



Newsletter

Winter 2008



Delivering *high quality* healthcare requires *highly qualified* people

In this issue

[New Business Model Heads List of Accomplishments for 2007](#)

[New Certification Program Expands AHA-CC Board](#)

[Casey to Help Define National Standards for Assessment-Based Certificate Programs](#)

[Special Administrations](#)

[Don't Get Lost](#)

[Check Yourself](#)

[AHA Certification Spans the Nation](#)

New Business Model Heads List of Accomplishments for 2007; Implementation Seen As Primary Task for 2008



Now each PMG is directly responsible for the success of its credential.

Wes Thiss, President, AHA-CC Board

Not only does the AHA Certification Center enter 2008 with an increase in the number of Programs it conducts, but also with a new business model for operation of the AHA-CC. According to Wes Thiss, president of the AHA-CC Board, the Board of Directors worked with the Personal Membership Groups (PMGs) who are its key stakeholders to develop the new model over the last eighteen months. "While retaining ownership of its intellectual property, the AHA-CC developed a model that allows the PMGs to market extensively their professional credentials and to 'have a say' in setting fees for Examinations, renewals and purchase of Self-Assessment Examinations (SAEs).

Each participating PMG pays a share of the AHA-CC expenses and receives all net revenue related to its professional credential. This is a major enhancement of the original business model. Now each PMG is directly responsible for the success of its credential," said Thiss. "Results of scholarship programs, renewals and SAEs now directly impact the bottom line of the PMG. Each PMG can see the results of its promotional efforts." (Participating PMGs are American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHE), American Society for Healthcare Environmental Services (ASHES), American Society for Healthcare Risk Management (ASHRM), Association for Healthcare Resource & Materials Management (AHRMM), and Association for Healthcare Volunteer Resource Professionals (AHVRP – formerly ASDVS).)

The new business model was not the only goal for the 2007 Board. Board members also worked "to do a better job of getting the word out to the C-Suite" about the importance of AHA Certification in today's work environment. Measuring the success of those efforts is difficult, said Thiss. "We do know that more and more HR directors are requesting info about AHA Certification Programs. We know that most jobs posted on AHA sites include an AHA credential as being desired or preferred for the job. We have seen an increase in the number of candidates for Examinations and the number of renewals; we expect this trend to continue."

"AHA Certification is the 'SAT' score for HR directors, giving them a tool for recognizing leaders who have already distinguished themselves in healthcare."

HR Directors and Administrative Directors of all disciplines understand that it is a win-win-win situation ...a win for the employee, a win for the hospital and a win for the patients who receive the benefits of an outstanding stay at facilities staffed by AHA Certified personnel. "We consider AHA Certifications critical components of recruitment and retention of qualified staff," said Thiss, who is director of Environmental Services for Bon Secours Health System in Richmond, Virginia.

"AHA Certification is the 'SAT' score for HR Directors, giving them a tool for recognizing leaders who have already distinguished themselves in healthcare."

Under the new business model, responsibility for promotion and marketing of the Certifications falls on the PMGs, "but the AHA-CC will continue to look for opportunities to inform hospital executives .We have a presence at the Health Forum Summit and all PMG national conferences. We are exploring other venues suggested by our stakeholders and the Board."

"Our major goal for 2008 is to provide quality Certification Programs for our newest partners as well as continuing to support our participating PMGs. Maintaining the impeccable reputation of the AHA-CC through operations that are efficient and effective is a driving force for 2008. 'Delivering high quality healthcare requires highly qualified people,' is our AHA-CC tag line and we will do whatever it takes to support it."

"The AHA-CC is finally in a place where long-term sustainability is insured. In 2008 the AHA-CC Board of Directors will deal with issues related to implementing the new business and governance models. We must ensure that all of the 'kinks' are out of the system, and that all of this occurs while we continue to provide the high quality AHA Certification Programs we promise to deliver," concluded Thiss.

Maintaining the impeccable reputation of the AHA-CC through operations that are efficient and effective is a driving force for 2008.

New Certification Program Expands AHA-CC Board



With the introduction of the new Certified Administrator of Volunteer Services (CAVS) Program to the roster of the AHA Certification Center, the AHA-CC has expanded its Board to include two representatives of the CAVS Program appointed by the Association for Healthcare Volunteer

Resource Professionals (AHVRP, an AHA Personal Membership Group). Michelle S. Caruso and Patricia (Pat) Poulin serve as primary and alternate representatives, respectively. Caruso is Director of Volunteer Services for Jordan Hospital in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Poulin is Director of Community Based Services for the University of Washington, Seattle.

The CAVS is the first of three new Certification programs to be launched in 2008, which will ultimately expand the number of Programs supported by the AHA-CC from four to seven, a 75% increase in one year. With project management and quality assurance services provided by the AHA-CC, the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) is moving forward with plans to launch two new certification programs in the fall – one for nurse executives and one for nurse managers.

The Board of Directors consists of two representatives from each professional Certification Program in development or operation within the AHA-CC, one public member elected by the Board of Directors, one staff representative from the AHA (Lindsay (Mac) Robinson, vice-president of the Division of PMGs) and the Executive Director of the AHA-CC, Maribeth Casey.

Other additions to the Board for 2008 include Kathleen (Kathie) Murray, RN, CPHRM, from Boston Medical Center, who replaces Barbara F. Lightizer. Lightizer's second term on the Board expired on December 31. James (Jim) Roussos, CHESP, replaces Thomas (Tony) Fitzgerald, whose term also expired on December 31.

Wes Thiss, CHESP was elected to a second term as Board president. Thiss is Director of Environmental Services, Bon Secours Health System in Richmond, Virginia. Other Board members who have returned for 2008 include Robert (Bob) C. Feldmeier, Partner, Schiff Hardin, LLP, Chicago, Illinois, public member; Robert Hacker, CHFM, Director of Facilities Management, St. John's Regional Medical Center, Simi Valley, California; Jay M. Kirkpatrick, CMRP, CEO of Nashville (Tennessee) Supply Chain Service of HCA; Michael (Mike) P. Lortie, CMRP, Corporate Director of Materials Management of Carondelet Health Network, Tucson, Arizona; Peggy B. Martin, CPHRM, President, Lifespan Risk Services of Providence, Rhode Island; and Terry L. Martin, CHFM, Director of Engineering, Medical Center of South Arkansas, El Dorado, Arkansas.



Casey To Help Define National Standards for Assessment-Based Certificate Programs

Maribeth Casey, executive director of the AHA Certification Center, has been invited to join a committee of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) to help develop standards for assessment-based certificate programs. Prior to establishment of this committee, Casey served on a task force to define differences between certification programs and assessment-



based certificate programs. She was also elected by NOCA membership to serve on the Nominating Committee to slot 2009 leadership for the organization. Below, Casey answers questions about NOCA and its importance to the AHA Certification process.

What is this organization? Why is it important?

Here's how NOCA defines itself: "Established in 1977, the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) is the leader in setting quality standards for credentialing organizations. Through its annual conference, regional seminars, and publications, NOCA serves its membership as a clearinghouse for information on the latest trends and issues of concern to practitioners and organizations focused on certification, licensure and human resource development."

NOCA has an arm, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), which establishes standards for and accredits certification programs. AHA Certification Programs are developed and maintained to meet national standards, which include those of the NCCA.

What is the difference between a certification program and an assessment-based certificate program? The biggest difference between the two is focus. A certification program, through an assessment (examination), evaluates an individual's mastery of a well-defined body of knowledge in the profession. So the focus is on the assessment. An assessment-based certificate program provides the education necessary to be successful on an assessment of the educational objectives. (Think CPR certificate.)

Why is it important to know the difference? Right now, governmental agencies are requiring various forms of certification for jobs, and are accepting completion of a certificate program without knowledge of the difference. AHA Programs are certification programs. The AHA-CC conducts only certification programs; it does not provide education.

What qualified you to serve on that task force and the committee? The AHA-CC represents a "user" of assessment-based certificate programs in that it accept completion of such programs toward renewal of a certification. The committee is actually composed of individuals from four areas: those who provide such certificate programs; those who use such certificate programs; government agencies having jurisdiction over such certificate program services; and those who fall into none of the above categories but are interested in defining the difference, such as consultants and vendors in the industry.

2008 Special Administrations

For your convenience, the following special administrations of AHA Certification Examinations are scheduled for 2008. To apply, use the application contained in the Candidate Handbook and Application available from the AHA-CC web site. On the application, under "Examination Type," check "special domestic administration" and enter the date of the Examination. Online application is not available for these administrations.

Please note that application deadlines are 4 weeks before the Examination, so be sure to apply early. For additional information, please contact Kimberly Williams of the AHA-CC at kwilliams@aha.org or 312/422-3711.

Exam	Sponsor	Applications Must Be Received By	Date & Check-in Time	Exam Format	Location
CMRP	AHRMM	June 19	July 20 9:00 a.m. July 20 1:30 p.m.	Laptop	Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center 200 East Market Street San Antonio, TX
CAVS	AHVRP	August 7	September 4 12:00 noon	Paper-and-Pencil	Marriott Anaheim 700 West Convention Way Anaheim, CA Salon G&H

Notices and reminders:

Don't Get Lost



If you change your name, job title, address, phone number, or employer, we need to hear from you. Your professional society and the AHA Certification Center don't share the same database. When you update your records with ASHE, ASHES, ASHRM, AHRMM or AHVRP, be sure to send a notice to Kimberly Williams, kwilliams@aha.org, or call her at 312/422-3711.

Check Yourself

Preparing for the Certification Examination? Due to renew?

Go to our web site and purchase the Self-Assessment Examination (SAE) to check your skills and knowledge. The preparatory exam uses the same style of questions as are found in the Examination. The SAE serves as a practice test, identifies content areas to focus on when studying for the exam and lessens anxiety about testing. Professionals who are currently AHA Certified can use the SAE to accumulate additional continuing professional education credit and refresh their knowledge. Preview the exam by taking the free, five-question sample available on the web page relevant to your credential.

Click here: (<http://www.aha.org/aha/Certification-Center/Program-Information/sae.html>)

AHA Certification Spans the Nation



Of all the challenges applicants for AHA Certification Examinations face, finding an Examination site is probably the least of them. They can “let their fingers do the walking” and find H & R Block offices in their area that administer the electronic tests. The Examinations are available twice daily, Monday through Friday, and one Saturday per month.

Some candidates get extra value from conferences sponsored the American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHE), the American Society for Healthcare Environmental Services (ASHES), the American Society for Healthcare Risk Management (ASHRM), the Association for Healthcare Resource & Materials Management (AHRMM), and the Association for Healthcare Volunteer Resource Professionals by taking the Certification Examination there.

Watch the AHA-CC web site (www.aha.org/certification) for announcement of special administrations in 2008.

Working abroad?

The AHA Certification Center, through Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc., offers AHA Certification Examinations outside of the United States. To access the International Examination Administration form and fees, **Click here:**

http://www.aha.org/aha/Certification-Center/files/International_Administration.pdf

Fee Reimbursement for Veterans



Four AHA Certification Examinations are accepted for reimbursement by the Veterans Administration (VA) for veterans who are seeking employment, planning to change jobs or trying to advance their careers. The VA benefit covers the Certified Healthcare Environmental Services Professional (CHESP), Certified Healthcare Facility Manager (CHFM), Certified Materials & Resource Professional (CMRP), and the Certified Professional in Healthcare Risk Management (CPHRM) Examination and renewal

fees. For more information, **click here:** <http://www.aha.org/aha/Certification-Center/Program-Information/veterans.html>.

Check the Date. Don't be Late

Do you know when your Certification expires? Take a look at your certificate for your expiration date. Or you can check AHA-CC's web site. Click on your credential, and then click "Certificants." You'll find your name and expiration date in the list under your state. The fee for renewing through continuing professional education is \$135 for members of an AHA Personal Membership Group (PMG). No longer a member of a PMG? No problem. The fee is \$225.



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Our thanks to the Certified Professionals who contributed to the Winter 2008 issue of the AHA Certification Center Newsletter.

Send an email to Kim Williams at kwilliams@aha.org with comments on the newsletter's content and format. We welcome any suggestions you may have for future issues.