



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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December 20, 2016

The Honorable Jay Inslee  
Governor of the State of Washington  
Post Office Box 40002  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

RCW 18.88A.087 requires the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and Department of Health to recognize alternative training (bridge training) options for home care aides and medical assistants to qualify for the nursing assistant-certified (NA-C) credential. It requires the secretary of health, in consultation with the commission, to report annually to the governor and legislature on progress made to advance certified home care aides and medical assistants into nursing assistant practice. This is our fifth progress report.

After consulting with stakeholders, the commission adopted requirements for bridge training programs for both home care aides and medical assistants in 2011. The training included curriculum and minimum education and training standards for program directors and instructors. The commission created processes to approve and deny training programs, and for individuals completing a bridge training program to take the competency evaluation and apply for an NA-C credential. These requirements can be found in WAC 246-841-530 and -585.

The commission recently adopted a final rule amending its definition of nationally-certified medical assistant that is used to determine who may take the medical assistant to nursing assistant bridge program (WAC 246-841-535(2)). Before this amendment was adopted, the definition included more restrictive requirements than those under the medical assistant certification rule (WAC 246- 827-0200(2)). The amended rule better aligns these definitions and creates consistency and enhanced career opportunities.

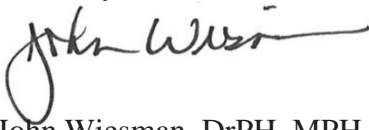
The commission approved the first two programs for alternative training in October 2012. There are now 22 approved programs, of which 8 are medical assistant bridge programs and 14 are home care aide bridge programs. There are 17 programs in Western Washington and 5 in Eastern Washington.

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Since July 1, 2012, the department has issued 423 NA-C credentials for applicants who have completed alternative training programs. Currently, there are an additional 40 applications awaiting approval from individuals who have completed an alternative training program.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Mindy Schaffner, associate director of nursing education, licensing, and research for the commission, at [mindy.schaffner@doh.wa.gov](mailto:mindy.schaffner@doh.wa.gov) or 360-236-4745.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Wiesman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH  
Secretary of Health

cc: The Honorable Randi Becker, Senate Health Care Committee  
The Honorable Eileen Cody, House Health Care and Wellness Committee  
Jason McGill, Governor's Policy Office  
Martin Mueller, Department of Health  
Paula R. Meyer, Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission  
Mindy Schaffner, Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission