

Vidant Medical Center, Greenville N.C.



Introduction

Nursing certification is defined as the formal recognition of the specialized knowledge, skills and experience demonstrated by achievement of standards identified by a nursing specialty to promote optimal health outcomes. (1)

Nurse certification and the continuing education required to maintain certification contribute to the creation of an environment of professionalism and a culture of retention. Certification is also a vehicle for hospitals to differentiate themselves from competitors and demonstrate to consumers that they have attracted the most skilled and experienced nursing professionals. (2)

The Institute of Medicine, author of the groundbreaking 2000 study on medical errors titled, *To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System*, recommends that health professional licensing bodies implement periodic reexaminations and relicensing of doctors, nurses and other key providers. Certification provides ongoing validation of specialty experience, knowledge and skills. (3)

Situation

February 2013, the Career Ladder program, RN's in Search of Excellence (RISE), required RN III and RN IV's to obtain a Specialty Certification, 72 nurses responded.

While this was a favorable response, many nurses chose not to participate, citing fear of failure and cost concerns as their initial barriers.

July 2013, Vidant Medical Center (VMC) earned ANCC Magnet Recognition®.

VMC's Nursing Annual Work Plan designated an increase in specialty certification as a nursing strategic goal for professional development, with a metric of 2% increase annually – This goal aligned with Transformational Leadership, Exemplary Professional Practice and New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements.



Purpose

To encourage and support achievement of specialty certification, while demonstrating Vidant Medical Center's commitment to improving patient outcomes through excellence in nursing practice and professional development.

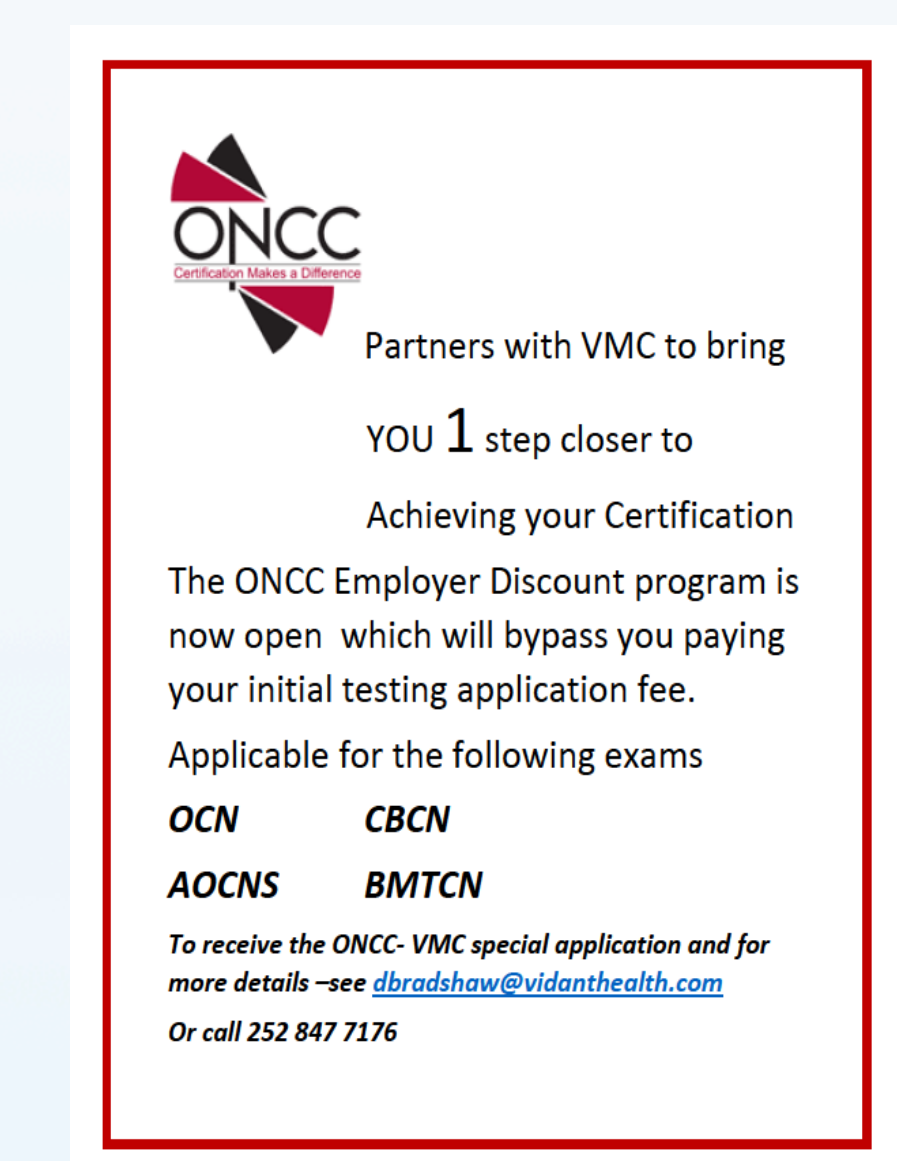
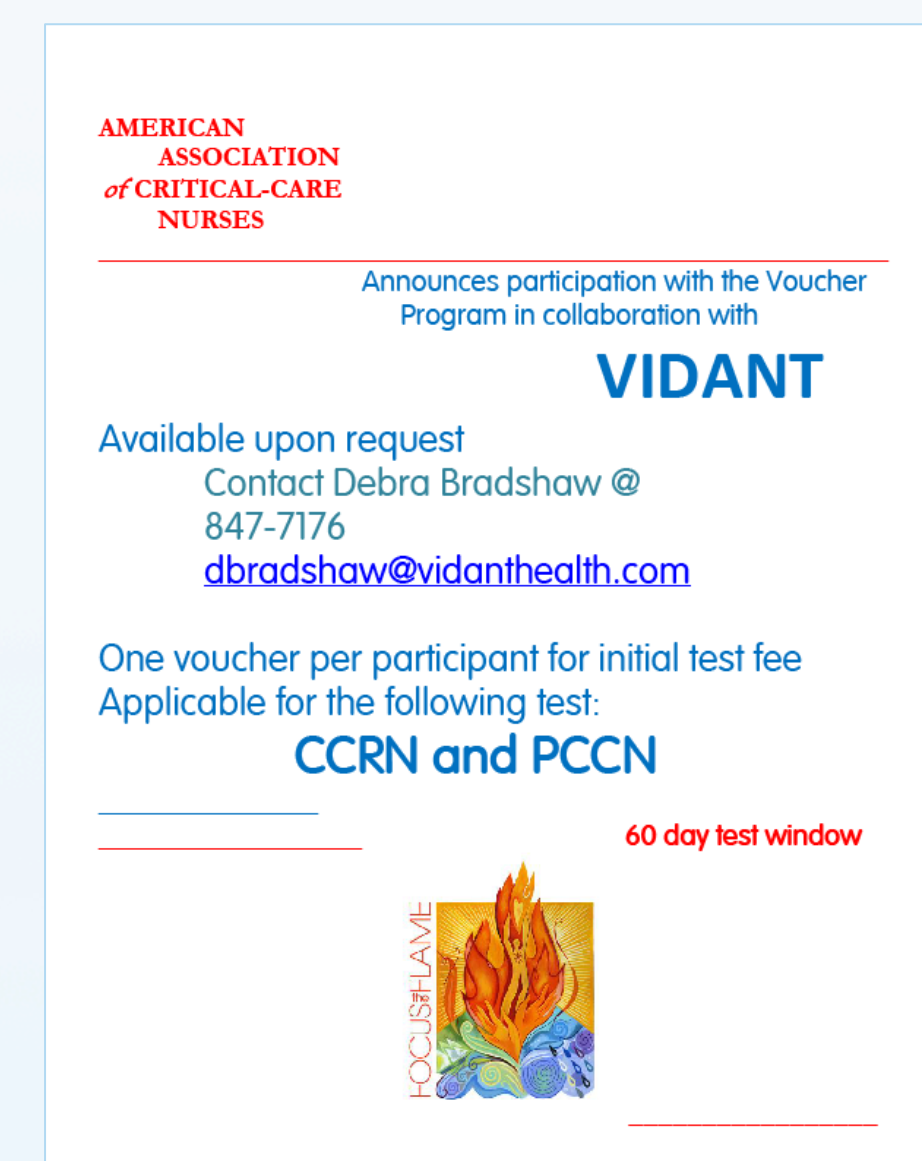
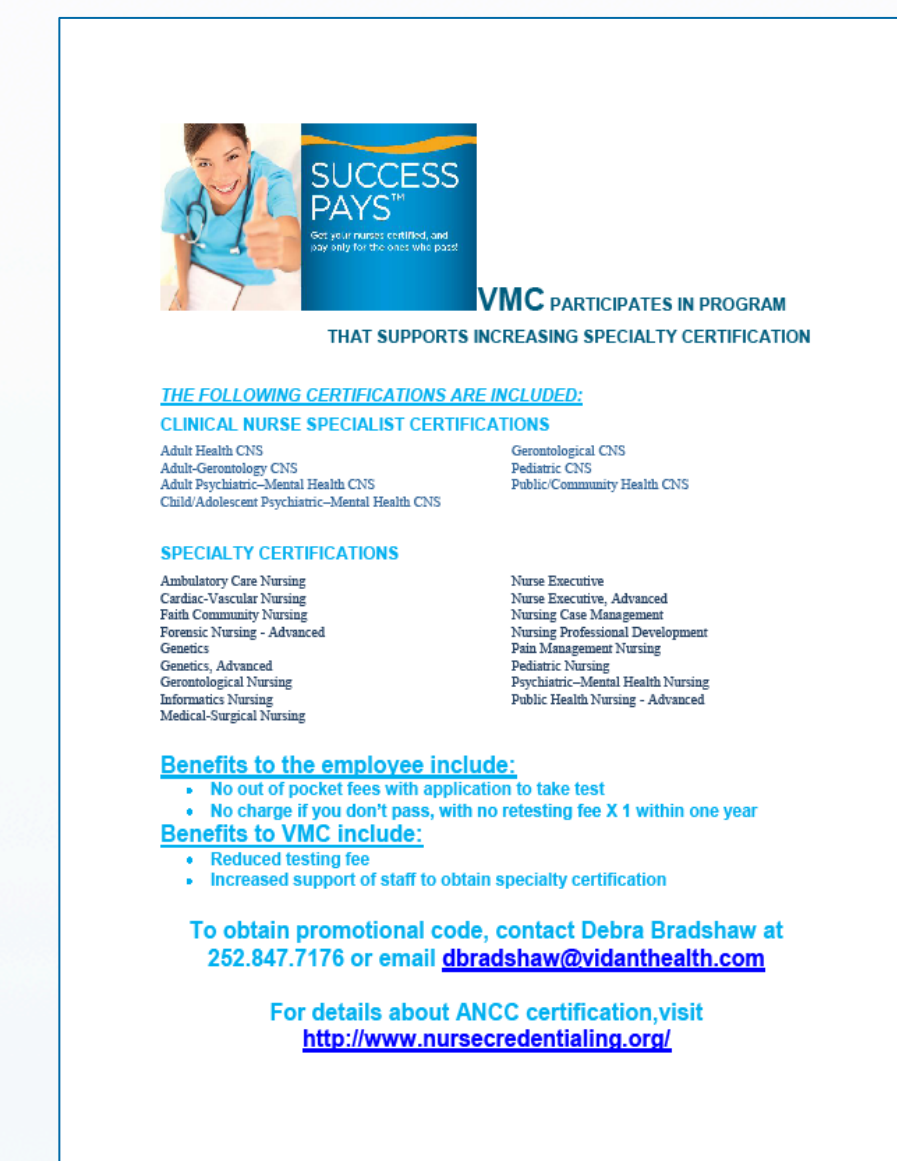
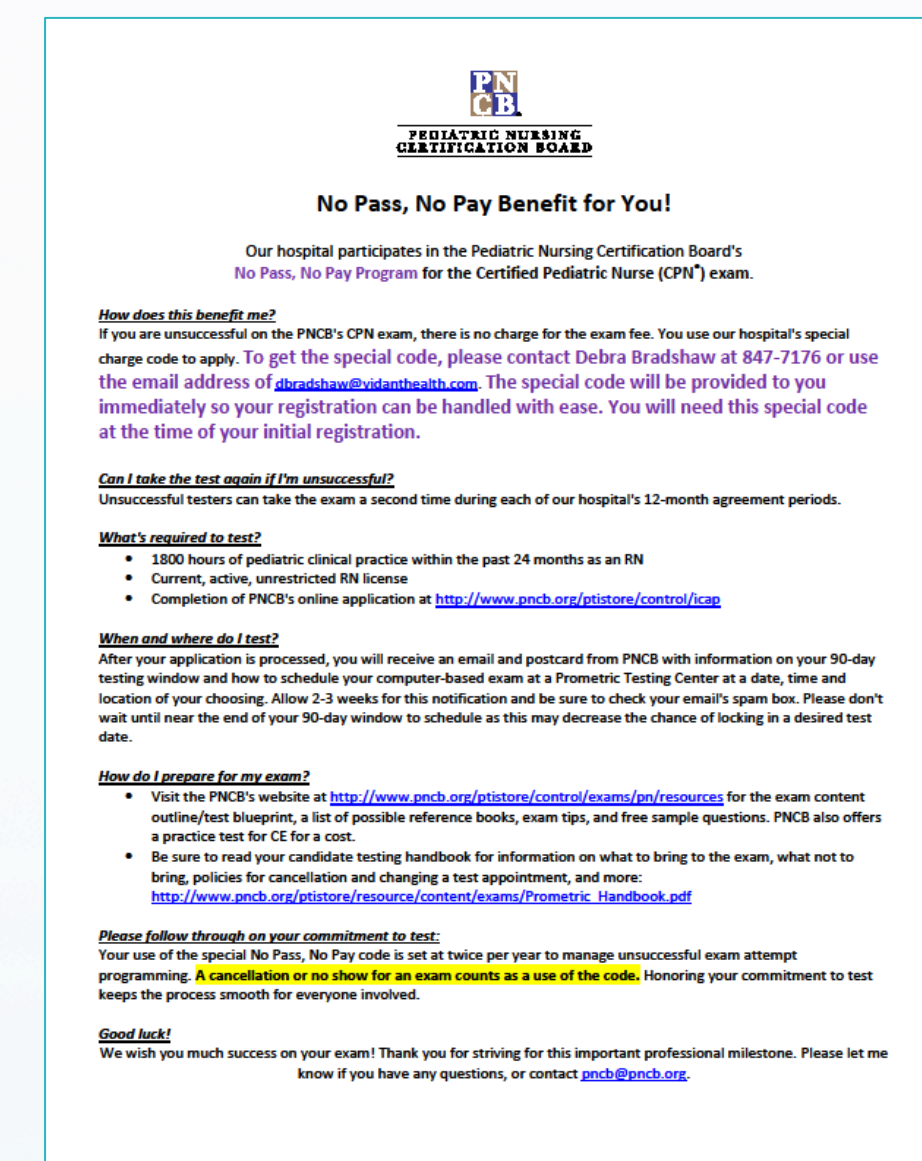
Background

Specialty certification points to nurses' commitment to career development and dedication to patient care, particularly in this constantly changing environment.

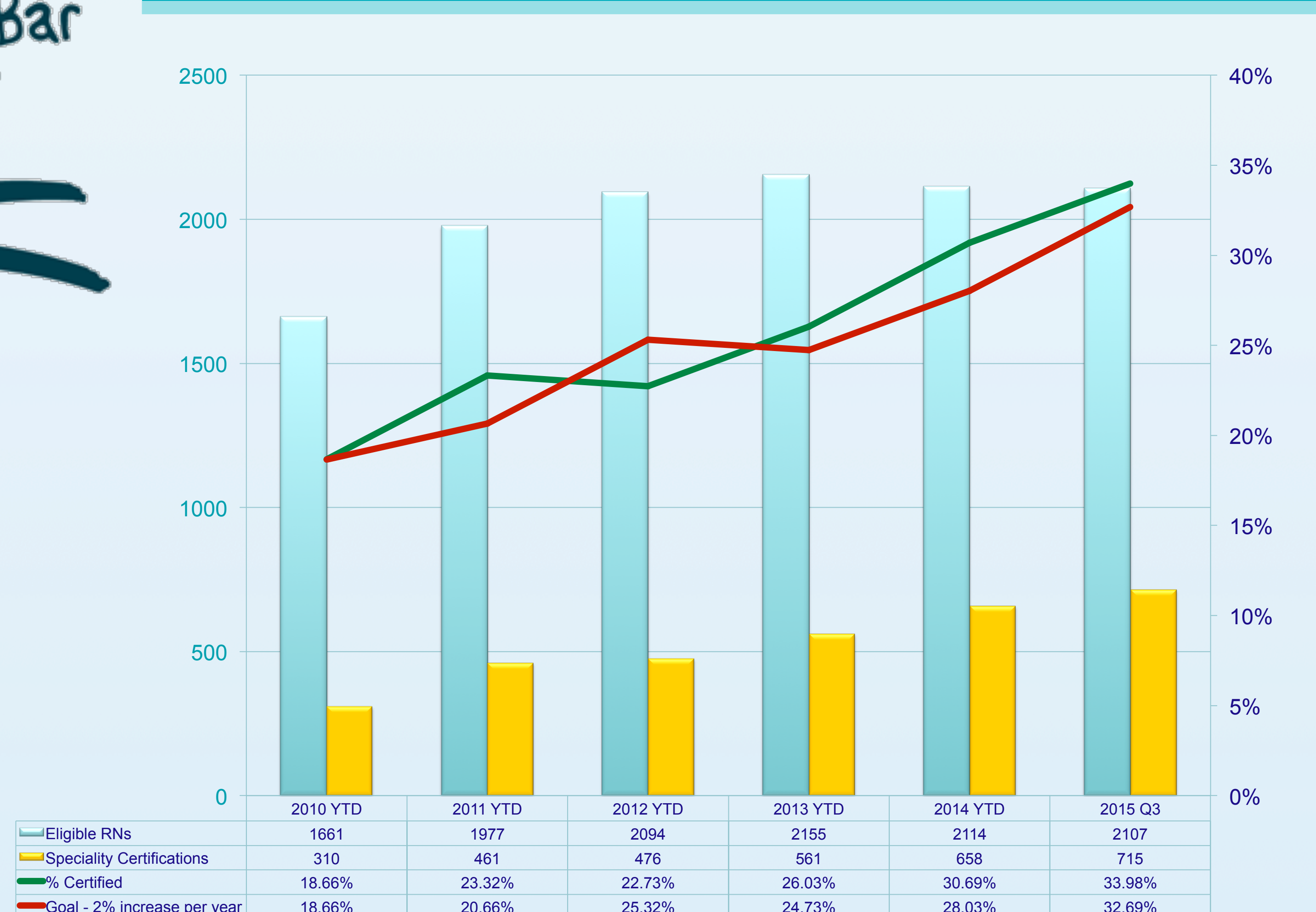
April and May 2014, VMC partnered with the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board for the NO Pass No Pay program and the ANCC's Success Pays™ program.

July 2014, VMC partnered with the American Association of Critical Care Nurses for the Voucher program.

April 2015, VMC partnered with the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation as a pilot hospital for participation in their special pay program.



Results



Conclusion

In the span of one year and 2 months, 146 nurses have successfully achieved a specialty certification by participating in these programs.

Reduction in reimbursement exam fees (up to 30%) has saved VMC over \$29,178.

68 nurses are currently in the process of confirming their exam dates for the Fall of 2015.

Potential additional savings for the 68 nurses committed to the programs = \$13,406.

No Pass, No Pay, Success Pays™ and Voucher programs significantly reduce the fear of failure for the RN.

RN's who never considered certification are taking advantage of the programs and have been successful.

RN's are proud to display their specialty badge enhancement.

Unit culture has changed to highly valuing certification as part of a “must do” expectation for professional development .

Two initial program partnerships quickly lead to exploring and adding two additional programs to our pre-pay options. Two + Two + Two = SUCCESS.

Next Steps....

Consider partnership with Competency and Credential Institute, CNOR® Take 2 program.

Explore options with National Certification Corporation for RNC®, Women's Health certifications for pre-paid voucher program.

References

- (1) American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS)
Retrieved August 1, 2015 from <http://www.nursingcertification.org>
- (2) American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) Retrieved August 1, 2015 from <http://www.aacn.org>
- (3) Institute of Medicine study Retrieved August 1, 2015 from <http://www.iom.nationalacademies.org>