

March 2011

Certification Corner

Q: What is the difference between regulation, certification and licensure?

A: *The National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), in its 2005 NOCA Guide, defines registration, certification and licensure as follows:*



Registration:

- The process by which a governmental agency grants a time-limited status on a registry, determined by specified knowledge-based requirements (e.g., experience, education, examinations), thereby authorizing those individuals to practice, similar to licensure. Its purpose is to maintain a continuous record of past and current occupational status of that individual, and to provide title protection.
- A listing of practitioners maintained by a governmental entity, without educational, experiential or competency-based requirements; for example, maintaining a list of practitioners on a state 'registry.'
- A professional designation defined by a governmental entity in professional regulations or rules. However, the governmental regulatory body does not itself maintain a listing or registry of those who purport to meet registration requirements. Verification and authentication of such individuals are left to the employer of the individual claiming to be registered.

Certification:

- A process, often voluntary, by which individuals who have demonstrated the level of knowledge and skill required in the profession, occupation, role, or skill are identified to the public and other stakeholders. (2004 NOCA Standards Glossary)
- The voluntary process by which a non-governmental entity grants a time-limited recognition and use of a credential to an individual after verifying that he or she has met predetermined and standardized criteria. It is the vehicle that a profession or occupation uses to differentiate among its members, using standards, sometimes developed through a consensus-driven process, based on existing legal and psychometric requirements. (2005 NOCA Guide)

Licensure:

- The mandatory process by which a governmental agency grants time-limited permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation after verifying that he/she has met predetermined and standardized criteria, and offers title protection for those who meet the criteria. (2005 NOCA Guide)

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Licensure is the most restrictive form of credentialing with the primary purpose of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the public by restricting the practice of the profession.

Certification, which is what IAHCSSMM supports, can be as rigorous as that of a licensure program, but it is distinguished from licensure because it is usually voluntary. Registration is the least restrictive form of credentialing and does not require individuals to demonstrate competency prior to being granted credentialing.

IAHCSSMM's legislative priority is to maintain that every patient deserves to have a certified Central Sterile Supply Department technician reprocessing his/her instruments. As such, the Association will actively promote laws and regulations to ensure certification of CSSD technicians at the state level. The purpose of codifying certification into state statute or regulation includes protecting the public, establishing standards for professional knowledge, skills, and practice, assuring consumers that professionals have met standards of practice, and advancing the profession.

Click the link below to check out the legislative map to find out if your state is working on certification.
http://iahcsmm.org/GovernmentAffairs/LegislativeMap.html#pab1_4