

**What ANCC Certified Cardiac Vascular Nurses are saying
about the value of their nursing certification, in their own
words! (As reported in a November 2005 Survey conducted by
ANCC Certification Services)**

1. "I was thrilled to learn that I was, in fact, the first nurse in the state of AZ to receive my Cardiac Vascular nurse certification in July of 2003. After practicing in this field for 23 years, from coronary intensive care to cardiac rehabilitation, it gave me a great sense of personal satisfaction to achieve national certification. It validated all the hard work and study I had invested in this area of expertise. I enthusiastically encourage others to go for it!"
2. "I have been a cardiac rehab nurse for three years and prior to that a telemetry nurse, so you can see cardiovascular nursing is "in my blood"! By becoming a certified nurse it has boosted my confidence level not only in myself but I believe in the institution where I work. I have seen leadership opportunities come my way! The physician I work with and my dept peers were thrilled over my certification and when the announcement was made hospital wide via email I received many congrats from well wishers. Therefore you can see the positive impact it has made on my career."
3. "...The cardiac/vascular nurse certification focuses on this aspect of patient care i.e. diabetes mellitus control, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, smoking cessation, etc.. I feel confident in my patient-teaching and the information that I provide on a daily basis to lower our patients' risk of having a second coronary event."
4. "Being certified shows that I have a strong commitment to cardiac/vascular nursing. The certification shows patients, peers and administrators that I value the cardiac/vascular patient. Achieving this certification is a great accomplishment for me and it has spurred further interest in pursuing other certifications. Patients deserve the best of the best, by achieving certification I am demonstrating that I have the patients' best interests at heart and I want to be the best that I can be for them."
5. "The ANCC credentials provides visible reinforcement to others of one's personal commitment to cardiovascular nursing"
6. **"I am asked what the extra initials on my badge stand for. It gives me great pleasure to be able to explain to patients, families and peers that I successfully completed the Cardiac Vascular Nurse exam and am nationally**

certified. This validates my years of experience and advanced knowledge. (The extra money isn't too bad either!) Lori Waddell, RN BC"

7. "Others look up to you because of your expertise - just proven by successfully completing this certification."
8. **"I have been a nurse since 1980 and have worked in a variety of departments. My experience ranged from general medicine to surgical nursing, yet I always shied away from cardiology. I could never understand why some nurses absolutely loved the field while to me, it was scary and intimidating! I believed I could never interpret all of "those squiggly lines" on an EKG, and if a patient of mine developed chest pain, I became nervous and a bit frightened, even though I would handle the situation as professionally as I could. However, six years ago I had an opportunity to work in an angiogram recovery area and over time, I began to find the work to be quite interesting. As I gained experience and knowledge, I moved on to an Interventional Cardiology Unit where the acuity was much higher, yet the opportunities for learning were endless. I felt very apprehensive about it but decided to "bite the bullet" and give it a try. I eventually found out that the things I feared most about cardiology were actually the aspects I excelled at! The hospital in which I work, has just received its sixth national award as a Top 100 Heart Hospital, and as part of their strive towards excellence, the hospital encourages its RNs to obtain certifications in various specialties. We knew it would not be an easy achievement, and no one on my unit dared to be the first to try. Well, after much self-pushing, I decided to "take the leap" and be the first to give it a try. So I did just that last December! Here I was, an "old" nurse of over 25 years with only 5 years of cardiac experience under my belt, preparing to take an exam of unknown magnitude! I hadn't studied for such a "big" exam since my nursing boards back in 1980 (when we still used pencil and paper!!) And being the first on my unit to attempt the exam, I felt even more pressure to succeed so that others would also have the confidence to take the exam. I decided the worst that could happen would be that I was unsuccessful in my endeavor and I would carry on as before, perhaps feeling a bit embarrassed before my peers, but what the heck! I wanted to challenge myself. Imagine my surprise and excitement when I learned that I had successfully achieved my certification! It was a wonderful feeling to have faced a challenge head on, one that I had once feared, and actually succeed in conquering it. I gained a great deal of personal satisfaction in knowing that I could actually learn an entirely new field of nursing (to me) in five short years, and actually become certified in it! I feel I have blazed a trail for some of my peers, and we now have four ANCC Certified Cardiac Vascular Nurses on my unit alone, with several more potential applicants! This has been a wonderful learning experience for me and I look at it as a starting point. There is so much left to learn, as the learning is ongoing. I suppose the message I would convey to younger**

professionals is that it is never too late to learn something new within the nursing profession. Learning is ongoing throughout our careers and we must constantly challenge ourselves to ensure our professional growth. Thanks for letting me share my story. Cathy Cardella, RN,BSN, CVN”

9. “In a field where we interact so independently with patients, having my certification increased my confidence about my level of knowledge and credibility with my clients. It is great to meet with patients for their initial session--they are tentative, unsure, etc. and after I establish a rapport, they are eager to come with their comments, questions. Their faces change as they become more familiar with the cardiac rehab program and their level of confidence in themselves as they trust me to answer their questions and provide for their safety.”

10. “I actually took the test for Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse in 1994 or 1995 the first year it was offered. I can remember how proud I was when that certificate came not only for my own accomplishment but for ANCC's recognition of a very specialized area of nursing. That particular certification has been phased out now and I feel both positively and negatively about that. We have lost that specific recognition of Cardiac Rehab as a specialty area of nursing and yet Cardiac Vascular Nurse better describes our body of knowledge and increases our marketability. As advanced education for nurses becomes increasingly important for advancement within organizations those seeking individual certification will increase by leaps and bounds. I currently have 3 nurses preparing for the exam in my department.”

11. **“Having a National Certification in Cardiac Vascular Nursing has been valuable. The Cath Lab I work in has recently started a primary angioplasty program. The program has been very successful and saved many lives. The group of nurses trained for this special lifesaving procedure is small. We must have a tremendous amount of knowledge and expertise in cardiovascular nursing to handle these emergencies. Since we are the resource for this procedure; we must be able to function autonomously. The Cardiac Vascular Nurse certification improves patient outcomes and validates our competency. Susan Karl RN,C”**

12. “Due to my certification I am looked to by other nurses for guidance and care of our cardiac rehab patients. I coordinate quality improvement, staff education for emergency situations and the recertification for our cardiac rehab through AACVPR.”

13. “I was honored on my unit, along with 2 others coworkers who achieved certification in 2005. I have framed my certificate and placed it on the wall in my study. I am going into business with another nurse and I will make my certification a part of my business resume.”

14. "This certification validates my commitment to my profession and my patients."
15. **"Being an ANCC Board Certified Cardiac Vascular Nurse has been an extraordinary experience for me. As a Nurse Educator for the Heart and Vascular Institute at Health Park Medical Center, professional certification has given me a world of new opportunities. It has allowed me to expand my professional practice, to serve as a role-model to other cardiac vascular nurses, and to enhance patient outcomes through the use of research and clinical evidence. Certification was never not an option for me; I simply needed to find the most credible and substantive representation of my professional practice. I believe that I have found that in the Cardiac Vascular Nurse Certification, and I will maintain it throughout my professional career! With sincere thanks, Elena C. Hanabarger, RN, BSN, BC"**
16. "I have been a RN almost 21 yrs but had never pursued a professional certification until 2002. This certification validated for me just how much I had absorbed from life experiences and helped to improve my own self image."