
Certificate of Added Qualifications Inspires Physician Trust

Being the only medical provider on the remote island of Kupreanos, Alaska, Lori Trout, PA-C, says that having two CAQs gives her “additional confidence to treat and manage the variety of patient cases that come through the door.”

Trout is the director of, and sole licensed provider at, the Kake Health Clinic in the Native American village of Kake, Alaska. The clinic is the only health care facility for the 450 residents of the village. Here, she sees all patients with all types of medical needs. Patients with medical emergencies or who need more extensive treatment are air lifted to the Sitka Community Hospital, 40 minutes away by flight, where Trout’s two supervising physicians, in general medicine and psychiatry, are located.

Trout earned CAQs in both nephrology and psychiatry in 2011, the program’s inaugural year. She believes there’s value in earning this additional credential as documentation of one’s specialty experience.

A PA since 1997, Trout worked at the University of Texas in Galveston, Texas, where she performed kidney biopsies and diagnostic urinalysis, managed kidney transplant patients, and was a part of the internal medicine faculty. Later, she provided inpatient care at the Institute of Living psychiatric hospital in Hartford, Conn.

Trout has witnessed some overlap between internal medicine and nephrology and psychiatry. For example, she saw psychiatric disorders develop in response to facing a serious illness or end-of-life medical issues, common in her nephrology practice.

“With the CAQs I am better equipped than others to assess, diagnose and manage patients with nephrology issues. The same goes for patients with psychiatric needs. We diagnose dozens of Title 47s (deeming the patients unable to make a decision for themselves) every year, and having the CAQ in psychiatry gives me confidence that I can help them.”

Trout thinks others, including patients, appreciate her CAQs. Both of her supervising physicians trust her ability to provide health care because she went beyond what was expected and earned the additional credentials. “Not anyone can simply walk in and take one of the exams – you have to have the experience and know patient care in that specialty,” explains Trout.

Trout encourages other PAs to earn their CAQ. “You are already committed to your specialty. Continue to work hard, study for the exam and know that, when you pass, you will be one of the PAs who has proven you have what it takes to hold the distinction of the CAQ, which is a true testament to your experience and patient care. The personal



Lori Trout, PA-C, at Kake Health Clinic

satisfaction and pride alone that comes with this achievement is worth the effort put into earning it, and the fact that others appreciate and respect it is even better.”

Want to prove to yourself, your employer and your patients that you have what it takes to carry this distinction? To learn more about the CAQs NCCPA offers in nephrology, psychiatry, emergency medicine, pediatrics, hospital medicine, orthopaedic surgery, and cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, visit www.nccpa.net/SpecialtyCAQs. Remember, you have six years to complete the requirements (experience, CME, physician attestation and patient cases) before taking the exam, so if you're not ready to take the exam this year, that's alright – you can always start the process now and complete the remaining requirements at a later date!