

# Performance Strategies



Achieve Magnet Recognition for Nursing Excellence

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## Magnet Recognition: It's the Right Thing to Do



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### **The Gold Standard for Nursing Excellence**

[American Nurses Credentialing Center \(ANCC\)](#) Magnet Recognition® is the highest and most prestigious international distinction a healthcare organization can receive for nursing excellence and quality patient care. Only 5% of the nation's hospitals currently hold this honor. Fewer still – just 1.8% – have been re-designated Magnet™ facilities. Clearly, it's the gold standard for nursing.

Magnet Recognition is a credential, not an award. To reach this top tier, healthcare organizations must demonstrate that they have successfully developed, disseminated and enculturated exceptional nursing practices and strategies. In turn, they reap far-reaching benefits, including:

- A more stable, motivated workforce
- Better teamwork and collaboration
- The best and brightest new graduate nurses
- Greater continuity of patient care
- Increased community partnership and support

Evidence is growing that clinical outcomes are superior in Magnet hospitals as well.

### **The Power to Attract and Retain**

The Magnet Recognition Program® originated more than 25 years ago during the nursing shortage of the early 1980s. Researchers noticed a trend: while most hospitals were struggling with high vacancy and turnover rates, a few didn't have any problems at all. These institutions were dubbed Magnet hospitals because of their ability to attract and retain well-qualified nurses. The characteristics that distinguished them became known as the Forces of Magnetism.

The findings inspired the American Nurses Association to develop a nationwide credentialing program to validate the highest-level nursing standards within hospitals. It established the ANCC to oversee the program and, in 1990, the University of Washington Medical Center became the first Magnet-designated healthcare organization in the country.

### **Success at Home and Abroad**

As evidence grew that a supportive, innovative workplace with empowered nurses boosted retention and recruitment, healthcare organizations took notice. CNOs in particular got savvy. They knew it was time to move beyond quick fixes such as signing bonuses, and focus instead on implementing long-term, sustainable structures and processes that would attract RNs.

Quality and safety moved to the forefront, too. Magnet standards became the framework by which to create a safe, high-quality environment where the entire healthcare team could thrive. More and more hospitals pursued Magnet certification, and the number continues to rise. Even in the current economic downturn, applications are up. Healthcare organizations say, "We will not compromise on quality and safety," and that's what Magnet is all about.

Now we've caught the world's attention. There are already two Magnet hospitals in Australia, and ANCC is developing a plan to expand the program globally.

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## Magnet Recognition: It's the Right Thing to Do (Cont.)

### New Outcomes-Based Model

The Magnet Model constantly evolves to reflect changes in clinical nursing practice and the work environment. Like any good business, ANCC listens to its customers. When they told us the old Model was redundant and the application process was difficult, we commissioned a scholarly review and statistical content factor analysis. The result is a dynamic, new Magnet Model that groups the 14 Forces of Magnetism into five components:

- Transformational Leadership
- Structural Empowerment
- Exemplary Professional Practice
- New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements
- Empirical Outcomes

This simpler model reflects a new emphasis on measuring outcomes and enables more streamlined documentation. Evidence-based practice, innovation, evolving technology and patient partnerships are stressed. To put it plainly: Magnet is great leaders working with great nurses, in great structures providing great care, yielding great patient outcomes.

### Take the Magnet Journey

Any healthcare organization can take the Journey to Nursing Excellence™ and achieve Magnet designation regardless of size, setting or location. The application process provides valuable feedback and improvement opportunities. Here are some helpful tips to get started:

**Educate yourself.** You'll find all the information and materials you need on ANCC's web site: [nursecredentialing.org/magnet](http://nursecredentialing.org/magnet).

**Read all about it.** Order a copy of our updated Magnet Manual and read it cover to cover. It's filled with practical advice and instructions for the application process.

**Attend a workshop.** ANCC sponsors regional Magnet workshops and a National Magnet Conference™. Check the Web site for dates and locations.

**Perform a gap analysis.** See how your organization measures up to the best of the best. Visit the Web site for assessment tools and tips.

**Apply immediately.** There's no waiting list! Submit your documents when you are ready. Applications are accepted five times a year: February 1, April 1, June 1, August 1 and October 1.

*Dr. Karen Drenkard is Director of the Magnet Recognition Program. She most recently served as the Senior Vice President of Nursing and Chief Nursing Executive at Inova Health Systems, in Falls Church, Va., where she was responsible for nursing practice, education, research, strategy, and operations. During her tenure at Inova, she led two hospitals to successful Magnet designation and served as a champion of the program. She has published and presented extensively on the Magnet Recognition Program. Dr. Drenkard has been widely recognized for leadership, including being the recipient of prestigious awards from Nursing Spectrum (Nurse of the Year 2005, Advancing the Profession) and the American Organization of Nurse Executives (Executive Nurse Scholar of the Year 2005).*

### Call to Post Scientific-based Research from ANCC Magnet Hospitals

Nurses at American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet-recognized healthcare facilities are invited to submit scientific-based research abstracts to Sigma Theta Tau International's Virginia Henderson International Nursing Library.

The honor society's **Registry of Nursing Research** is a free, searchable online database located at [www.nursinglibrary.org](http://www.nursinglibrary.org) and contains more than 28,000 studies. The goal of the library is to provide nurses worldwide with one of the most comprehensive resources for nursing information.

Instructions for submitting abstracts are available on the library site. For additional information, contact Margie Wilson, Library Services Coordinator, at 1-888-634-7575 or [librarymanager@nursinglibrary.org](mailto:librarymanager@nursinglibrary.org).

## Events

### **AONE 42nd Annual Meeting & Exposition**

*Leading Beyond Limits*  
April 15-19, 2009  
San Antonio, Texas  
McKesson Booth #418

### **2009 ANCC National Magnet Conference™**

Louisville, Kentucky  
October 1-3, 2009  
McKesson Booth #312

### **McKesson Clinical Leadership Education Sessions**

*Attend complimentary  
CE-accredited  
Webinars sponsored by  
AMDIS & McKesson*