

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE

Finding a Supportive Practice Environment

**MAGNET  
RECOGNITION®**



**PATHWAY TO  
EXCELLENCE®**



**CERTIFICATION**



**ACCREDITATION**

NURSING CONTINUING  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICE TRANSITION  
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM®



**ANCC Supports You Throughout Your Career**



## FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH CARE EXCELLENCE



Foster Interprofessional Collaboration  
Empower Engagement  
Sustain a Culture of Excellence  
Advance Professional Care

## ANCC Supports You Throughout Your Career

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) is a recognized and well-trusted leader in nurse credentialing for both organizations and individuals. Whether you are looking to advance your nursing career at your current organization or seeking a new opportunity, ANCC has the resources to help you throughout your professional journey.

- ▶ Certification engages nurses in lifelong learning and inspires confidence while giving the first impression employers seek
- ▶ Accreditation for nurse residency and fellowship programs to support a seamless transition-to-practice
- ▶ Importance of engaging in accredited nursing professional continuing development that is evidence-based
- ▶ Standards to help organizations foster higher job satisfaction, employee engagement, and better patient outcomes
- ▶ Support for health care organizations to achieve nursing excellence, professionalism, safety, patient care, and positive outcomes

Where you choose to learn, study, and practice can help boost your career prospects and job satisfaction. Finding the right match is an important step, no matter where you are in your career.

**Choose organizations that have been recognized by ANCC, the trusted authority and gold standard in nursing credentialing.**



# Accreditation

The ANCC Accreditation Program recognizes the importance of high-quality nursing continuing professional development, interprofessional continuing education, and transition-to-practice programs. Around the world, ANCC-accredited organizations provide nurses with the knowledge and skills to help improve care and patient outcomes.



## Practice Transition Accreditation Program® (PTAP)

Why is accreditation important when considering a nursing residency or fellowship program? PTAP accreditation ensures several hallmarks, including a high-quality transition program that meets international standards of excellence, a significant organizational commitment to professional development, and program engagement in continuous quality improvement through re-accreditation processes. If an organization does not have an accredited program, it is important to still consider whether key elements of transition support are in place.

PTAP accreditation ensures that nurse residency and fellowship programs meet or exceed set standards for quality content, faculty experience, evidence-based practices, program satisfaction, and improved outcomes.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK ON YOUR INTERVIEW



**Is the nurse residency program accredited?**

### RATIONALE

Organizations should be committed to ensuring programs for transitioning from student to registered nurses meet a set of evidence-based standards.



**What are the goals of the nurse residency/fellowship program?**

### RATIONALE

A program with clear goals helps you identify what you will gain from experiencing this program.



**How much time will I spend with a preceptor during my unit orientation? How are preceptors matched?**

### RATIONALE

One-on-one time with a preceptor helps you solidify a nurse's knowledge, skills, and abilities.



**What sets your nurse residency program apart from others?**

### RATIONALE

Each program is unique. Knowing how the program is different will help you identify if the organization is the right fit.

**“PTAP Accreditation goes beyond the initial clinical orientation and allows nurses to really focus on their own professional development. PTAP accreditation is a distinguished honor and the greatest source of recognition for residency programs.”**

MARY ROSE PAPCIAK, MPA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, PROFESSIONAL NURSING  
PRACTICE INNOVATION AND PTAP  
NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL



## Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD) Accreditation

The ANCC NCPD Accreditation program recognizes national and international organizations that provide ANCC-accredited professional development. Accreditation in NCPD demonstrates an organization's commitment to the growth and development of its nursing workforce. NCPD Accreditation by the ANCC shows that the organization's professional development programming adheres to evidence-based standards that challenge it to continually improve and advance the professional practice of nurses to achieve performance, as well as patient and system goals.

**“So often we educate, but do not get to see the impact of how it is changing practice, improving patient outcomes and enhancing staff knowledge. The ANCC NCPD accreditation framework sets the criteria to ensure outcomes can be achieved and that learning has taken place in the clinical environment.”**

ANTOINETTE ROBHEMED, MSC, BSN, RN  
PROGRAM MANAGER, CONTINUING EDUCATION & SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION  
CLEVELAND CLINIC ABU DHABI

## QUESTIONS TO ASK ON YOUR INTERVIEW

**Q** How do the mission, vision, and values of the organization align with the growth and development of its nurses/other members of the health care team?

### RATIONALE

Organizations should be committed to providing NCPD that is aligned with its strategic goals and demonstrating how NCPD impacts those goals.

**Q** How is learning and professional development supported and recognized within the organization?

### RATIONALE

Organizations should create opportunities in which NCPD is encouraged and professional development goals are set.

**Q** How does the organization support the growth and development of the nurse through learning and professional development?

### RATIONALE

Each organization should fully support and embrace the growth of its workforce beyond financial assistance. It should have opportunities whereby learning is fully integrated into professional practice and aligned with the achievement of individual, team, departmental, and organizational goals and patient outcomes.

**Q** What formal or informal professional development systems exist in the organization for transitioning into different roles (e.g., leadership or specialty practice)?

### RATIONALE

Organizations should have identified career pathways for growth and development and be able to support initiatives that build each nurse's professional portfolio.

# Certification

You're already a great nurse, so what's the next step? Nurse certification validates your skills, underscores your specialty knowledge, and helps you take your career to the next level.



Whatever your practice level or desired specialty, ANCC certification is nationally recognized as the measure of a nurse's ability to provide competent care. By obtaining an ANCC certification, you demonstrate that you possess the knowledge and skills required for practice in a specialty area for registered nurses or entry into practice for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN).

Whether you are looking to achieve your first certification, ready to renew, or exploring new certifications, ANCC certification gives you the opportunity to advance your nursing career. Demonstrate your commitment to nursing with the most respected certifier in the profession.

Understanding whether a new employer supports nursing advancement and professional development through certification can help you determine if the organization aligns with your professional goals.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK ON YOUR INTERVIEW



**What are your nursing specialties?**

### RATIONALE

Showcases whether the organization has the appropriate population for your desired clinical setting.



**How does your organization support professional development and certification for nurses?**

### RATIONALE

Identifies whether the organization fosters evidence-based learning and values advancements in the nursing career.



**Is there a clinical ladder at your organization?**

### RATIONALE

Showcases shared governance and leadership support.



**When a nurse is hired into a department, is there an understanding of becoming certified and, if so, is a specific time period specified?**

### RATIONALE

Reflects open communication and clear guidelines while supporting advances in one's nursing career.

**"I chose ANCC because it's always been the gold standard for nurse credentialing."**

DR. SHANNON NICHOLSON,  
RN, DNP, FNP-BC, RNFA  
ANCC BOARD-CERTIFIED  
FAMILY NURSE  
PRACTITIONER

# Pathway to Excellence®

The ANCC Pathway to Excellence Program® (Pathway) recognizes a health care organization's commitment to creating a positive practice environment that empowers, engages, and safeguards the well-being of nurses. The Pathway designation underscores an organization's commitment to give nurses a voice and make them feel supported.



Pathway ensures that leaders, at both the organization and unit levels, foster nurses' participation in decision-making and in improving quality and safety.

Credentialed organizations "live" the Pathway standards and proactively safeguard clinician well-being so that Pathway nurses are more resilient, enjoy greater work-life effectiveness, have more collegial relationships, and are recognized for their work.

As a nurse at a Pathway organization, you will be part of a team that supports you throughout your nursing career.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK ON YOUR INTERVIEW

**Q** How does your organization support creating and sustaining a positive practice environment?

### RATIONALE

Reflects whether the organization fosters a collaborative atmosphere, the values the organization aspires to, how those values are implemented at the unit level, and leadership support of professional behaviors.

**Q** Can you provide examples of processes where frontline nurses' input is invited?

### RATIONALE

Reflects the organization's transparency and support of shared decision-making.

**Q** What are the biggest challenges your nurses face daily? How does the leadership team help them overcome these challenges?

### RATIONALE

Showcases leadership support of nurses.

**Q** What programs or support services does the organization have in place to support nurse well-being?

### RATIONALE

Reflects the organization's commitment to safeguarding clinician well-being.

**"A Pathway-designated facility means we have transformational leaders who inspire us and expect us to achieve astounding results. They encourage us to embrace change. When a new initiative is rolled out, our leaders are there to support us through the change process."**

ABIEYUWA AWANI, DNP, RN, HACCP  
VA NORTH TEXAS HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

Learn more about the ANCC Pathway to Excellence Program at [nursingworld.org/pathway](https://nursingworld.org/pathway)

# Magnet®

The Magnet Recognition Program® designates organizations worldwide where nursing leaders successfully align their strategic goals to improve the organization's patient outcomes. The Magnet Recognition Program provides a road map to nursing excellence, which benefits the whole of an organization and is the most prestigious distinction that a health care organization can achieve.



When you join a Magnet-recognized organization, you become part of a team that is committed to superior nursing processes and patient care, resulting in the highest levels of safety, quality, and satisfaction among nurses and patients alike. Magnet organizations embrace change and innovation and support advanced education and continuous professional development.

For nurses, Magnet recognition means education and development through every career stage, resulting in greater autonomy at the bedside. You'll work alongside and learn from the best of the best, with many opportunities to advance your career. To patients, Magnet recognition means the very best care, delivered by nurses who are supported to be the very best they can be.

Learn more about ANCC Magnet Recognition Program at [nursingworld.org/magnet](https://nursingworld.org/magnet)

## QUESTIONS TO ASK ON YOUR INTERVIEW

**Q** Does your organization have a shared decision-making structure?

### RATIONALE

Every nurse should have the ability to provide input and make decisions regarding practice standards, quality improvement, research, and professional development. The ability to contribute empowers the nurse and increases autonomy.

**Q** Does your organization have accredited continued professional development and ongoing education?

### RATIONALE

Nurses are lifelong learners and should have support and access to professional development and education.

**Q** How does your organization support nursing research? Do nurses have an opportunity to participate in nursing research?

### RATIONALE

Nursing research provides the scientific basis for practice of the profession (AACN, 2006,1).

**Q** How does your organization promote a culture of safety?

### RATIONALE

The ability to practice in a safe environment, free from physical and psychological violence and threats of incivility, is the right of every nurse.

**“Being a part of shared governance has really given me a sense of identity, and it makes me feel empowered as a bedside nurse. Shared governance gives me the opportunity to say something and actually make changes at the bedside.”**

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