

Frequently asked questions

- **Do I have to be a member of the ACMHN to become credentialed?**
- No, you can be credentialed without joining the ACMHN. However there is an application fee discount available to members, or those who join at the time of submitting their application.

- **How long does it take to prepare an application?**
- In general, 1-2 months may be needed to prepare an application.

- **What happens to my application?**
- Once received by the ACMHN, it is checked to ensure it is complete. When it is complete, the application is sent for peer review on a set date each month. This process may take 6-8 weeks but will depend on how complete the application is when submitted.

- **Do I have to submit my application by a certain date?**
- New applications may be submitted at any time. Re-credentialing applications must be forwarded at least three months prior to the expiry of the 3-year credential period.

- **Can I get help to complete the application?**
- There are guidelines available on the ACMHN website which explain each question on the application form. You can also contact the ACMHN for assistance.

What nurses say...

"Being a credentialed Mental Health Nurse means I am acknowledged by my peers.

Mental health nurse credentialing has expanded our involvement in key health initiatives.

Being credentialed I am able to demonstrate the advanced and specialist nature of my work.

Credentialing allowed me to move more easily into private practice."

CPP application packages and membership enquiries can be obtained at;

www.acmhn.org

Mental health nursing

Connect with people

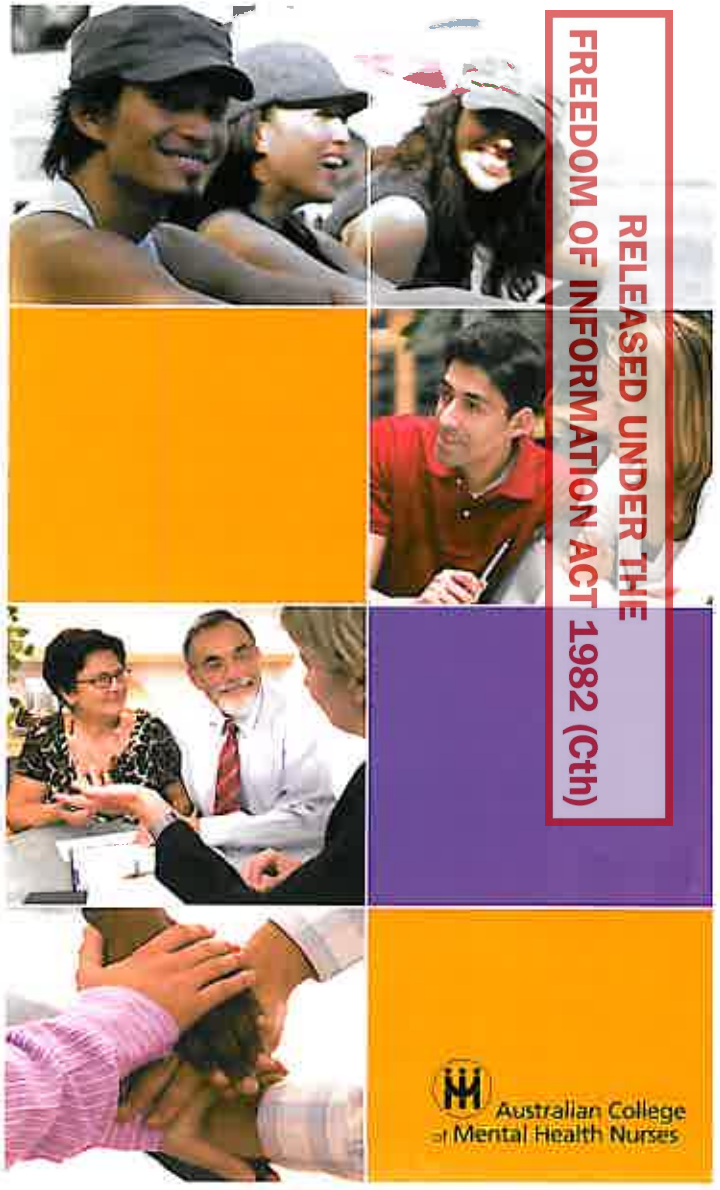
Australian College of Mental Health Nurses

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Credentialing for Mental Health Nurses



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Australian College of Mental Health Nurses



Recognising professional achievement

Professional recognition of the skills, continuous learning and experience of the nation's mental health nurses is essential to the future health and wellbeing of the community and to this vital profession.

This is why there is a national professional credentialing program for mental health nurses in Australia in the Credential for Practice Program (CPP).

The Credential for Practice Program is an initiative of the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN). It is a program of professional self regulation governed by the ACMHN and launched nationally in 2004.

The ACMHN is the peak professional body for mental health nurses in Australia. It works to promote public confidence in, and professional recognition of, mental health nursing and to enhance the mental health of the community.

What is the Mental Health Nurse Credential?

A credentialed Mental Health Nurse is a specialist nurse who has demonstrated the Credential for Practice Program criteria set by the ACMHN in relation to:

- education
- practice experience
- professional development, and
- professional integrity.

Mental health nurse credentialing through the ACMHN Credential for Practice Program validates registered nurses as specialist mental health nurses.

Being awarded a Mental Health Nurse credential demonstrates to employers, professional colleagues, consumers, and others the achievement of professional standards for practice in mental health nursing.

A credentialed Mental Health Nurse is awarded a credential for three years.

Why become credentialed?

An ACMHN Mental Health Nurse credential:

- is the only nationally consistent recognition for you as a specialist in mental health nursing
- demonstrates that you have undergone the specialist postgraduate education and significant practice experience required for mental health nursing practice
- demonstrates that mental health nursing is delivered from a contemporary evidence base, and is culturally safe and responsive to consumer needs through recent practice experience, continuing professional education, and continuing practice development
- enhances and expands the roles, and work opportunities for mental health nurses
- is the designated national standard for mental health nurses to participate in Medicare initiatives provided by allied health professionals, and in primary mental health care programs such as the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program.

How do I become credentialed?

Criteria

To gain the credential, applicants must demonstrate that they:

- hold a current licence to practice as a registered nurse within Australia
- hold a recognised specialist/post graduate mental health nursing qualification, or equivalent
- have had at least 12 months experience since completing specialist/postgraduate qualification or 3 years experience as a registered nurse working in mental health
- have been practising within the last three years
- have acquired minimum continuing professional development points for education and practice
- are supported by two professional referees
- have completed a professional declaration agreeing to uphold the standards of the profession.

Assessment

Assessment of applications is by peer review. This is a rigorous process carried out by other credentialed mental health nurses who volunteer and are trained as peer reviewers.

"The Credential for Practice Program has provided mental health nurses with a new level of credibility."

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