The licensure renewal period ends at midnight (Eastern Time) on October 31, 2011. See pages 16-17 for renewal information.

Background checks now required if license lapses.
DIALYSIS TECHNICIAN Corner

by Sharon Eli Mercer, MSN, RN NEA, BC, Nursing Practice Consultant

National Certification Requirement at Renewal

Effective October 14, 2008, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services established new national certification rules governing Dialysis Technicians working in renal dialysis centers. Federal Regulation 42 CFR 494.140 states all newly employed technicians must obtain national certification within 18 months of hire date. All currently employed Dialysis Technicians have 18 months from the effective date, October 14, 2008, to obtain certification.

According to 201 KAR 20:470, a Dialysis Technician shall report to the Board the name of the national certification program that has issued their certification. A copy of the national certification certificate with expiration date must be provided to the Board at renewal of the Kentucky Dialysis Technician Credential.

Information about National Certification is available below:

- Certified Clinical Hemodialysis Technician (CCHT) offered by the Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC) - $195 effective 1/1/2010
  East Holly Avenue, Box 56
  Pittman, NJ  08071-0056
  [www.nncc-exam.org](http://www.nncc-exam.org)
- Board of Nephrology Examiners for Nursing and Technology (BONENT) - $200
  901 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
  Suite 607
  Washington, D.C.  20006
  [www.bonent.org](http://www.bonent.org)
- National Nephrology Certification Organization (NNCO) examination - $245
  1350 Broadway 17th floor
  New York, NY  10018
  [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com)

A mother usually basks in the praise and envy directed at her beautiful new child. Which is why Kendra Huber found it curious – and educational – one wet afternoon in Tizimin, Mexico, to meet a mother who did not welcome the attention her infant attracted.

Huber was observing at a village medical center as the Mexican mother and father hurried in from the rain with an armful of blankets. Once inside, the bundle revealed a full head of ruffled dark brown hair and piercing blue-green eyes. “It was possibly the most beautiful child I’ve ever seen,” said Huber, a 21-year-old nursing and Spanish double major at Carson-Newman College in Tennessee.

Experiences such as these allow Huber and others to enhance their nursing careers by gaining a greater understanding of the experiences and family lives of Hispanic patients.

This was one of several experiences Huber and other students gained in a five-week program in Mexico offered this summer through the Kentucky Institute for International Studies (KIIS), a non-profit consortium of colleges and universities. With the burgeoning Hispanic population in the United States, cultural sensitivity was a key goal of the trip, said Adele Dean, a program director and associate professor at Northern Kentucky University.

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throughout the country. That includes Kentucky, where the number of Hispanics has doubled in 50 of the 120 counties in the past decade.

Kentucky health professionals need to prepare for cultural encounters like the ones KIIS students experienced, said Chip Kraus, public health services coordinator for the Barren River District Health Department.

Similar to patients in Tizimin, Hispanic patients in the U.S. may hold traditional medical beliefs that are different than what doctors tell them, Kraus said. "[We try to] understand where they're coming from and not judge them," he said.

If a professional translator isn't available, the language barrier is often the most immediate problem, Kraus said. Parents often bring their young children to clinics to translate for them, creating potential problems.

"How do you ask an 8-year-old to ask her mother how many sexual partners she's had?" Kraus said. "... Kids have different understandings of the importance of things. Are they really going to tell their moms they need to fix more green vegetables?"

Offering health classes in Spanish, using diagrams with Hispanic foods, and working with local churches are some efforts implemented to build trust in Hispanic neighborhoods.

Living in a Mexican home, eating local cuisine, and working in hospitals and villages gave Tiffany Grammer a taste of daily Mexican life that she said she'll keep with her as a nurse. The Northern Kentucky University (NKU) nursing student works as a patient care assistant at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and frequently encounters Hispanic patients.

"I came to this [program] trying not to impose my own culture or beliefs," she said. "Now I could much better understand a Hispanic patient."

NKU nursing student Brittany Poe experienced the Mexican public health care system firsthand when she made a personal appointment at a local hospital for a health problem. She hopes to be as knowledgeable, comforting, and personable with her patients in the United States as the hospital staff she observed.

"I was scared because I didn't know what to expect," Poe said. "But I got right in... and a nurse held my hand the whole time. I used to be afraid of touching patients, but now I realize that healing touch is important."

These experiences are exactly what Dean had in mind when helping to build the pre-professional program through KIIS. "We get a better outcome at hospitals if we know how to be culturally sensitive to our patients," said Dean, who was a women's health nurse practitioner for 25 years before becoming a professor.

That ability is something both Mexican and American nursing students learn with time and maturity, said Alejandra Escalante, a Mexican nursing professor who taught medical Spanish for the KIIS program. Escalante also gave students a tour of her school, Universidad Autonome de Yucatan, and acted as a translator while they compared experiences with their Mexican counterparts.

Escalante said it's "very cool" that American students are getting an introduction to Hispanic culture through the KIIS program. The field trips to cultural landmarks, the clinical work and the tours of medical facilities and schools will give them valuable cultural skills, she said.

"They are here learning what it is to be in Mexico... what it is to be a Mexican patient," she said.
KBN Mission
It is the mission of the Kentucky Board of Nursing (KBN) to protect public health and welfare by development and enforcement of state laws governing the safe practice of nursing.

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Statistics Corner
As of Sept. 26, 2011, KBN records show:

RN Active: 59,557
LPN Active: 15,410
Dialysis Technicians Active: 472
SANE Active: 246

KBN Connection circulation includes over 70,000 licensed nurses and nursing students in Kentucky.