


**Professional Certification**  
*Purpose, Preparation & Passing*

Sharon K. Colling  
CNHA, CALA, CSW, FACHCA

ACHCA Annual Convocation  
April 4, 2017



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Speaker Disclosure:

- I have a commercial interest in the following organizations:
  1. Lantern Health Services (President/CEO)
    - LHS provides comprehensive facility management, consulting and development services for post-acute, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities as well as senior housing communities.

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Today:

- Definitions
- Professional Certification Overview
- History & Value
  - Evolution of Exam
  - Development Process
  - Reasons to Pursue
- Eligibility Requirements

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Today:

- Application Process
- Application Procedure & Costs
- Exam Structure & Content
- Exam Preparation & Test-Taking Strategies
- Re-Certification
- Advancement to Fellow



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Warm-Up:

Q: Why do hummingbirds hum?  
**Because they forgot the words.**

Q: If H<sub>2</sub>O is inside a fire hydrant,  
what is on the outside?  
**K, P**



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Definitions

Licensure:

- Mandatory. Government Requirement.
- May also be called Registration or Certification by some states
- Requires Assessment Testing
- Sets MINIMUM, entry-level competence
- Goal: Protect public from incompetence



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Definitions

Certification:

- Voluntary. Non-Governmental
- Requires Assessment Testing
- Sets Advanced Professional Standards
- Identifies & Recognizes Those Who are Performing at an Advanced Level
- Results in an Advanced Professional Credential



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Definitions

- Certificate:
  - Voluntary
  - Not regulated or standardized
  - A prescribed course or curriculum with a Certificate of Completion at the end
  - May or may not include any testing
  - Not to be confused with Professional Certification



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Certification Overview & Purpose

- Mission
  - Visible & Tangible Evidence for Public Accountability
  - Leadership for Quality LTC Delivery
- Goal: Recognize Demonstration of Advanced...
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
  - Values
  - Judgment



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## History & Value

- Certified Nursing Home Administrator (CNHA) Exam established in 1978
- Brown University & LTCQ Study of 2000
- Independent Study of 2013. Published Soon
  - Both used Comparative Studies of Facilities with Certified vs. Non-certified Administrators

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## Findings

### Certified Administrators

Operate Facilities With:

- ☑ Higher Quality of Care\*
- ☑ Fewer Deficiencies
- ☑ Higher Medicare & Private Pay Mix
- ☑ Greater Functionally Dependent Residents

\* Using QI Measures, # Deficiencies, 5-Star Data

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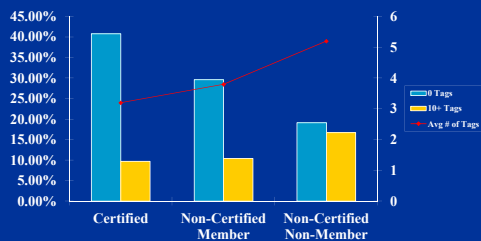
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## Leadership

2000



Source: LTCQ, Quality of Care in Skilled Nursing Facilities, 1999

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Reasons to Pursue Professional Certification

- Reflects Commitment to Residents, Families, Staff, and Organization
- Promotes Quality in Profession
- Improves Public Image of Administrators
- Personal Satisfaction & a Sense of Achievement
- Employer Recognition (Resume, Wages, CoH)
- ACHCA Recognitions (Five Separate Actions)


  
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Reasons to Pursue Professional Certification

- **22\*** State LNHA Boards Recognize ACHCA CNHA certification, which in many cases “fast-tracks” NHA licensure
- **10** States in Review
- State Recognition


  
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Reciprocity/Endorsement

■ Alabama	■ Nevada*
■ Arkansas*	■ New Hampshire
■ Arizona	■ New Jersey*
■ Georgia*	■ New Mexico
■ Illinois*	■ New York*
■ Iowa*	■ North Dakota*
■ Florida	■ Ohio*
■ Kansas	■ Oregon*
■ Kentucky*	■ Rhode Island*
■ Louisiana*	■ South Carolina*
■ Maine*	■ Tennessee*
■ Massachusetts*	■ Utah*
■ Maryland	■ Vermont
■ Michigan*	■ Washington*
■ Missouri	■ Washington, DC
■ Minnesota*	■ West Virginia*
	■ Wisconsin*

\* Recognized now, White-Consideration


  
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### Eligibility Criteria

- Education & Experience
  - Two Years of Work Experience
  - Education: Varies by Discipline
  - Do **NOT** Need to be ACHCA Member
- Continuing Education
  - 40 Clock Hours Over Previous Two Years
- ⊗ Bias for Gender, Race, Religion or National Origin

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### Eligibility: NHA

- Experience: At least 2 Years LNHA
- CEU: 40 Hours Minimum in 2 Yr Prior to Application
- Education: Bachelor's Degree (if lic > 1/1/96)

### Eligibility: ALA

- Experience: At least 2 Years ALA
- CEU: 40 Hours Minimum in 2 Yr Prior to Application
- Education: Bachelor's Degree + 2 Yrs OR  
RN or Associate Degree + 4 Yrs OR  
HS/GED, LPN/LVN + 6 Yrs

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### Development Process

- Selection of HumRRO
- Identification: Knowledge Area Experts
- Job Analysis & Training
- Ongoing Review Process
  - Replace
  - Modify

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### Evolution of Exam

- Early Stages
  - Multiple-Choice, Knowledge-Based Exam
  - Peer-Reviewed Simulated Exercise
- Current Model
  - Multiple-Choice, Knowledge-Based Exam
  - Two-Part Multi-Disciplinary Exam:
    - 110 General Administration Questions
    - 40 Facility-Specific Questions (SNF or AL)

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### Exam Structure

**General Administration (110 Questions)**

1. Resident Care (includes Clinical & Food Service) (26%)
2. Human Resources/Personnel Mgmt (16%)
3. Financial Management (20%)
4. Environmental Management (15%)
5. Leadership (24%)

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### Exam Structure

**Nursing Home & Assisted Living  
(40 Questions Each Section)**

- Resident Care (27%)
- Human Resources (15%)
- Financial Management (25%)
- Environmental Management (11%)
- Leadership (23%)

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### Exam Preparation

- **Review:** Reading List (See ACHCA Website)
- **Identify:** Specific Areas of Review
- **Consult:** Experienced CNHA/CALA
- **Trust:** Yourself. Experience is a great teacher!
- **Remember:**
  - 150 Item Multiple-Choice Exam
  - 3 HOURS allowed for exam completion
  - One Additional Hour for 2<sup>nd</sup> Discipline Same Day

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### Test-Taking Strategies

- **Good News:** Correct Answer is *There!*
- **Process of Elimination**
  - Correct = Count
- **Practice Timed Test**
- **Digital Exam (www.Lasergrade.com)**
  - Content Review
  - Immediate score

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### Application Process

- **Application Handbook & Packet**
  - On ACHCA Website ([www.achca.org](http://www.achca.org))
  - Work Experience (Verification Statement)
  - Diploma or Transcript (if applicable)
  - License (for ALA, if applicable)
  - Proof of Continuing Education in Last 2 Years
  - Acknowledgement: Code of Ethics
  - Application Fee
  - **Submit to ACHCA**

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### Self-Investment: Exam & Credentials

Application – See Handbook Pages 18-19

	ACHCA Member	Non- Member
Single Credential Exam	\$150	\$150
2 <sup>nd</sup> Discipline - <i>Same Day</i>	\$135	\$135
2 <sup>nd</sup> Discipline - <i>Diff Day</i>	\$150	\$150
Single Credentialing Fee *	\$250	\$350
2 <sup>nd</sup> Cred. Fee-Same Day *	\$135	\$135
2 <sup>nd</sup> Cred. Fee - Diff Day *	\$185	\$235
<b>*Paid when exam successfully passed</b>	\$400/\$670	\$500/\$770

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### Exam Feedback

- Exam Feedback is **Confidential**
- Your Score is Kept for 3 Years
- Re-take Only the Failed Part Within 3 Years
  - I. **General Administration: Pass/Fail**
    - Proficiency in Each Domain
  - II. **Discipline-Specific: Pass/Fail**
    - Proficiency in Each Domain

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### Re-Certification

- **Certification:** Valid for 5 Years
- **Renewal**
  1. Pass the Certification Examination
  2. Complete an Executive Portfolio
  3. Completion of Executive Level Course

	Member	Non-Member
■ Renewal Fees	\$339	\$389

■ \$100 for 2<sup>nd</sup> Credential; Exam Option - Original Fees

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Recap: Certification Promotes

- Professional Development
- Employer Recognition
- Customer Confidence
- National Recognition
  - Reciprocity / Endorsement / Mobility
  - Insurance
  - Quality Outcomes

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ACHCA Fellow

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ACHCA Fellow

- Peer Recognition as Leader in the Field
  - Highest Level of Achievement in ACHCA
  - “FACHCA”
- Qualify for Advancement:
  - 2 Years of current, voting ACHCA Membership
  - 165 Points on Application
  - Acknowledge ACHCA’s Code of Ethics

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ACHCA Fellow

**Application**  
Visit [www.achca.org](http://www.achca.org) under the **Development** section

**\$250 = Non-refundable Application Fee**  
**(Same Application Process as Certification)**

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Certification & Advancement

**You Owe it to Your:**

- Residents...
- Staff...
- Employer...
- Community...
- & Self!**

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Sample Questions

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Sample Questions

**Organizational Mgmt & Governance: Operations**

*In conflict resolution, "mediation" is defined as:*

- a. submitting the dispute to a neutral third party, who makes a decision for the parties to accept or reject.
- b. utilizing a neutral third party, who assists in framing the issues, enhancing communication, and developing possible solutions.
- c. submitting the dispute to a neutral third party who documents the solution.
- d. a voluntary, informal process in which disputants reach a mutually acceptable agreement.



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Sample Questions

**Organizational Mgt & Governance: Operations**

*In conflict resolution, "mediation" is defined as:*

- b. utilizing a neutral third party, who assists in framing the issues, enhancing communication, and developing possible solutions.



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Sample Questions

**Financial**

*Accrual accounting provides a clear image of the current financial condition of the community by*

- a. Allowing current cash inflows to be combined with expected current cash outflows
- b. Including depreciation and expenses
- c. Measuring the performance by when the cash transactions occur.
- d. Measuring revenues earned after expenses have been paid by matching revenues and expenses for each time period



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**Sample Questions**  
**Financial**

*Accrual accounting provides a clear image of the current financial condition of the community by*

d. Measuring revenues earned after expenses have been paid by matching revenues and expenses for each time period

  
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**Specialty Exam: Nursing Home**  
**Client Services:**  
**Knowledge of Codes, Rules & Regulations**

*What does the term "separately locked" in reference to drug storage mean?*

a. Schedule II drugs do not need to be locked except when refrigerated.  
b. the key to gain access to non-Schedule II drugs should be the same key used to lock Schedule II drugs on the medication cart.  
c. Schedule II drugs do not need to have a separate key to lock them if an MD orders to self administer.  
d. the key to lock Schedule II drugs cannot be the same key used to access non-Schedule II drugs.

  
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**Specialty Exam: Nursing Home**  
**Client Services:**  
**Knowledge of Codes, Rules & Regulations**

*What does the term "separately locked" in reference to drug storage mean?*

d. the key to lock Schedule II drugs cannot be the same key used to access non-Schedule II drugs.

  
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**Specialty Exam: Assisted Living**

**Clinical Services**  
**Knowledge of Client & Org. Outcomes**

*A standardized document that identifies areas and amounts of assistance in an assisted living facility is called:*

- a. Instrumental Activities of Daily Living.
- b. Range of Services Provided.
- c. Client or Resident Assessment.
- d. Shared Responsibility.

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**Specialty Exam: Assisted Living**

**Clinical Services**  
**Knowledge of Client & Org. Outcomes**

*A standardized document that identifies areas and amounts of assistance in an assisted living facility is called:*

- c. *Client or Resident Assessment.*

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**Certification**  
**Readiness Seminar Part II**

- **30 Sample Exam Items**
  - Sneak Preview & Practice
  - Discussion
- Exam Environment
- References for Preparation

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*Time Remaining*

15 minutes

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*Time Remaining*

10 minutes

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*Time Remaining*

5 minutes

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*Time Remaining*

2 minutes

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*Time Remaining*

● STOP ●

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Discount  
for  
Today's  
Attendees !

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**Certification & Advancement**

**You Owe it to Your:**

- Residents...
- Staff...
- Employer...
- Community...
- & Self!**

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**Thank You!**

For More Info:

[www.achca.org](http://www.achca.org)  
(202) 536-5120

OR

[professionaladvancement@achca.org](mailto:professionaladvancement@achca.org)

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