

NEPHROLOGY SOCIAL WORK-CERTIFIED PROGRAM FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the NSW-C cost?

Initial certification \$75; Renewal \$50

How long does the NSW-C last?

Certification is for 3 years and each renewal is for 3 years.

Do I have to apply online?

We encourage all applicants to use the online system, however applications may be submitted by mail. It will take longer to process “paper” applications. To request a paper application, email certification@kidney.org or call 800.622.9010 and ask to speak with the Professional Membership Manager

Do I send in information as I get it?

No. All information and documentation should be uploaded at the same time to avoid any mix-up or mismatching of documentation.

I don't work in a dialysis unit or with kidney transplant program will my position count as working as a Nephrology Social Worker?

Most NSW-C recipients are currently working in a dialysis and/or kidney transplant setting and have at least 2 years nephrology experience. However if you are in another setting and work with a significant number of nephrology patients, the NSW-C Board can review on a case-by-case basis. Typically we have looked for about 50% of your patient/client population having CKD. For many people working in non-traditional nephrology settings, one challenge has been getting 2 nephrology social workers to complete the Competency Summaries.

Does my internship count toward the 2 year requirement?

When considering the years working in nephrology social work, we would count the years worked independently so the internship would not meet that requirement.

What about state licensing?

There is no set level of state licensing required as each state's licensing is different; however since December 31, 2010, all applicants must be licensed in the state(s) in which they practice.

My state does not have licensing – Can I still apply?

No. After December 31, 2010, all applicants must be licensed in the state(s) in which they practice.

I am currently working on obtaining my state license. Do I have to wait to apply for the NSW-C?

Yes, beginning 1/1/2011, licensure became mandatory.

Who has access to this information?

You do. The information is confidential and only the NSW-C Board member reviewing your application will have access to the information.

What about CEUs?

New applicants will have to show **20 hours** of continuing education credits during the **last two (2) years**, with **10** of those hours being **nephrology**-specific, and **3** hours must be in **ethics**.

At renewal, you will submit **30 hours** of continuing education during the **last 3 years**, with **10** of those hours being **nephrology**-specific and **3** hours must be in **ethics**.

How can I get Nephrology specific CEUs?

We have accepted CEUs from the following:

- Program sponsored by NKF or one of its affiliates
- Programs where the CEUs were provided by CNSW, including online CEUs through PERC
- Education provided by Dialysis Corporations or Transplant Programs
- Renal Network
- American Kidney Fund
- Society of Transplant Social Workers, when the content included kidney transplant
- Medical Education Institute (MEI)

If we have questions about the CEUs, we will request additional clarification.

I don't have 3 nephrology social workers where I work to complete the Competency Form. What do I do?

Two of the evaluations must be by nephrology social workers. One may be from another nephrology professional or social worker outside the field of nephrology.

Some suggestions for the social worker evaluations:

1. A corporate nephrology social work director who is familiar with your work.
2. A nephrology social worker in your local CNSW chapter with whom you have worked or discussed cases.
3. A nephrology social worker (even out of state) with whom you have worked and consulted on transient or transplant situations.
4. A nephrology social worker who is willing to discuss (in person or by phone) your cases in terms of the skills criteria.
5. A nephrology social worker with whom you worked in the past.

6. A NKF Division/Affiliate social work staff member familiar with your work.
7. A Renal Network social worker familiar with your work.
8. Form a conference call "professional consultation group." Document the calls and, when comfortable, participants can evaluate each other.

Any of the NSW-C Board will be glad to talk with you about your specific situation and help you determine who might be an appropriate individual to approach about your evaluations.

My hospital/facility is paying my certification fee. How is that handled?

You have 2 options:

1. Pay with your own funds and seek reimbursement.
2. Apply using a paper application, enclosing your company's check with your application.

Please note – application fee is non-refundable.

Can my Competency Form be completed by a retiree or someone who is no longer in nephrology?

We will accept competency forms from retired nephrology social workers or those who are no longer working in nephrology; however, they will need to submit a copy of their most recent resume or CV and these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. There is no promise that the Board will accept these individuals as meeting the two nephrology social worker requirement.

What happens if I do not renew my NSW-C?

We ask you to stop including the certification on your business cards and signature lines. On your resume, you should only include the range of years that you were certified.

My NSW-C lapsed, what are my next steps?

If your NSW-C has been lapsed for over a year, you will need to restart the application process including the 3 Competency Summaries, CEU sheet, and pay the initial enrollment fees.

I haven't been getting any emails about my NSW-C, what happened?

We have been hearing that some corporate email servers have been labelling emails from organizations like NKF into their "spam" box or blocking completely. Some people prefer to use personal email addresses.

What if I still have questions?

As the NSW-C Board members are volunteers and managing the applications in addition to their regular caseload, we ask the questions start through the NKF Professional Membership Manager. If you have further questions or concerns, you can also reach out to the Chair of the NSW-C Board, Lara Tushla.