



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

*PO Box 47890 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
Tel: 360-236-4030 • TDD Relay Service: 800-833-6388*

November 4, 2015

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of the State of Washington
Post Office Box 40002
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

RCW 18.88A.087 requires the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (commission) and Department of Health to recognize alternative training (bridge training) options for home care aides and medical assistants to qualify for the nursing assistant-certified (NA-C) credential. It requires the secretary of health, in consultation with the commission, to report annually to the governor and the legislature on progress made to advance certified home care aides and medical assistants into nursing practice. This is our fourth progress report.

Rules

After consulting with stakeholders, the commission adopted requirements for bridge training programs for both home care aides and medical assistants in 2011, which included curriculum and minimum education and training standards for program directors and instructors. The commission created processes to approve and deny training programs and for individuals completing a bridge training program to take the competency evaluation and apply for an NA-C credential. These requirements can be found in WAC 246-841-530 and 585.

The commission has recently adopted a final rule amending its definition of nationally certified medical assistant that is used to determine who may take the medical assistant to nursing assistant bridge program (WAC 246-841-535(2)). Before amendment this definition included more restrictive requirements than those under the medical assistant certification (WAC 246-827-0200(2)). The amended rule aligns the definitions to create consistency and enhance career mobility.

Status of Programs and Certification as Nursing Assistant

The commission approved the first two programs for alternative training in October 2012. There are now 22 approved programs, of which 9 are medical assistant bridge programs and 13 are home care aide bridge programs. There are 16 programs in Western Washington and 6 in Eastern Washington.

The Honorable Jay Inslee

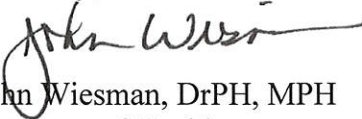
November 4, 2015

Page 2

Since July 1, 2012, the department has issued 258 NA-C credentials for applicants who have completed alternative training programs and have 24 applications pending from individuals who have completed an alternative training program.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Mindy Schaffner, associate director of nursing education advisor for the commission, at mindy.schaffner@doh.wa.gov or 360-236-4745.

Sincerely,



John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH
Secretary of Health

cc: Senator Randi Becker, Senate Health Care Committee
Representative Eileen Cody, House Health Care and Wellness Committee
Jason McGill, Executive Policy Office
Martin Mueller, Department of Health
Mindy Schaffner, Department of Health