During fall 2017, I searched for and summarized licensure and certification renewal requirements from the website of each U.S. state and territory board of nursing (SBNs) and selected national professional certifying boards (NPCBs). With institutional review board approval, I invited each organization to participate in a survey, which included a link to review the summarized renewal requirements and a request to respond if the renewal information required correction. One SBN responded and five of 40 invited NPCBs responded (13%). Only one response included a correction. Information from each organization’s website was included in the final data tables for those organizations that did not respond.

I have gained a new appreciation for the range of renewal requirements set by different states and certification boards. Many organizations require documentation of practice hours and completion of continuing education programs. Some offer a range of options for meeting competence requirements, including portfolio review, peer review, mentor or preceptor hours, certification as evidence for licensure renewal, publications, presentations, practice hours, and formal testing.

In some states, renewal requirements are similar for licensed practical and vocational nurses, registered nurses, and advanced practice registered nurses. In other states, renewal requirements are different for each type of nursing license. Some SBNs and NPCBs listed multiple specific requirements for the content of required continuing education, whereas others required no continuing education or did not indicate specific content requirements.

Please refer to each state and certification board and association for detailed information about renewal processes and timelines. Information related to continuing education and competence requirements for state licensure renewal and professional nursing certification renewal is summarized in two tables available at Healio.com/jcen/ce_survey.

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