

# Regulatory and accreditation bodies essay sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Body](#)



## **Regulatory and accreditation bodies**

Regulatory and accreditation bodies have a huge impact on how the nursing profession is developed and structured. These bodies have influences on numerous areas of nursing including nursing education and licensing. The aim of this paper is to describe the scope and purpose of the nursing regulatory body, the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN), and the accreditation body, the National League for Nursing. In addition, similarities and differences between accreditation and regulation are discussed.

### **The BRN**

“ The Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) is a California state governmental agency established by law to protect the public by regulating the practice of registered nurses” (BRN, 2012). Within the Department of Consumer Affairs, the BRN acts as a regulatory body for enforcement and implementation of the Nursing Practice Acts which describe and define the legal boundaries of nursing practice within each state, such as nursing licensure, discipline, practice, and education. Board members of the BRN include public members, and registered nurses in various areas of practice, such as direct-patient care, administration, nursing education, and an advanced nursing practice.

### **Licensing and practice**

The BRN’s primary responsibility is regulating licensing and practice of registered nurses in the state of California. The BRN evaluates the eligibility of the RN license applicants and issues licenses for those who successfully passed NCLEX RN examination. The BRN is also responsible for certification process of nursing specialties and advanced nursing practice, such as nurse

anesthetist, clinical nurse specialists, public health nurse, and nurse practitioner. In addition, the BRN offers services such as license renewal for RNs and license verification for employers through its online data base. Furthermore license applicants are evaluated on their eligibility through the requirements set by the BRN, including successful completion of the educational requirements and NCLEX examination.

## **Nursing programs**

The BRN governs the California's registered nursing programs including advanced practice nursing programs through approval of their curriculum. Through this process, the BRN ensures that the nursing programs are compliant with requirements set by the regulatory and statutory laws. The BRN also sets the educational standards for nursing programs to ensure educational materials required for individuals to successfully become registered nurses. Those who completed the nursing program from BRN approved schools may be eligible for NCLEX examination. In addition, the BRN monitors the school programs through survey and report to ensure the effectiveness of the program curriculum. This includes statistics on students' completion rate and NCLEX passing rate. Such information is available on BRN website for consumer review, which may influence the students when they choose the nursing program that they wish to enter. Furthermore, approval from the BRN also provides the nursing program with the eligibility for National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission.

## **The NLN**

The national league for Nursing (NLN) was formed in 1952 to serve both agencies and individuals in nursing field. The focus of the NLN is to promote the improvement and development of nursing education and nursing services and nursing education. To aid in this, the NLN offers numerous continuing education classes and workshops for the members. For nursing schools, the NLN provides testing services, such as preadmission exams nursing student candidates, and exit exam upon completion of the course or the program. The NLN also carries out surveys in nursing schools every year. These surveys constitute a primary data source for nursing education in the US. NLN focuses on improving the quality of nursing services as well as nursing education in the United States.

“ One of the goals of the National League for Nursing is to lead in setting standards that advance excellence and innovation in nursing education” (NLN, 2011, Mission, Goals, and Core values). To accomplish this goal, NLN developed numerous recognition programs related to nursing education including, Academy of Nursing Education, Centers of Excellence Program, Student “ Excellence Paper” Competition, and Certified Nurse Educator. CNE examination is one of the core programs of NLN in pursuing improvement of nursing education because it recognizes the excellence of the nurse educators in advanced nursing education specialty.

## **NLNAC**

The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), an independent body within the NLN, provides voluntary accreditation for educational programs in nursing including Practical, Diploma, Associate,

Baccalaureate, Master's, and Clinical Doctorate programs (Berman, Snyder, Kozier&Erb, 2011). NLNAC strives to provide core standards for nursing education programs and to strengthen the nursing education quality. The U. S governmental bodies, such as United States Uniformed Nursing Services, United States Department of Education, State Boards of Nurse Examiners, and National Council of State Boards of Nursing recognize the NLNAC as the accrediting body for nursing programs in the nation.

Although NLNAC accreditation is a voluntary process for the nursing programs, accreditation by NLNAC provides the programs with recognition that its curriculum has been evaluated and re-evaluated by competent peers to ensure the higher educational purpose. It is also a gateway for eligibility for licensure and certificates. In addition, graduating from accredited school provides the graduates with the eligibility to enter the advanced degree nursing program, such as BSN and MSN program. Through the recognition, accreditation of program promotes the recruitment and retention of nursing students.

NLNAC set a standard for nursing program curriculum for the accreditation candidate. The nursing program is subject for NLNAC review every eight years to ensure the compliance to accreditation standards, which provides curriculum development leaders with opportunities for on-going evaluation, re-evaluation and modification of the curriculum for quality education.

Furthermore, NLNAC standards for curriculum states that curriculum must be developed by the faculty and incorporate the professional standards, guidelines and competencies to the curriculum.

## **Similarities and differences between accreditation and regulation**

Regulation entails ensuring that minimum standards as defined by statutory laws are met. Accreditation, on the other hand, is basically a seal of approval of a program or an institution from an independent accrediting body that certifies that the program/organization has met pre-set standards. All programs must meet the minimal requirements set by law but they do not have to be accredited to operate. The latter is a voluntary process and is not required for the licensing of graduates of a program. However, in the health field accreditation is given the same amount of significance as regulation with graduation from an accredited program being required for licensing or entry into some programs.

The processes of regulation and accreditation are similar in that they involve a multi-step process by external evaluators using an established criterion. Of note is that both are carried out by external agencies and are hinged on pre-set standards. Regulation is meant to safeguard public welfare hence the requirement for meeting the basic/minimum standards. Accreditation, on the other hand, is concerned with quality improvement. It focuses on optimal but achievable standards. Of further note is that regulatory bodies exist outside of the regulated activity whilst accrediting bodies generally comprise of practitioners or experts in a particular field.

## **Conclusion**

Development of nursing education is influenced by many of regulatory and accreditation bodies, such as the Board of Registered Nursing, and the National League for Nursing. The BRN is a state governmental agency

responsible for establishing standards for nursing practice, and licensure in California. It also approves the nursing programs to provide eligibility for NCLEX examination to their graduates. The NLN is the voice for nursing education as the organization places its focus on improvement of nursing education and provides numerous programs to strengthen the field of nursing education. The NLNAC is body within the NLN responsible for accreditation of nursing program, setting high standards for nursing program curriculum and provide accreditation to those programs that meet such standards. Regulation and accreditation share some key features but also differ in certain aspects.

## **References**

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