

Credential Maintenance Program (CMP)

FAQs

After almost 15 years, the Continuing Competency Program (CCP) has been updated to better represent the purpose of the program. The two original principles of enhancing and maintaining competence as time passes and requiring participants to provide evidence of meeting current competency expectations, remain our guiding statements for the new Credential Maintenance Program (CMP). The CMP will be piloted to individuals earning a specialty credential in 2019 and available to all credentialed practitioners beginning January 1, 2020. The following FAQs provide more detailed information about the program.

Q: Do I have to participate in the Credential Maintenance Program (CMP)?

A: If you earned your credential July 1, 2002 or after – Yes. The new CMP still has three options to maintain your credentials; 1) earn another NBRC credential, 2) pass the same credentialing examination again, or 3) take quarterly assessments and/or document up to 30 continuing education credits. Your performance on the assessments will determine whether you have to also document CE with the NBRC.

Q: Why does the Credential Maintenance Program (CMP) have an assessment component?

A: The goal in using assessments is to strengthen the relationship between competencies of credential holders and expectations linked to those credentials. Quarterly assessments are a component of the CE option to maintain credentials through the promotion of learning. Practitioners will not be required to take the assessments but are encouraged to do so to demonstrate their competency and knowledge.

Q. What will the assessments cover?

A. Each assessment is designed to focus on content that changes most rapidly and puts the public at highest risk. Practitioners who participate in the credential maintenance process were surveyed to identify changing content and public risk issues. New assessment items will be created each year, so content will continue to cover hot topics as they emerge. Assessments designed this way will be more meaningful and valuable in comparison to the current system that relies on an accumulation of general continuing education credits.

What is the format of the questions on the assessment?

Each assessment question is in multiple-choice format with four potential answers to choose. Each question must be answered within five minutes of being displayed. Content of the assessments is focused on tasks that put the public at high risk and have a high pace of change. Assessments are taken in an open-book format which means you can access resources during the five minutes before selecting a response. However, no other person should help you.

Q: How much will it cost?

A: The fee will remain the same at \$125.00, collected annually in \$25 increments over the 5-year credential period.

Q: Do I still have to document CE with NBRC?

A: CE may be required depending on your assessment performance. Your assessment score and number of CE required will be updated each quarter as you complete your assessments on your credential maintenance dashboard within the Practitioner Portal. If your assessment score is high enough, no documentation of CE will be required to renew your credential(s). Other results will place you into one of two groups: those in the yellow zone who will be required to document 15 CE credits and those in the red zone who will be required to document 30 CE credits.

Maintaining a credential is separate from maintaining a license. Even if high assessment performance exempts you from documenting CE for the NBRC, the state in which you live will require CE documentation for your license.

Q: Where do I take my assessment?

A: The assessment is accessible online at nbrc.org and may be completed on a mobile device, tablet, or personal computer. Some questions contain images and graphics whose details may be easier to see while using a device with a larger screen. Make the decision about the device you use before starting an assessment because the timer cannot be paused once a question is opened. The timer will continue if closing a browser or powering off the device.

Q: When do I take my assessment and how much time do I have to complete it?

A: An email or text message notifying you that an assessment is available will be sent twice a year. The assessment should be completed within 60 days of availability.

Q: How many questions will be on my assessment?

A:

Assessment Group	Credentials	Number of Items Each	
		Quarter	Year
RT	CRT, RRT	10	40
PFT	CPFT, RPFT	5	20
NPS	CRT-NPS, RRT-NPS	5	20
SDS	CRT-SDS, RRT-SDS	5	20
ACCS	RRT-ACCS	5	20
AE-C	AE-C	5	20

Q: What is the best way to prepare for the assessments?

A: Reviewing the specific detailed content outline (DCO) to identify your personal areas of strengths and weaknesses before you begin an assessment is suggested. An explanation for all possible responses and a reference citation is provided for each question for use in further researching the topic. This feedback provides an excellent opportunity for professional development, as well as improving performance on future assessments.

Q: What information does the CMP Detailed Content Outline (DCO) provide?

A: The DCO provides the number of questions you can expect for a one-year period and describes the content areas and complexity levels (recall, application, analysis) covered on each assessment. Tasks are identical to those found on the credentialing examination. However, because CMP assessments are purposely limited to content that put patients at increased risk and tasks that change rapidly, some tasks will not be included on the CMP assessments and are shaded on the DCO to indicate this.

Q: What are my options for maintaining my credential(s) through the CMP?

A: To meet your individual needs as a credentialed respiratory care practitioner, we offer three options for maintaining your credential through our Credential Maintenance Program:

- Option 1: Complete the quarterly assessment(s) for your credential(s) and, if needed, provide proof of completion of required hours of Category I Continuing Education (CE) acceptable to the NBRC, according to your assessment progress (see table below).
- Option 2: Retake and pass the respective examination for the highest credential held that is subject to the Credential Maintenance Program.
- Option 3: Pass an NBRC credentialing examination not previously completed.

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT Only	30	15	0
PFT Only	30	15	0
AE-C Only	30	15	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT	15	7.5	0
Specialty 1	15	7.5	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT	12	6	0
Specialty 1	9	4.5	0
Specialty 2	9	4.5	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT	12	6	0
Specialty 1	6	3	0
Specialty 2	6	3	0
Specialty 3	6	3	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT	10	5	0
Specialty 1	5	2.5	0
Specialty 2	5	2.5	0
Specialty 3	5	2.5	0
Specialty 4	5	2.5	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

	Red Zone	Yellow Zone	Green Zone
RT	10	5	0
Specialty 1	4	2	0
Specialty 2	4	2	0
Specialty 3	4	2	0
Specialty 4	4	2	0
Specialty 5	4	2	0
TOTAL	30	15	0

Q: How do I track my assessment progress?

A: Log in to the Practitioner Portal and go to the credential maintenance dashboard to view your progress. Progress is displayed in red, yellow, and green zones reflecting success while responding to assessment questions. The color-coded progress indicator will include responses from CRT or RRT assessments plus specialty assessments. For example, a therapist who has achieved RRT and RRT-NPS credentials will observe progress after one quarter that is based on 10 RRT questions plus 5 RRT-NPS questions for a total of 15 questions.

You will find learning content in your progress dashboard explaining more about the best response to each question. Continuing education should be sought that builds one's knowledge about content the assessments cover. Each assessment question has been linked to high patient risk tasks.

Q. What if I have one credential that expires and one that does not expire?

A. When an individual has a credential that expires, plus a lifetime credential, there is an opportunity to opt-in for the credential that expires. Opting-in signals an individual's intent to access assessments linked to both the lifetime credential and the credential that expires. However, an individual may opt-out of participating for the lifetime credential at any time thereafter. Individuals holding a specialty credential are not eligible to opt-out of assessments for the CRT or RRT credential.

Q. What happens if my credential expires?

A. If you are within six months of credential expiration, you have the option of entering your CEUs online and paying a \$250 reinstatement fee. Any CMP fees paid annually become void once your credential expires and your CEUs must have been earned during your five-year credential term. CEUs obtained after your credential expiration are not accepted. If your credential is expired more than six months, you must apply for testing to reinstate your credential. You must meet the admission policies in effect at the time you apply and will be required to pay the new application fee. If you successfully complete the examination, your credential will be reinstated. If you have more than one expired credential, you must apply for and pass all examinations to reinstate your expired credentials.

Q. How do I submit CEU information to the NBRC?

A. Continuing education information must be submitted online through the [Practitioner Portal](#). Please do not submit paper documents. After logging in, choose 'Credential Maintenance' from the menu.

Q. What CE courses will the NBRC accept toward compliance with the CMP?

A. At the NBRC, we intend for the completion of CE credit to coordinate with the requirements of state licensure agencies, which means we permit any course accepted by your state licensing board for the purposes of respiratory care licensure. If your state licensing board does not have its own specific course requirements, rest assured the NBRC will accept any course credits from the American Association for Respiratory Care Continuing Respiratory Care Education Program (AARC-CRCE®) as fulfillment of our Credential Maintenance Program requirements.

Q. Why is the CMP voluntary for practitioners credentialed before July 2002?

A. Credentialing standards were different at the time those credentials were earned. Imposing a new requirement for maintaining a credential after someone has started a professional career is different than creating a new requirement for someone who subsequently enters the profession. The NBRC believes that more of these practitioners may participate in the CMP if they know they cannot lose their credential by doing so. The patients

served by these practitioners will be better protected because of participation and the learning that is expected to follow.

Q. What if I have a credential not subject to the Credential Maintenance Program?

A. Only credentials earned beginning July 1, 2002 are subject to expiration and require taking part in the Continuing Competency Program. Credentials earned prior to July 1, 2002 are valid for a lifetime with no expiration date.

Q: Why is the Continuing Competency Program (CCP) changing?

A: As a credentialed practitioner, you already know that maintaining and enhancing the knowledge established on initial credentialing is a key component to professional development and career advancement, as well as patient care. Changes in accreditation standards encouraged the NBRC to evaluate how the Continuing Competency Program could become more valuable and meaningful to those who document their continued competencies and to the public served by these persons. As a result, key elements for a modified program were recommended to the NBRC by a Recertification Commission (stakeholder representatives including two people required to participate in the CCP). The CCP has been renamed the Credential Maintenance Program to better represent the purpose of the program.