

Building a Competent Workforce: Prevention Specialist Certification

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2

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Our Objectives

- ▶ Describe the competency needs of the current prevention workforce
- ▶ List benefits and barriers to certification
- ▶ Describe the scope of work, core competencies and standards for prevention specialists set by IC&RC subject matter experts in the profession
- ▶ List resources to prepare for certification

Times They Are A-Changing...What Does a Prevention Professional Need to Know

- ▶ Skill Sets Related to the Strategic Prevention Framework
- ▶ Coalition Building and Community Mobilization
- ▶ Health Equity
- ▶ Cultural Responsiveness
- ▶ Communication and Group Facilitation
- ▶ Technology and Social Media Savvy
- ▶ Prevention Ethics
- ▶ Organizational Structures and Management
- ▶ Current Drug Trends and Policies
- ▶ Social Determinants of Physical Health and Behavioral Health

What Does Certification Have to Do with Competency in Prevention?

- ▶ A profession is a full-time occupation.
- ▶ Competencies are identified for a profession.
- ▶ Education/training institutions are established.
- ▶ Local/national associations are established.
- ▶ State licensing laws/certification regulations are established.

PREVENTION IS A PROFESSION. Certification is part of being a profession.

Prevention as a Regulated Profession

There are two basic tenets for regulation:

1. There is a level of risk to the public.
2. There is a specific body of knowledge which requires competency by the professional.

Prevention meets both of these identifiers.



Prevention Competency

- ▶ Competency must be measured and monitored. We cannot assume that someone is competent.
- ▶ Other professions measure and monitor: medicine, psychology, social work, law, etc.



What Is the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)?

- ▶ For more than 35 years, IC&RC has developed standards and examinations for credentialing of prevention, substance use treatment, and recovery professionals that adhere to the highest standards of quality and integrity.
- ▶ Today, IC&RC represents 82 member boards, including 24 countries, 46 states and territories, 4 Native American regions, and all branches of the U.S. military.
- ▶ **51 boards offer the Prevention Specialist credential.**

What Certifications Does IC&RC Offer?

- ▶ Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC)
- ▶ Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC)
- ▶ Clinical Supervisor (CS)
- ▶ **Prevention Specialist (PS) – since 1994**
- ▶ Certified Criminal Justice Addictions Professional (CCJP)
- ▶ Certified Co-Occurring Disorders Professional (CCDP), and Certified Co-Occurring Disorders Professional Diplomate (CCDPD)
- ▶ Peer Recovery (PR)

What Are the Benefits of Certification?

- ▶ **Is a quantifiable milestone** of achievement identifying professionals who are specialists in the field, setting them apart from others not certified
- ▶ **Establishes credibility** and **verifies competency** in the field .
- ▶ **Becomes a marketing tool and career mobility** for the professional when seeking employment or advancement.
- ▶ **Becomes a marketing tool for the agency** when promoting their services to the public.
- ▶ **Offers the benefit of reciprocity** when moving to another state, country, or nation.
- ▶ **Provides public protection** and a grievance process for those harmed.
- ▶ **Establishes a cadre of advocates** for prevention.

And the Barriers?

- ▶ Cost and sustainability
- ▶ Lower salary than other behavioral health positions
- ▶ Lack of appropriate prevention supervisors
- ▶ Standards that may be difficult for some to meet
- ▶ Competing credentials being offered by different organizations that can be confusing
- ▶ Test anxiety

Credential Creation

- ▶ Job Analysis (JA), a large job description is completed every five years.
- ▶ Domains/core competencies are identified from the JA.
- ▶ Tasks delineate what a prevention professional does as part of providing competent prevention services.
- ▶ International exam is developed from the JA.
- ▶ Standards are developed.
- ▶ Boards adopt standards & exams for use in their own jurisdiction.
- ▶ Entire process is driven by prevention specialists (SMEs) who work directly with IC&RCs testing company.

Prevention Specialist Domains

- ▶ Planning & Evaluation – 30%
- ▶ Prevention Education & Service Delivery – 15%
- ▶ Community Organization – 15%
- ▶ Professional Growth & Responsibility - 15%
- ▶ Communication – 13%
- ▶ Public Policy & Environmental Change – 12%

Updated 2013

Standards/Requirements

- ▶ **Experience:** 2,000 hours of prevention work experience.
- ▶ **Education:** 120 hours of training/education across domains of which 24 hours must be ATOD specific and 6 hours must be specific to prevention ethics.
- ▶ **Supervision:** 120 hours specific to the domains with a minimum of 10 hours in each domain.
- ▶ **Examination:** All candidates must pass the IC&RC Prevention Specialist Examination.
- ▶ **Code of Ethics:** All candidates must sign a prevention specific code of ethics statement of affirmation that the applicant has read and will abide by this code of ethics.
- ▶ **Recertification:** 40 hours of training earned every 2 years.

The Written Exam – Oh No!

- ▶ Candidates will receive correspondence from the testing company regarding specific instructions to register for the exam.
- ▶ The PS exam is 150 multiple choice questions with both a 3-option and 4-option format. But wait. Only 125 questions are scored – more to come on this. Candidates have up to three hours to complete the exam.
- ▶ IC&RC Exams are computer based and offered on an on-demand basis year round. There are over 300 computer based testing sites worldwide. Candidates can choose the testing site that is closest for their travel.
- ▶ Preliminary scores are available after a candidate completes the exam. Official scores and notification of certification will follow from the credentialing authority after your exam date.

Special Administration

- ▶ Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in exam administration may request specific procedure changes, in writing, to the credentialing authority no fewer than 60 days prior to the exam date. With these written requests, the candidate must provide official documentation of the disability or religious issue. Candidates should contact the credentialing authority on what constitutes official documentation. The testing site will offer appropriate modifications to its procedures when documentation supports the need for them.

Over 1000 Exam Candidates Since Dec. 2013

- ▶ Highest scaled score was 743 (about 8 questions incorrect)
- ▶ Lowest scaled score was 285 (about 36 questions correct)
- ▶ International pass rate = app. 79%
- ▶ International fail rate = app. 21%
- ▶ Total professionals holding CPS credential worldwide = app. 3100

Exam Preparation

- ▶ Candidate Guide and Study Materials:

- ▶ https://internationalcredentialing.org/resources/Candidate%20Guides/Prevention_Candidate_Guide.pdf

- ▶ Study Guide (free) :

- ▶ <https://internationalcredentialing.org/resources/Documents/PreventionCertificationStudyGuide.pdf>

- ▶ Practice exam (\$49.00 online):

- ▶ https://internationalcredentialing.org/Resources/Documents/PracticeExams_instructions.pdf

Questions?



For More Information About
Certification....

IC&RC Prevention Committee

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or

www.internationalcredentialing.org

