

NEWS FROM CGFNS INTERNATIONAL

CGFNS partners with HHRDC to create ISPN

CGFNS International with its 30 years of experience testing international nurses, and the Health Human Resources Development Center (HHRDC) of the People's Republic of China announced in December 2008 the signing of an agreement introducing the International Standards for Professional Nurses (ISPN) program there.

The International Standards for Professional Nurses (ISPN) program consists of two components: an initial verification of first-level, general nurse status followed by an examination to assess nursing knowledge. The examination is the CGFNS Qualifying ExamSM, which has been administered worldwide since 1977 to foreign-educated nurses who wish to practice in the United States. The exam satisfies the examination component of both the CGFNS Certification Program and *VisaScreen*[®] and has been administered under these programs in China since 2003.

"The CGFNS Qualifying ExamSM," said Barbara L. Nichols, CEO of CGFNS International, "is being unbundled from the CGFNS Certification Program to create an exam component for the ISPN so nurses in China can measure their nursing knowledge against established international standards."

Dr. Li Feng, Director General of HHRDC, said, "I am delighted to bring the ISPN program to China. This program will provide the international benchmarking that we desire to strengthen nursing education and practice in China. Our nurses aspire to achieve international standards and I am confident that they will take full advantage of this opportunity to participate in this program."

First-level, general nurses residing in the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong and Macao who wish to participate in the HHRDC-CGFNS-ISPN program must have graduated from a government-approved nursing school and must have their status as a first-level, general nurse verified. The first administration of the CGFNS Qualifying ExamSM under the ISPN program is scheduled for July 2009.

The four major areas of nursing — adult health nursing, nursing of children, psychiatric/mental health nursing and maternal/infant nursing — form the foundation of the examination. For more details about the HHRDC or the HHRDC-CGFNS-ISPN program, go to www.hhrdc.org/english_wecan/index.html

US Defense Department opens doors for nurses

The Defense Department has announced that it has authorized the military services to implement a pilot program temporarily permitting enlistment into military service certain legal aliens (who have lived in the United States for at least two years), who hold skills that are critically needed in the military.

The pilot will address health care professionals holding needed medical specialties (physicians and nurses) and people with skills in certain strategic foreign languages and cultures, qualifications important to present and future military operations. A fact sheet detailing the languages and basic requirements is available.

"The services are doing a tremendous job of recruiting quality personnel to meet our various missions," said Bill Carr, deputy undersecretary of defense for military personnel policy. "This pilot seeks to provide yet another opportunity to fill the gaps with people who are highly qualified and eager to serve this nation."

The military services will review their requirements and determine the pilot's efficacy within their service. If they choose to participate, they will provide implementation plans within 45 days. The pilot may recruit up to 1,000 people, and after one year, its value for enhancing military readiness will be evaluated.

Non-citizens have served in the U.S. military since the Revolutionary War. Today about 29,000 non-citizens serve in uniform, and about 8,000 permanent resident aliens (green card holders) enlist each year. This initiative expands non-citizen eligibility for military service to include not only the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

VisaScreen[®] renewal



VisaScreen[®] certificate holders who have not changed their status or obtained a permanent U.S. visa are required to renew their certificates within five years of the date it was issued. Applicants should begin the process six months prior to the expiration of their *VisaScreen*[®] certificate. The cost for renewal is \$250 USD. The application for *VisaScreen*[®] renewal has been updated and is available for download at www.cgfns.org/files/pdf/apps/visascreen_reapp.pdf. Applicants may also apply online through CGFNS Connect.

CGFNS hosts Building Global Alliances symposium



SALLY ARMSTRONG



DIANA MASON



LAURA LEDERER

We sincerely appreciate the thought leaders, clinicians, researchers and policy makers who participated in our fifth Building Global Alliances symposium, The Challenges of Migration for Health Professional Women, on December 7–8, 2008 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. Through this symposium on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights, we achieved a greater understanding of the cultural, social and political challenges of global migration for health professional women as a strategy for change. The presentations surpassed our expectations in terms of being forward-thinking, thought-provoking and sometimes sobering. In addition, we celebrated the accomplishments of Dr. Afaf Meleis as the 2008 CGFNS International Distinguished Leadership Award recipient.

We at CGFNS are proud of the work we do. For over 30 years, the Commission has committed itself to protecting the public by ensuring that foreign-educated nurses and other health care professionals who wish to practice in the United States are eligible and qualified to meet U.S. licensure and practice requirements. In addition to protecting the public trust, CGFNS has been equally dedicated to fostering just treatment of health care professionals worldwide.

Migrant women in general and migrant health professionals in particular affect and impact health care delivery systems globally. To that end, the Commission’s historical purpose to advocate for social justice and equitable treatment of foreign-educated health professionals has been given voice throughout the Building Global Alliances series of symposiums.

Health care human resources and the need for cultural adaptability will continue to mushroom amidst a challenging economy and immigration environment. We look forward to hosting future Building Global Alliances symposiums and International Distinguished Leadership award galas in anticipation of the issues surrounding global alliances, migration, and international diplomacy and the changes that are taking place.



KATRIN SCHULTHEISS



PETER BUERHAUS



DEBORAH WASHINGTON

2009 QUALIFYING EXAMSM SCHEDULE

Examination date	Deadline for new applications*	Deadline for re-applications*	Deadline to change location/test date
March 11, 2009	December 10, 2008	January 7, 2009	December 31, 2008
July 8, 2009	April 8, 2009	May 6, 2009	April 29, 2009

*Application deadlines are firm unless extended by CGFNS.

QUALIFYING EXAMSM TEST CENTERS OPEN FOR MARCH 11 EXAM

Country	Test center	Number	Country	Test center	Number
Jamaica	Kingston	815	Philippines	Manila	823
Nigeria	Abuja	925		Cebu City	907
Peru	Lima	843	Taiwan	Taipei	827
			United States of America	New York, New York	540

Immigration challenges for practical nurses

Although there is a documented need for practical nurses in the United States, the immigration process is not as streamlined for practical nurses as it is for registered nurses.

Employers in the United States who wish to recruit practical nurses from abroad must file a petition with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). This must be supported by the employer's documentation of the need for a worker who is not a citizen of the United States, evidence of unsuccessful recruitment of U.S. citizens, establishment of the prevailing wage, the employer's ability to pay, necessary proof of licensure and required notices at the work site as part of the employer's labor certification to the Department of Labor. Upon approval of the labor certification USCIS can proceed with processing the visa application. The labor certification process can take up to five years.

Another challenge to practical nurse migration is that practical nurses are not considered professionals because their education is less than two years. USCIS regulations mandate that to be considered a professional, an individual's education must be greater than two years. This also means

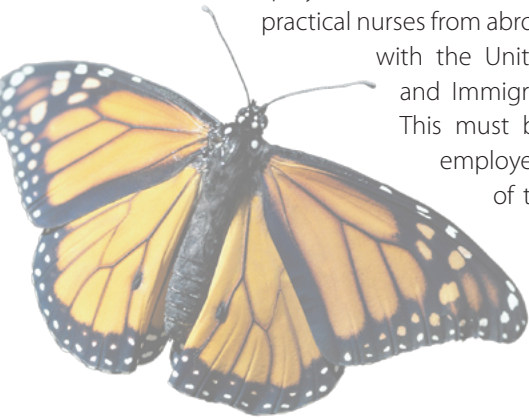
that practical nurses are not eligible under the H-1B or Trade NAFTA temporary visa categories.

A third factor is that there is no predictor exam like the CGFNS Qualifying ExamSM for registered nurses. This means that the practical nurse is limited to 11 international sites where the U.S. licensing exam (NCLEX-PN[®]) can be taken. Applicants who do not live near those sites would have to travel to them. Most U.S. employers are not enthusiastic about accepting that expense when there is no assurance that the practical nurse will be successful on the NCLEX-PN[®].

At this time the major cloud of contention regarding practical nurses schooled outside the United States is whether their occupation is recognized by the country in which they were educated. Presently, CGFNS is seeing a proliferation of practical nursing programs opening in several countries, specifically in Haiti, Jamaica and the Philippines. These are of particular concern because there is no licensure process for practical nurses in those countries. This significantly impacts graduates of those accredited schools in Jamaica, Haiti and the Philippines. Some state boards of nursing require that the country must recognize the practical nurse entity by granting licensure or registration. They also believe that a scope of practice, universal standards of education, practice standards and disciplinary or oversight processes by the nursing authority must exist for the occupation. There is no demonstrable quality control of programs or practice without such processes.

CGFNS International recommends that those who are pursuing nursing education programs outside or inside the United States should thoroughly research the school and/or program before applying. This can be done by checking with the ministries of health, nursing councils and state boards of nursing to determine if the schools are accredited/approved to ensure that the eligibility criteria for U.S. licensure is met.

“Another challenge to practical nurse migration is that these nurses are not considered professionals because their education is less than two years, as designated by USCIS regulations”



Defense Department

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

green card holders, but also those visa holders legally present in the U.S., such as doctors, nurses, and students.

Those volunteering to serve the nation by joining the military during a time of war would be eligible for accelerated citizenship — as are all others who serve in the military — by virtue of the July 3, 2002 executive order that allows expedited naturalization for those non-citizens who serve in our armed forces.