

The ABOHN REPORT

Board Certification: Engage Excellence



American Board for
Occupational Health Nurses, Inc.

Spring 2018 - Volume 41—Issue 1

Message from the ABOHN Chair *by Wanda Smiling*



Well, six months has passed so quickly and I am anxiously awaiting the Spring. A time for new beginnings. It is a highly-anticipated season that ushers in new life and a renewed sense of hope.

I hope this new season is filled with much success and exponential growth for all. As we review our progress and mark off milestones towards our resolutions, let's look with fresh eyes upon our goals. If by chance more of your milestones remain on the list than those already accomplished, view it as an opportunity to use your time more wisely.

That is exactly what we have decided to do here at ABOHN. We have taken a closer look at our processes to determine if we could do them more efficiently. Our goal was not to recreate the wheel by re-vamping our entire system. Instead we needed to tweak a few things to ensure a smoother operating mechanism.

We have begun the process of strategic planning. We set great goals in the past, but we felt that the process of measuring our success was not always completely clear. To that end, we are embarking on a project of strategic planning to meet the

needs of the organization and the changing world culture.

We are also completing a long overdue practice analysis. We have begun the initial phase and have had much success with the process thus far. We admonish all certified Nurses to participate in the upcoming survey so that we may glean pertinent and useful information that will keep us on the cutting edge and thus ensuring the most efficient and professionally prepared Occupational Health Nurses available.

Alas, I am encouraged and elated about the projects we are now deeply entrenched in and working together we will all reap the benefits of their conclusions.

So, bring on the Spring season: We are ready to be renewed!

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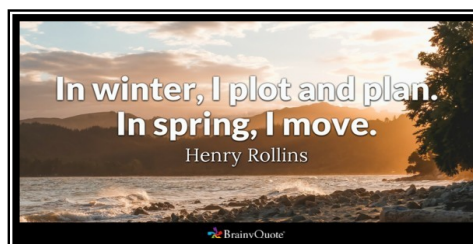
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Accredited by the :
National
Commission for
Certifying Agencies



**Celebrate
OHN Week
April 9-15,
2018**



ABOHN 2017-2018 Board of Directors



Back Row: L-R: Beverly Hagar, Michele Willis, Daurice Holly, Melinda Cordova, Jim Persoon, Lucy Carlson, Denise Matthews. Front Row: L-R: Jean Drevdahl-Orchard, Denise Knoblauch, Wanda Smiling, Noreen Olson, Pamela Swann

2017-2018 ABOHN Governing Council

Chair: Wanda Smiling,
BSN, CARN, COHN-S

Treasurer: Noreen Olson,
MN, RN, ARM, COHN-S

Secretary: Michele Willis,
BSN, RN, COHN-S

COHN Chair: Jean Drevdahl-Orchard,
PhD, RN-BC, CCM, CIH, CSP, CHMM, COHN-S/CM

COHN-S Chair: Beverly Hagar,
BSN, RN, COHN-S

CM Chair: Lucy Carlson,
MSN, MPH, RN, COHN-S/CM

Directors

Melinda Cordova,
BSN, RN, COHN/CM

Daurice Holly,
RN, COHN, CCM, FAOHN

Denise Matthews,
BSN, RN, COHN-S

Jim Persoon,
PhD, Public Member

Pamela Swann,
RN, COHN

Call for Board of Director Nominees

Sadly, every year we must say farewell to one or several members of our board. Each member brings their own unique perspective to our Board and becomes a subject matter expert (SME) for the region and industry in which they practice.

For 2019-2020, we will require two Directors for the ABOHN Board. We constantly strive to represent all credentials (COHN, COHN-S, CM), industries, and regions, including Canada, with whom we have a Reciprocity agreement.

If you are interested in serving on ABOHN's Board of Directors, please find the information online at www.abohn.org under the **About Us** tab and within the Board section.

THANK YOU!



CONGRATULATIONS ABOHN NEWLY BOARD CERTIFIED

CLASS OF 2017

BOARD CERTIFICATION: ENGAGE EXCELLENCE

Join us in congratulating these occupational health nurses for their accomplishments and for their right to use the COHN, COHN-S and CM credentials which they gained last year by passing stringent examinations for certification. We proudly present the ABOHN Class of 2017:

Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN)

Barry, Bernadette
Berg, Deborah
Boles, Angel
Briggs, Nancy
Brown, Angie
Clark, Billie
Cohon, Sandra
Connolly, Ellen
Cooley, Kimberly
Davis, Reyna
Felice, Maureen
Foster, Christine
Gianos, Sara
Gustafson, Margaret
Hawley, Christine
Hertz, Stephanie
Hill, Blake
Hill, Renee
Jacoby, Mary
Jimenez, Rosa
Jost, Tonya**
Kline, Tiffany
Knott, Lee Ann
Kobesko, Jennifer
Kocsis, Sharon
Kolak, Patricia
Lamour-Romero, Corinne
Lancaster, Ashley
Lane, Shannon
Long, Tammy
Lowe, Rebecca
Maddox, Jamie
Marett, Benjamin
McCay, Mary
McKay, Christine
McLochlin, Jillian
McPadden, Michelle
McVay, Christopher
Merrill, Kyler

Miller, Shelaine
Moran, Lisa
Morey, Kay Ann
Nealer, Teresa
Newsome, Jennifer
O'Connell, Cindy
Paolucci, Kathryn
Podolec, Marcia
Potter, Jenny
Ragan, Barbara
Roering, Maria
Rogers, Dawn
Sanders, Shirley
Schjoll, Jennifer
Sorrels, Misty
Stapleton, Tami
Surita, Patricia
Underwood, Ronald
Veltman, Elizabeth
Woodward, Joyce

Certified Occupational Health Nurse - Specialist (COHN-S)

Allman, Connie
Anderson, Lorraine
Bacon, Carolyn
Baldwin, Pamela
Ballard, Angela
Barton, Deborah
Berry, Kim
Berryhill, Shannon
Bodemann, Carrie
Bold, Wenda
Brass, Tammy
Candito, Rita
Caudell, Kelly
Chlarson, Craig
Conti, Theresa

Dake, Margaret
Davis, Emily
Diestler, Christine
Elam, Jessica
Epps, Nancy
Ervin-White, Jeannine
Flammang, Devon
Fritsch, Linda
Garvin-Dumay, Chanise
Gould, Elizabeth
Grace, Peggy
Gurley, LaTresa
Hartgens, Janice
Heath, Yonna
Heaton, Karen
Helton-Mayne, Denise
Hill, Samantha
Hinkle, Kevin
Holschuh, Patricia
Howard, Jamie
Hruska, Colleen
Jacobson, Maria
Jones, Phoebe
Julien, Clara
Karr, Heather
Keane, Alison
Kilbride, Karis
Kimble, Denise
Kiner, Elizabeth
Krasnoselsky, Adam
Lacey, Elizabeth
Lam, Ria
Lapp, Cora
Lawyer, Angelique
Leinonen-Cook, Vickie
Levis, Stephanie
Lockridge, Khelli
Long, Jessica
McGinnis, Amanda
McGowan-Lee, Martha
McKee, Jake

McMahon, George
Meighen, Nicole
Mellon, Susan
Mnieckowski, Gena
Mott, Peter
Oswald, Kristin
Owolawi, Cecilia
Peters, Meaghan
Rattazzi, Theresa
Rinehart, Rene
Rogan, Sarah
Rose, Roberta
Rosner, Jurgen
Saunders, Laura
Smith, Roberta
Smith, Patrina
Smith, Shannon
South, Joseph
Stallard, Christopher
Taylor, Donna
Thompson, Maureen
Tomalia, Kara
Tullberg, Trent
Wahlenmaier, Victoria
Watts, Thresa
Wicks, Rita **

Case Management - (CM)

Austin, Dorothy
Harsch, Joyce
Huesgen, Lisa
Jost, Tonya**
Phelps, Stephanie
Santee, Lee Ann
Wampler, Sandra
Wicks, Rita **
Wood, Renee

** Indicates passed an ABOHN Core Credential and CM examination in the same

Someone You Should Know!

Melissa J. LeBlanc, BSN, RN, CCM, COHN-S

Melissa graduated from Rhode Island College in 1988 and if anyone had told her that nursing would offer the variety of opportunities that it had, she never would have believed them! In 1988, there was a significant nursing shortage. Melissa was recruited by Yale New Haven Hospital, in New Haven Connecticut where she worked with physicians and nurses who were on the cutting edge of research and practice. Interventional Radiology, Patient Controlled Analgesia, Heart/Lung and Liver Transplantation and Microscopic Surgery were in its infancy, and she was able to experience it firsthand. It was a dream job and she loved.

A few short years later, at 25 years old, Melissa sustained a serious back injury, ending her vocation in bedside nursing. With the career she envisioned over, she was devastated. Dr. Gary Bloomgarden, Neurosurgeon who operated on her back, sensed her depressed mood and facilitated a job interview with an occupational health firm where his wife was employed.

Armed with her brief hospital career and limited personal experience with the Workers' Compensation system, Melissa began her career in Occupational Health Nursing. Anthony DiGuida, RN, former President and Proprietor of Occupational Health Managers & Resources, was her first mentor in Occupational Health Nursing. He bartered his services as an instructor so that she could attend the Annette Haag Occupational Health Nursing Certification Review Course, free of charge. Melissa states, "I was amazed at the breadth and scope of Occupational Health Nursing. It was humbling and exciting to realize how much I didn't understand or was even aware of in my own profession. I was like a sponge absorbing as much information as I could." Melissa continued to work with Mr. DiGuida, opening a satellite office of his firm in Atlanta, Georgia, and laying the foundation for a new office. Melissa recalls that this position was a combination of nursing meets business, law, and most importantly, people.

Melissa's passion for Occupational Health Nursing truly took root while she was working as an Occupational Health Nurse Administrator for the United States Postal Service. In 1996, she became Certified as an Occupational Health Nurse - Specialist. Over the 18 years that she was with the Postal Service, Melissa was responsible for the Occupational Health needs for up to 13,000 employees, up to 50 medical contract providers, supervisor and DOT training, Fitness for Duty examinations, Pre-placement Physical and Medical Assessment programs, Wellness, mass hiring for holiday and summer seasons, to name a few.

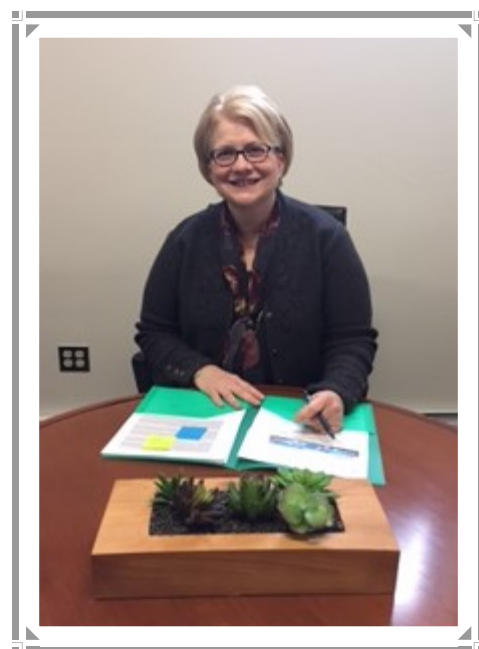
The USPS entered a new age in Occupational Health Nursing after 9-11 and the subsequent Anthrax in the mail crises. For the first time in history, biohazard detection machines were installed in Postal Distribution Centers. Emergency Preparedness became much more than continuation of operation plans for power outages, floods and other weather-related events. Mass vaccination and antibiotic distribution sites needed to be included in plans. Active shooter and hostage situations needed to be addressed. Melissa was fortunate to be included in the creation and exercising of these plans. Collaboration with local government, state police, fire, local emergency management, FEMA, FBI and Homeland Security was necessary. She grew tremendously as a professional nurse and person.

To survive in a rapidly declining market, the United States Postal Service consolidated several districts throughout the country. The Southeast New England District, located in Providence RI, was dissolved. Melissa decided not to stay with USPS and uproot her family.

She took an online employment and aptitude test to see where her experience and skills would lead her. Melissa was surprised to find that Human Resources, not nursing, was where she may belong. West Warwick Public Schools was looking for a Director of Human Resources. She applied and was the successful candidate for the position. Ironically, it was her nursing education and experience that tipped the scale in her favor. Melissa is responsible for many of the same programs for the school department that she was during her work as an Occupational Health Nurse. (Workers' Compensation Program, FMLA, Safety Committee, Reasonable Accommodation Program for employees, contract management for educational vendors, management of District Medical Director and Dentist, Wellness, staff professional development and training, Crisis intervention, Fitness for Duty Program, etc.)

After 15 years of dating, Melissa married her high school sweetheart who also happens to be her brother's best friend. She has been happily married for 21 years and has 16-year-old twins, Alexander and Victoria. Most of her free time is spent reading or chauffeuring her children to voice lessons, piano lessons or musical theatre productions.

Occasionally, someone will ask Melissa why she left nursing. Melissa replies that she "is the Occupational Health Nurse for West Warwick Public Schools." Her education and the Nursing Process is applicable to every position she has held, including wife and mother. That's why we think Melissa is Someone You Should Know!



Call for Research Proposals

The ABOHN Research Committee is accepting applications for the [2018 Applied Research Grant](#). Proposals for research projects that are in progress or have been completed in the past year will be accepted. The purposes of the Applied Research Grant are to assist nurses to be successful in becoming certified, assess the effects of certification, and demonstrate the value of certification in occupational health nursing. The winner of this award will receive \$1,000.

Consideration for awards may be based upon the following criteria.

1. Applicant must be a certified occupational health nurse (COHN or COHN-S), or a non-certified registered nurse who works in occupational health or is studying occupational health nursing who is collaborating with a certified occupational health nurse.
2. Applicant must present an applied research project focusing on certification in occupational health nursing. Examples of research related to certification include:
 - The effect of certification on occupational health service outcomes (i.e., quality, cost, effectiveness, safety, etc.);
 - The effects of preparation strategies for successfully achieving certification;
 - Effects of age, education, experience, practice setting, etc. on success in becoming certified;
 - The relationship of certification on OHN retention, career development, satisfaction, benefits, etc.;
 - Strategies to improve employer and management understanding of certification for occupational health nurses;
 - The relationship of certification regarding role expansion or career diversity;
 - The career benefits OHNs experience from certification;
 - The role of the certified OHN on multi-disciplinary teams;
 - The value of certification for the employer, consumer, or nurse.

Please note: ABOHN will support research projects by providing mailing labels or e-mail addresses of certified nurses as appropriate to the project, and by making aggregate data available from the ABOHN database at no cost (over 3, 500 certified nurses).

The deadline for submission of completed applications is **September 1, 2018**.

You can use the hyperlink above or contact the ABOHN office at info@abohn.org for the full guidelines and application. For any questions about the Research Grant, please contact Denise Knoblauch, Executive Director at 630-789-5799.

Special Recognition!

ABOHN would like to give special recognition to our certified occupational nurses who have held the COHN, COHN-S and CM credentials for over 35 years and are still Active in the OH industry.

Congratulations to all of these outstanding individuals !



Year Certified	Credential	Name
1974	COHN-S/CM	Gloria Garrett
1975	COHN-S/CM	Annette Haag
1977	COHN-S/CM	A. Brian Verrall
1978	COHN-S	Betty Scott
1980	COHN-S	Kay Campbell

Credentialing Statistics—Year End

The ABOHN Board of Directors are tasked with many challenges in order to sustain a specialty credentialing program. Table 1 shows the official ABOHN Active, Inactive and Retired certification holders that were in our database system as of 12/31/2017. As the base of our credential holders approach retirement age, we see a decline in Active credential holders. Table 2 shows a decline in our applications in 2017 versus 2016. .

CREDENTIAL	ACTIVE	INACTIVE	RETIRED
COHN	844	4	48
COHN/CM	182	0	9
COHN/SM	0	0	0
COHN/CM/SM	2	0	0
COHN-S	2003	25	364
COHN-S/CM	476	4	87
COHN-S/SM	1	0	1
COHN-S/CM/SM	3	0	0
CM	0	0	0
Total 12/31/2017*	3500	33	509
Total 12/31/2016	3819	51	445

Table 1 (left)

ACTIVE:

Credential holders who have met the criteria to hold certification.

INACTIVE:

Credential holders who have not met one or more requirements for active status and have opted to take inactive status until they are compliant with the requirements.

RETIRED:

Credential holders no longer in practice and maintain their retirement status with ABOHN.

*These numbers do not include those certificants' whose renewal and/or recertification paperwork was processed after 12/31/2017.

Credentialing Statistics—Pass Rate Percentage

Exam Session	COHN			COHN-S			CM		
	Candidates	Number Passed	Percentage Passed	Candidates	Number Passed	Percentage Passed	Candidates	Number Passed	Percentage Passed
2012	72	47	69%	107	77	73.6%	32	26	81%
2013	84	49	59%	102	61	59%	17	11	64%
2014	86	70	77%	150	121	74.2%	17	19	88%
2015	64	48	75%	148	102	69%	22	18	82%
2016	53	34	64.2%	119	70	58.8%	23	18	78.3%
2017	84	68	80.9%	117	82	70.0%	14	9	64.2%

Table 2 (right)

The number of COHN and COHN-S candidates who passed their certification examination increased substantially in 2017. Taking the correct test based on your practice, not education, has a direct impact on the exam passing point.

COHN application increased; COHN-S application remained the same; and CM applications decreased in 2017.

Credentialing Statistics—Recertification

Recertification is required to maintain your credential. Every year there are nurses who retire, change jobs into non-occupational health fields and/or ABOHN has lost contact. All of these areas impact the percent of ABOHN credential holders that recertify each year. Table 3, shows ABOHN's recertification data for the past few years. The current fees associated with all ABOHN's tests; application, exam, renewal and recertification can be found in Table 4.

Recertification Year	Certificants Due for Recertification	Certificants Achieved Recertified	Percent of Recertification
2011	1031	728	71%
2012	615	388	64%
2013	1131	783	69%
2014	1096	752	78.6%
2015	962	567	58%
2016	721	451	62.6%
2017	564	327	60%

Table 3—Recertification Statistics

Application, Renewal and Recertification Fees and Guidelines

	COHN/COHN-S	Case Management	Information
Application Fee	\$150.00	\$150.00	Good for 90 days from the date of approval from the ABOHN office.
Examination Fee	\$400.00	\$250.00	Must be paid within 90 days from the date of the invoice from the ABOHN office and is good for 120 days.*

* If you fail to schedule an appointment and sit for your examination before the expiration date, your examination authorization will be voided and you will have to pay for another application and examination fee.

Exam Authorization (Extension Fee)	\$50.00	\$50.00	One time, 60 day extension to the original 120 day authorization period.
Yearly Renewal Fee	\$150.00	\$50.00	Renewal payments are required every year before the credential holders' expiration date.
Recertification Fee	\$150.00	\$50.00	Recertification occurs every 5 years. Paperwork and the yearly renewal fee is required before the credential holders' expiration date.

Table 4—Application, Renewal and Recertification Fees and Guidelines

January 2018 BOD Meeting—Nashville, TN

The ABOHN Board of Directors held their January Board meeting in Nashville, TN. We were looking for some warm weather to inspire us, but it was only 14 degrees in Nashville when we landed on January 17, 2018! The cold that surrounded us wreaked havoc on the Holiday Inn where we were staying. A roof-top pipe burst sending water cascading through the hotel and set off the fire alarm. All persons had to evacuate. Our booked meeting room was flooded and we were relocated into a new room for the next few days. That didn't stop the ABOHN BOD!

This meeting was the kick-off to the 2018 Practice Analysis which will be sent to all of our ABOHN certification holders along with OHN's who belong the AAOHN and AOHP associations

The ABOHN Board of Directors met with our PSI testing consultant psychometrician, Chris Traynor, for one and half days to begin the process of preparing to launch our Practice Analysis. This meeting was preceded by the board doing some homework by reviewing the current test blueprints, completing a job log, and providing copies of current job descriptions or performance appraisals. The current test blueprints were critically reviewed to consider adding items new to the profession, identifying weaknesses, and review of the current major categories of the credential.

Background: A practice analysis is known by many terms such as practice analysis, job analysis, or job delineation study. This study is imperative for ABOHN as we determine the critical skills, competencies, and knowledge needed by our specific specialty.

ABOHN is undergoing this process to keep our examinations up to date with current practice. Our practice analysis will be survey-based in which you identify the significance of the task regardless of how often the task is performed. The purpose of this project will be to revise the current practice domains and task statements (test blueprint) that serve as the foundation of the three examinations. A practice analysis is a procedure whereby a job is dissected into its component parts, and then examined. ABOHN will collect data from members of AAOHN and AOHP as well as from our certificant database. The testing consultant will work to ensure that you should only receive 1 survey to complete.

The testing consultant will then analyze the ratings and group them into major content areas which will be used to develop the test blueprint that guide the development of the examinations.

This work is extremely important to keep ABOHN's examinations relevant with today's OHN practices. **PLEASE fill out the survey when it comes into your preferred email box. Your answers to these questions help shape the future of the ABOHN Examinations.**

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

In June of 2017, ABOHN began the recruitment and training of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with the goal of adding 10 SME's to the COHN, COHN-S and CM Examination committees. 61 Active credential holders responded to the initial email request and ABOHN undertook vetting these individuals based upon the following criteria:

- Credential held (COHN, COHN-S, COHN/CM, and COHN-S/CM)
- Geographic location
- Business category
- Job title, and
- Experience with exam writing in order to obtain representation of active credential holders.

32 individuals were accepted based on the above criteria and as of 12/31/2017, 21 of these new SMEs have completed their initial training. The ABOHN BOD are thankful to all of the OHN's who responded to this request.

These subject matter experts will be called upon to help write examination questions and review the content included in the ABOHN examinations for accuracy, relevance, and importance to the profession of the OHN who has two years of practical working experience.

The SMEs obligation is for a one-year term, with renewal up to three additional years. If you have any interest in becoming an ABOHN Subject Matter Expert (SME), please look for an email request for new recruits in the Fall of 2018.

AAOHN 2018 National Conference



Join ABOHN

at the AAOHN 2018 National Conference

Booth 603

in the Exhibit Hall!

ABOHN Awards Ceremony and Reception

Tuesday April 17, 2018

6:30pm—8:00pm

Tuscany Rooms 11 & 12.

To honor all Board Certified Occupational Health Nurses and to congratulate the newly credentialed Class of 2017 with presentations to those nurses who achieved the highest score on their exam last year.

Recruit a Colleague for Certification

Congratulations to

Victoria Cameron, COHN-S

of the Kwajalein Range Services LLC, whose corporate offices are located in Huntsville, AL. for winning the 2017 *Recruit A Colleague for Certification* program award. Victoria received a \$300.00 check for encouraging her colleague to sit for the exam. ABOHN credential holders recruited 95 fellow colleagues to sit for the examinations in 2017.

All Certified Occupational Health Nurses (COHN) and Certified Occupational Health Nurse—Specialists (COHN-S) can recruit a fellow nurse working in occupational health. Prospective candidates can indicate on their application a particular COHN/COHN-S holder who has recruited them to initiate the process for certification. The ABOHN office keeps track of these individuals and a random drawing is conducted to pick the winner.

Upcoming Events

You can find information on more conferences, CEUs, and classes on our website under the [Upcoming Events](#) tab.



ABOHN's Vision

ABOHN Certification is recognized and valued as the standard to maximize the health and safety of workers worldwide.

ABOHN's Mission

to promote a standard of excellence in occupational health nursing through credentialing.

Principles and Values

To accomplish its mission and vision, ABOHN commits its resources to achieving the following principles and values:

Establish and promote credentialing standards for professional occupational health nurses.

Publicly recognize individuals who demonstrate that they meet these standards.

Elevate the quality of occupational health nursing practice.

Stimulate the development of improved educational standards and programs in the field of occupational health nursing.

Encourage occupational health nurses to continue their professional education.

Perform the above unrestricted by consideration of national origin, race, creed, disability, color, age and gender.

Create value for employers, their employees and the occupational health professional.

Seek inclusion by partnering with organizations that share ABOHN's mission and values

ABOHN

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