialty Certifications in Acute Care Hospitals

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PURPOSE

The nursing profession's efforts to improve healthcare quality have resulted in rapid growth in the number of specialty certifications and certified nurses. Our purpose is to provide a current description of direct care RNs with specialty certifications in acute care hospitals in the United States:

- Characteristics of hospitals and units where certified RNs work
- Characteristics and job plans of certified RNs
- Specialty certifications held

METHODS

- Cross-sectional descriptive design using data from the web-based 2009 NDNQI RN Survey.
- RN inclusion criteria:
 - Full or part-time, regardless of job title
 - ≥ 50% of time in direct patient care
 - Employed ≥3 months on unit or workgroup

RESULTS

18 Certifying Organizations Listed in Survey	% of Certifications Checked
American Association of Critical Care Nurses Cert Corp.	25.3%
National Certification Corporation for the Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing Specialties	14.8%
American Nurses Credentialing Center	13.3%
Certification Board of Perioperative Nurses	9.8%
Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation	9.0%
Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing	7.3%
Pediatric Nursing Certification Board	4.8%
American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification	3.9%
Orthopaedic Nurses Certification Board	1.7%
Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board	1.7%
Wound, Ostomy, Continence Nursing Certification Board	1.5%
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program	1.5%
American Board of Neuroscience Nursing	1.4%
American Board of Certification of Gastroenterology Nurses	1.2%
Council on Certification of Nurse Anesthetists	1.0%
Infusion Nurses Certification Corporation	0.9%
National Board Certification of Hospice & Palliative Nurses	0.6%
American Midwifery Certification Board	0.2%



Top Ten Specialty Certifications Held

	% of RNs Who Checked Certification Listed
Certified Critical Care RN (CCRN)	23%
Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR)	10%
Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN)	9%
Inpatient Obstetric Nursing (RNC)	8%
Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN)	7%
Medical-Surgical Nurse (RN-BC)	6%
Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN)	5%
Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing (RNC)	5%
Progressive Care Certified Nurse (PCCN)	3%
Certified Post Anesthesia Nurse (CPAN)	3%

MEASURES AND SAMPLE

RNs in 770 U.S. hospitals responding to survey: 270,423 (65% Response Rate)

Do you currently hold any of the following active credentials?

Nursing specialty certification awarded by a national nursing association (e.g., CCRN, CEN, CNOR, CRNA)?

RNs who checked YES: 53,588 (19.8%)

RNs who checked NO: 212,458 (78.6%)

The following is available only to RNs checking Yes:

For each national nursing specialty certification you currently hold, check the certifying organization from the list below, and then check your active certifications from the list that will appear:

RNs who checked specialty certification listed: 37,579 (13.9%)

Last item in list:

Other (type in certifications not listed):

RNs who typed in a certification listed: 1,083 (0.4%)

RNs who typed in a certification not listed: 7,348 (2.7%)

Non-respondents:

RNs who did not check or type in any certification: 7,578 (2.8%)

64 specialty certifications from 18 organizations meeting criteria:

▪ Granted by a national nursing organization

▪ Limited to RNs

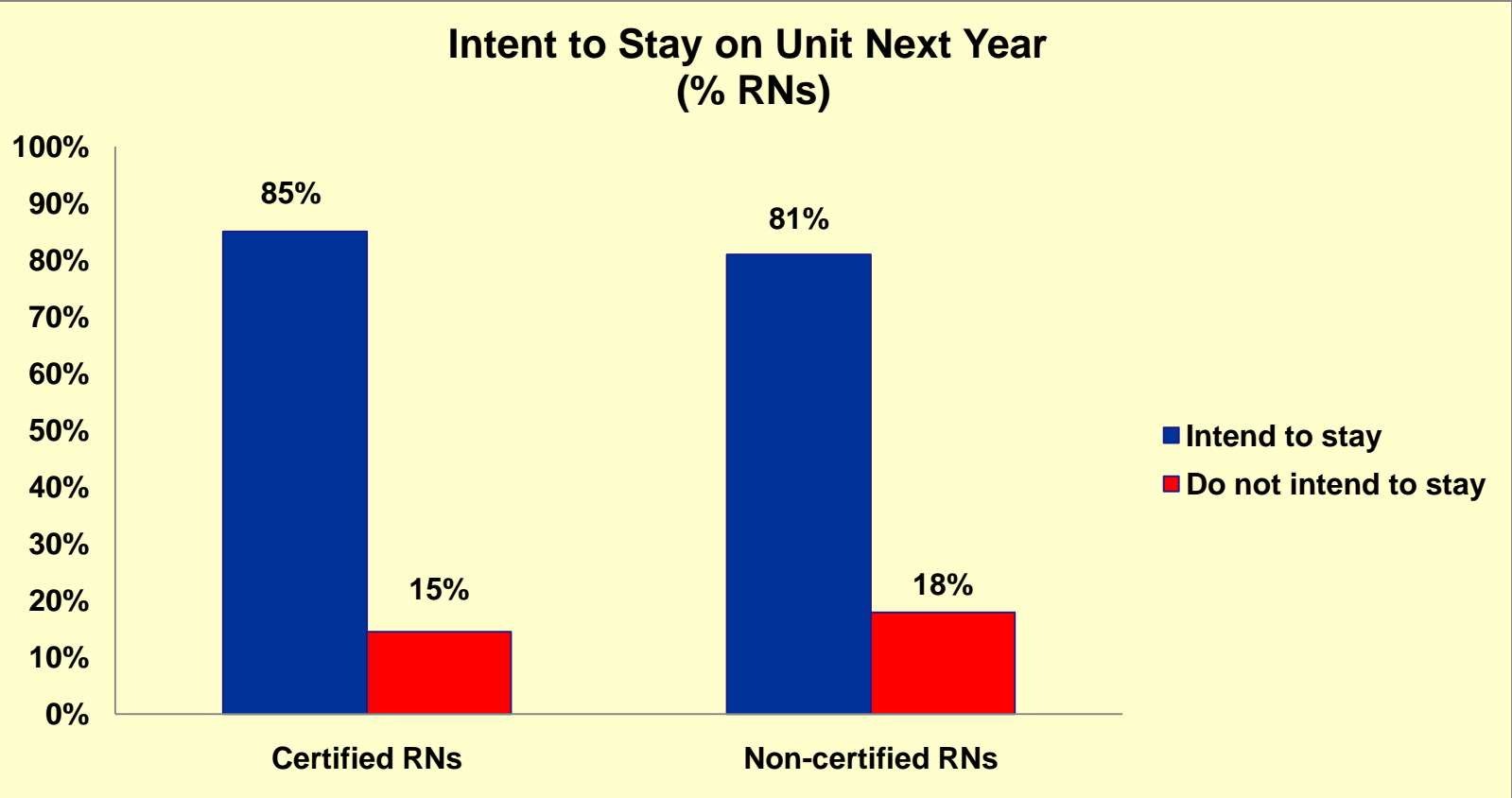
▪ Relevant to provision of direct patient care in an acute care setting

▪ Accredited by National Commission for Certifying Agencies or Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification

RN Characteristics	Certified	Not Certified
Age (mean)	46 years	41 years
Years as RN (mean)	20 years	13 years
% White/Non-Hispanic	80%	75%
% BSN or higher	64%	53%
% APRN license	6.7%	0.6%

Hospital Characteristics	% RNs Certified
Academic Medical Center/Teaching Hospitals =>400 beds	20.8%
Magnet® Designated Hospitals	20.6%
All Hospitals in Survey	22.8%
	19.8%

Unit type	% of All Certified RNs	% of Unit Type RNs Who are Certified
Critical Care/ Step Down	17.0%	19.0%
Peri-Operative	15.4%	25.4%
Obstetrics/Neonate	14.4%	22.0%
Medical/Surgical	14.3%	12.9%
Other units groups	10.9%	25.8%
Emergency Depart	7.4%	20.0%
Interventional Units	6.8%	21.7%
Ambulatory Care	5.7%	29.3%
Pediatrics	4.4%	21.1%
Psychiatry	2.2%	18.4%
Rehabilitation	1.5%	23.9%



CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS

Certified RNs have more years of experience than non-certified RNs, are more likely to work in Magnet recognized hospitals, and in academic medical centers. Research is needed to explore the impact of certified RNs.

Research conducted under contract to the American Nurses Association

