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Commission on
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Education

Serving the
Public Interest
Through Quality
Accreditation

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For Immediate Release

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education Amends Accreditation Standards

WASHINGTON, DC, October 16, 2003 – Completing a comprehensive review process that involved broad-based calls for comment and significant input by its constituents, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) has amended the standards used to ensure quality in baccalaureate and graduate level nursing programs. An autonomous arm of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), CCNE is the only accrediting body devoted exclusively to the evaluation of baccalaureate and graduate degree programs in nursing. At its October 2 -3 meeting, the CCNE Board of Commissioners approved an amended version of its *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs*. The revised *Standards* document, which will be effective January 1, 2005, reflects improved consistency in use of terminology, clarification of intent, and the elimination of redundancy. Importantly, the revised Standards also identify specific sets of professional nursing guidelines that programs must use as the foundation for curricula.

“It has been a pleasure to work with this agency in its first comprehensive review of the *Standards*,” said Dr. Carole Anderson, chair of the Standards Committee. “The revised *Standards* underscore CCNE’s commitment to quality nurse education.” The work of the committee, an essential component of CCNE’s systematic process for standards revision, upholds the Commission’s fundamental commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Programs hosting a CCNE on-site evaluation and/or submitting a report to CCNE after January 1, 2005, will be required to comply with the revised *Standards*; CCNE will offer assistance to these programs in their preparations for accreditation activities. CCNE will host a forum for deans and other interested parties later this month in conjunction with AACN’s fall semi-annual meeting, and an invitational workshop that focuses on writing self-study documents will be held March 27, 2004; these programs will include information about the changes to the *Standards*. Additionally, CCNE’s 2004 training sessions for evaluators will prepare participants to review programs in light of the revised *Standards*. Finally, CCNE staff will continue to be available for consultation and guidance.

Dr. Charlotte Beason, founding Commissioner, and departing CCNE Board chair, stated, “Clearly, the revised *Standards* will enhance the quality of baccalaureate and graduate level nursing programs across the nation. The Board’s approval of these revised *Standards* marks yet another milestone in CCNE’s contribution to the nursing profession.” She expressed appreciation on behalf of the entire Board to the members of the Standards Committee: Dr. Carole Anderson, Ohio State University; Dr. Donna Boland, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis; Dr. Mary Jo Clark, University of San Diego; Dr. Mecca Cranley, SUNY Buffalo; Ms. Pamela Dell Dennison, University of Virginia Health System; Dr. Karin Polifko-Harris, KPH Consulting; Dr. Joyce Pulcini, Boston College; Ms. Caroline Stellmann, Stellmann Associates; and Dr. Suzanne Van Ort, University of Arizona (Emerita).

The revised *Standards* will be disseminated in hard copy to all CCNE-affiliated programs in the coming month. Currently, the document may be accessed by visiting the CCNE Web site at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Accreditation>.

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public’s health. CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education programs. As a voluntary, self-regulatory process, CCNE accreditation supports and encourages continuing self-assessment by nursing education programs and supports continuing growth and improvement of collegiate professional education.