



SPRING 2026

CBN C.A.R.E

Official Newsletter of the ASMBS CBN Certification Committee

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear CBNs,

At the Certified Bariatric Nurse (CBN) certification program, we are dedicated to advancing the specialty of metabolic and bariatric surgery nursing care. Metabolic and bariatric surgery nursing is recognized as distinct and nationally significant, continuously evolving with advancements across various sciences. Our mission is to support you in providing the highest quality care for metabolic and bariatric surgery patients and to offer the premier credential for nurses in this specialty.

As we continue to elevate and strengthen the CBN program, we are actively pursuing accreditation through the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Our CBN subcommittees have been meeting regularly - both independently and collaboratively - to update, revise, and develop the protocols, guidelines, and documentation required to meet NCCA's rigorous standards.

The teams are making significant progress and are actively preparing the application for submission in the near future. We are truly approaching the finish line, and the dedication, commitment, and expertise demonstrated throughout this process have been invaluable. This progress would not be possible without the hard work of the CBN Committee.

Behind the scenes, the committee has also been diligently editing and updating the CBN Handbook, as well as our policies and procedures. We have started to prepare for the next Practice Analysis and will be reaching out to you to complete the survey. We are excited about the future and the continued success of the CBN program.

On a personal note, I want to sincerely thank you for entrusting me to serve as Chair of the CBN Certification Council and the CBN Committee. It has been both an honor and a privilege. It is time for me to rotate off as Chair. I am pleased to share that Sharon Hillgartner, RN-CBN, FASMBS-IH will rotate from Co-Chair to Chair, and I am confident that the Council and Committee will continue to thrive under her leadership.

Thank you to all CBNs, CBN Committee and Subcommittee members, and ASMBS for your dedication, hard work, and friendship.

Best regards,
Karen Flanders, MSN, FNP-BC, CBN, FASMBS-IH, IH FIFSO
Nurse Practitioner and MBSAQIP Coordinator – Boston, MA



Karen Flanders,
NP-C, CBN, FASMBS-IH



Sharon Hillgartner
RN, CBN, FASMBS-IH

IMPORTANT DATES



2026 Test Window 2

April 13 - July 6, 2026

Registration Window

July 13 – September 7, 2026

CBN Exam Window

November 2026

ASMBS Weekend

Las Vegas, NV

June 27 – July 1, 2027

ASMBS Annual Meeting 2027

Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin
Orlando, FL

Connect with Us:

Join the [ASMBS IH CBN – Certified Bariatric Nurses Private Facebook Group](#).

Suggest newsletter topics or ask questions via email to CBN@asmbs.org or on our Facebook page.

Visit the virtual [ASMBS Marketplace](#) for new CBN Swag

A SURPRISINGLY WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE: REFLECTIONS ON THE ASMBBS WEEKEND MEETING 2025

I'll admit it: ASMBBS Weekend 2025 wasn't high on my priority list this year. Between onboarding a new PA, precepting nursing students, teaching patient classes, and juggling holiday expenses, adding a conference felt like a stretch. But I'm genuinely grateful I made it happen. The weekend turned out to be one of the most energizing professional experiences I've had in quite some time.

What struck me first was the intimate feel of the meeting. I'm used to the scale of the Annual Meeting, and while I appreciate its breadth, this event offered something different - a perfect middle ground. The sessions were robust and varied, yet the environment felt relaxed enough that asking questions and joining discussions came naturally.

The multidisciplinary approach was a standout feature. Surgeons, nurses, dietitians, and mental health professionals shared the stage to explore topics like access to care, reimbursement for weight-loss medications, and women's health across the continuum. It felt like an expanded version of the team-based model we use every day, elevated by diverse expertise.

The atmosphere was refreshingly unhurried. Planned events like the welcome reception and the Angel's Envy Bourbon tasting—complete with limited-edition ASMBBS Founders Select bottles—were memorable highlights. But I equally enjoyed the spontaneous moments: breakfast conversations in the marketplace, quick shopping trips near the hotel, and discovering great local restaurants after sessions.

ASMBBS Weekend is designed as a focused, high-impact gathering for the entire metabolic and bariatric care team, and it delivered exactly that. This year also featured the first fully collaborative surgeon and IH leadership meeting, and attendance grew by 3.14%, with just under 400 participants.

If you haven't attended before, I highly recommend adding it to your future plans. And I'm already looking forward to seeing everyone in May in one of this former Texan's favorite cities—San Antonio. Learning by day and celebrating Cinco de Mayo on the Riverwalk after hours sounds like the perfect combination.



Written by: Sharon Hillgartner RN, CBN, FASMBS-IH
Bariatric Program Coordinator – Missoula, MT
Contracted Remote MBSCR – Tucson, AZ

SAN ANTONIO IS CALLING!

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE ASMBS ANNUAL MEETING 2026

The 2026 ASMBS Annual Meeting is coming to the iconic Riverwalk from May 3–7, perfectly aligned with National Nurses Week and Cinco de Mayo. It's shaping up to be the can't-miss event for anyone committed to advancing metabolic and bariatric care. Guided by ASMBS President Dr. Richard Peterson's vision of **"No One Left Behind,"** this year's theme sets the tone for a week of collaboration, innovation, and inclusive education. It's the perfect moment to connect, recharge, and celebrate the essential role nurses play in transforming patient lives.

Why RNs Will Love It

This conference is designed to strengthen your practice and deepen your connection to the multidisciplinary team that makes bariatric care thrive. You'll find:

- Breakout sessions for Bariatric Coordinators and MBSCR abstractors
- Fresh strategies to "Pump Up" physical activity programs
- Education tailored for nurses, dietitians, psychologists, APPs, and allied health professionals
- Evidence-based insights you can bring straight back to your unit
- Collaboration with surgeons and IH colleagues in a supportive, inclusive environment



Global Leaders, Big Ideas

Hear from international innovators shaping the future of metabolic and bariatric surgery. Gain a global perspective on trends, challenges, and breakthroughs—and see how your role fits into the bigger picture. You also won't want to miss **the Mason Lecture:** This year's featured speaker, Dr. Ralph DeFronzo, is a leader in obesity and diabetes care. His insights will deepen your understanding of obesity science and inspire your practice.

Sessions Nurses Will Be Talking About

Pelvic floor and core function after metabolic and bariatric surgery, CBN prep, equity in obesity care, weight recurrence, interdisciplinary communication, Ted Kyle's IH Keynote, AI in bariatric care, culturally responsive care, professional social media use, women's health, and patient advocacy.

Why You Should Be There

Bariatric nursing is evolving—and this is where the evolution happens. You'll leave with new skills, new connections, and renewed passion for ensuring that no patient, no colleague, and no discipline is left behind.

And of course... It's on the San Antonio Riverwalk. What could be more fun?

Written by: Sharon Hillgartner RN, CBN, FASMBS-IH
Bariatric Program Coordinator – Missoula, MT
Contracted Remote MBSCR – Tucson, AZ

CERTIFIED BARIATRIC NURSES TAKE THE MIC: INSIGHTS THAT INSPIRE METABOLIC BARIATRIC SUCCESS

BariNation recently spotlighted three Certified Bariatric Nurses (CBNs) in featured podcast episodes that offer an inside look at how CBNs educate, support, and empower patients and professionals. These conversations highlight the role of certification in advancing quality care and explore how nurses contribute to long-term patient success across pre- and post-operative care and integrated health practices. The episodes also emphasize the leadership, advocacy, and education CBNs bring to the bariatric community. Here are the highlights:

Carah Horn

Episode 246: Metabolic Adaptation and How Obesity Disease Management Is Like Mowing the Lawn

- **Motivation & Feelings:** “I was definitely surprised - and a little nervous - but obesity stigma and education are true passions of mine, so saying yes felt natural.”
- **Memorable Moment:** Helping others understand obesity as a chronic disease of biology, not a failure of will.
- **Key Insight:** “Just like the lawn is going to do what the lawn is going to do; obesity is going to do what obesity is going to do. Both require intentional, consistent, and ongoing care to maintain control and direction.”
- **Impact:** Empowering listeners to meet negativity with knowledge, confidence, and advocacy.

Heidi Bednarchuk

Episode 268: Building Your Bariatric & Obesity Care Dream Team

- **Motivation & Feelings:** Sharing the importance of the Integrated Health team in bariatric care.
- **Memorable Moment:** Using Carah’s landscaping analogy to explain how teams equip patients with tools for long-term success.
- **Key Insight:** “It’s not just about shopping for a surgeon—it’s about shopping for a whole team.”
- **Impact:** Encouraging broader recognition of Integrated Health in metabolic and bariatric surgery.

Kellie Armstrong

Episode 270: Kellie Armstrong Is Building Bridges For An Integrated Health Approach to Bariatric Care

- **Motivation & Feelings:** “I truly believe that helping people on their journey of health is my passion and my calling in life.”
- **Memorable Moment:** My moment came after the recording, when I listened to Carah’s and Heidi’s episodes. I was struck by how naturally our conversations intersected and how many shared themes emerged across all three podcasts.
- **Key Insight:** The “3 C’s” of care: continuous, conversation, and connection.
- **Impact:** Sharing both professional and personal perspectives on treating obesity as a chronic disease.

Listen to the Episodes:

[Episode 246 – Metabolic Adaptation and How Obesity Disease Management Is Like Mowing the Lawn with Carah Horn](#)

[Episode 268 – Building Your Bariatric & Obesity Care Dream Team With Heidi Bednarchuk](#)

[Episode 270 – Kellie Armstrong Is Building Bridges For An Integrated Health Approach to Bariatric Care](#)

Written by: Kellie Armstrong, MSN, RN, FASMBS-IH, CBN
Service Line Manager - Providence, RI
ASMBS Integrated Health Leadership Council Director

CBN SPOTLIGHT: NEW VOICES, FRESH PERSPECTIVES

For this newsletter, we shifted our CBN Spotlight to feature a small group of **newly certified CBNs**. While many of our newsletter contributors bring years of experience in metabolic and bariatric nursing, a newer perspective on the CBN certification can be both motivating and refreshing. For longtime CBNs, it is also rewarding to see registered nurses continuing to pursue certification and specialty growth for the reasons shared below.

We used our ASMBS Integrated Health Facebook page to gather participants. Thank you to the CBNs pictured here who took the time to share their experiences.

Who Participated

Roles:

- Metabolic and Bariatric Program Coordinator
- RN in a Bariatric Clinic or Office

States Represented

- Wisconsin
- New York

Experience Before Certification: 2–6 years in MBS practice

Why They Pursued CBN Certification

Participants shared several motivations, including:

- Deepening metabolic and bariatric nursing knowledge
- Validating professional expertise
- Encouragement from leadership or employers
- Personal and professional fulfillment
- Improving patient care
- Aligning with national standards and best practices

How They Prepared for the Exam

CBNs reported using a variety of study resources, including:

- ASMBS CBN Exam Prep Course (Annual Meeting 2025)
- ASMBS CBN Exam Prep Course (Online, LMS)
- ASMBS CBN Exam Prep study guide
- ASMBS textbook
- Practice exams purchased online
- Various CBN Exam Prep books, including the CBN Exam workbook

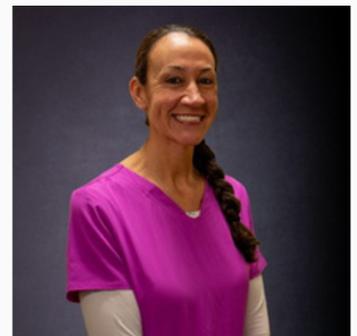
Would They Recommend CBN Certification?

- Yes
- It depends, organizational recognition and employer support are important considerations when pursuing certification

Coordinated by: Veronica Cook, RN, MSN, CBN
Bariatric Program Manager - Shreveport, LA



Abby, Wisconsin



Stephanie, New York



Michelle, RN; New York

**Participating in ASMBS developed exam prep materials does not guarantee the learner will pass the CBN Examination. The CBN Certification Council does not endorse a particular review course or material, but encourages the candidate to review all reasonably available resources.*

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, LOCAL IMPACT: CERTIFIED BARIATRIC NURSES SHINE AT IFSO 2025

One of the benefits of **ASMBS membership** is complimentary membership with the International Federation for the Surgery and Other Therapies for Obesity (IFSO). This global connection creates opportunities for international collaboration, leadership, and engagement in shaping worldwide standards for metabolic and bariatric care. When combined with service on ASMBS committees focused on research, education, and patient advocacy, this dual membership offers both local impact and global reach.

The **XXVIII IFSO World Congress**, held in Santiago, Chile from September 9–12, 2025, embraced the theme “Combined Therapies: The Dawn of a New Era.” The program highlighted the integration of surgery, pharmacotherapy, and endoscopic treatments to advance obesity care.

Several Certified Bariatric Nurses represented our community at this international meeting. We asked each participant to share their key takeaways and notable sessions.

CBN Reflections from IFSO 2025

“I was excited to see the importance that IFSO Integrated Health leadership placed on elevating the role of nursing in metabolic and bariatric surgery.” - Heidi Bednarchuk

“As a first-time attendee at IFSO, it was noteworthy to learn that many of the challenges in combating the disease of obesity are shared globally.” - Shirley Bearden

“Seeing a higher nursing presence was very important as well as the inclusion of nursing related topics in the World Congress agenda.” - Karen Flanders

“The international MBS community recognizes the unique value of the Certified Bariatric Nurse credential in the U.S. There is a growing interest in establishing consistent nursing standards and specialty recognition worldwide.” - Carah Horn

Looking Ahead

The insights and contributions shared by our CBNs at the XXVIII IFSO World Congress underscore the vital role of nursing and integrated health in advancing metabolic and bariatric care worldwide. As we continue to build on these global connections, we encourage all members to explore opportunities for engagement - whether through ASMBS committees, international collaborations, or upcoming events.

Mark your calendars for the 2026 IFSO World Congress, September 2026, in Toronto, Canada.

Join us as we shape the next era of innovation and patient-centered care. [Apply to serve on a committee today](#) and be a part of something impactful!

Written by: Kellie Armstrong, MSN, RN, FASMBS-IH, CBN
Service Line Manager - Providence, RI
ASMBS Integrated Health Leadership Council Director

A COLLECTIVE TREASURE CHEST OF CBN RESOURCES

Tools to Support Practice, Education, and Patient Care

The CBN Professional Outreach Subcommittee curated this collection of frequently used resources to support Certified Bariatric Nurses and professionals in metabolic and bariatric surgery. These tools and references are intended for quick consultation, ongoing education, and deeper learning.

Thank you to those who submitted resources via email and the *ASMBS IH CBN – Certified Bariatric Nurses* Facebook page.

Education and Professional Development

American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS)

- **Support Group Facilitator Training Program**
 - <https://asmbs.org/asmbs-ih-support-group-facilitator-training-program/>
- **ASMBS Webinar Library**
 - <https://asmbs.org/webinars/>
- **ASMBS Toolkits**
 - <https://asmbs.org/tool-kits/>

Community and Practice Support

BariNation

- **Podcasts, newsletters, and professional community**
 - <https://barination.com/blogs/barination-blog>

Baritastic

- **Practice demo options (free tier available)**
 - <https://www.baritastic.com/bariatric-providers/>
- **App download and onboarding**
 - <https://www.baritastic.com/how-to-get-started-on-baritastic/>

Networking and Events

Obesity Help

- **Educational events and networking opportunities for bariatric coordinators**
 - <https://www.obesityhelp.com>

Accreditation, Quality, and Standards

American College of Surgeons (ACS)

- **MBSAQIP Site Survey & Quality Improvement Resources**
 - <https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/accreditation-and-verification/metabolic-and-bariatric-surgery-accreditation-and-quality-improvement-program/resources/>
- **2026 MBSAQIP Standards Change Log**
 - <https://accreditation.facs.org/accreditationdocuments/MBSAQIP/WEB/MBSAQIP-Standards-Change-Log-2026.pdf>
- **Quality Improvement Project Examples**
 - <https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/qi-resources/case-studies/>

Advocacy and Patient Education

Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)

- **Weight Matters Magazine and educational resources**
 - <https://www.obesityaction.org/education-support/learn-about-obesity/>
- **Advocacy initiatives**
 - <https://www.obesityaction.org/advocacy/what-we-fight-for/>

*Coordinated by: Meghan Bell, RN, BSN, CBN,
MBS Coordinator - New Lenox, IL*

**ADVOCACY
RESEARCH**



**EDUCATION
COMPASSION**

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CBN?

CBN Exam Preparation

“How do I prepare to take the CBN exam?” is a question that is frequently asked. Every individual is different, but we have some guidelines to help you develop a study plan on our webpage:

<https://asmbs.org/integrated-health/cbn-exam-preparation/>

- Reviewing the Content Outline section of the CBN Handbook and doing a self assessment.
- Find learning experiences to meet your needs.
- Study with a partner!
- Find us on Facebook to connect with CBNs!

CBN Online Review Course

Developed by ASMBS in order to assist those who would like to take the CBN® examination and attain the CBN® certification. This course will provide the learner with a readily available, flexible, easy to use, reasonably priced and quality resource to study for the examination. *This course does not guarantee the learner will pass the CBN Examination.*

<https://asmbs.org/professional-education/cbn/cbn-online-review-course/>

**While the ASMBS CBN Review Courses are helpful, they do not guarantee exam success. The CBN Certification Council recommends reviewing a variety of materials.*

IMPORTANT TESTING INFORMATION

CBN Quick Links

Thinking about your next career step? For details on the CBN credential, eligibility requirements, certification and recertification processes, key benefits, and related resources:

- **About the CBN Credential**
 - <https://asmbs.org/professional-development/cbn/>
- **CBN Examination: Get Prepared**
 - <https://asmbs.org/integrated-health/cbn-exam-preparation/>
- **CBN Examination Information**
 - <https://asmbs.org/integrated-health/cbn-examination-information/>
- **CBN Re-Certification**
 - <https://asmbs.org/professional-development/cbn/cbn-re-certification/>

2026 Test Window 2

- Early Online Registration Opens: **April 13, 2026**
- Early Registration Deadline: **June 8, 2026**
- Regular Registration Deadline: **July 6, 2026**
- Exam Administration: **July 13 – September 7, 2026**

Find us on 

CBN Facebook

@CBNCertification

WELCOME CLASS OF MARCH 2026 OUR NEWEST CERTIFIED BARIATRIC NURSES!



M. Anggono
J. Barnhizer
E. Collins
M. Guia Villafuerte

C. Hernandez Vega
A. Losee
J. Orbaker
M. Orband

S. Palmer
A. Sink
S. Stephens
L. Stone

L. Taylor
M. Uy

APPLY TO JOIN THE CERTIFIED BARIATRIC NURSE COMMITTEE

Are you passionate about advancing the field of metabolic and bariatric nursing? The Certified Bariatric Nurse (CBN) Committee is looking for dedicated professionals to join our team! As a member, you'll have the opportunity to shape certification standards, contribute to the exam development process, and ensure excellence in metabolic and bariatric care.

Whether you're experienced in item writing or simply eager to get involved, your expertise and enthusiasm can make a difference. Help us continue our mission of promoting high-quality metabolic and bariatric nursing.

Apply today and be a part of something impactful!



WHEN SHOULD YOU RECERTIFY YOUR CBN?

Don't Let Your CBN Credential Expire— Recertify with Confidence!

Recertification keeps your Certified Bariatric Nurse (CBN) status active and confirms your ongoing expertise in bariatric nursing. Whether you choose to recertify through continuing education or by retaking the exam, maintaining your credential ensures you remain a recognized leader in the field. You can begin entering your professional development activities anytime within your recertification window through the streamlined LearningBuilder platform. Stay current, stay credentialed—**recertify before your expiration date to avoid any lapse in your CBN status!**

RECERTIFICATION	IF YOU TESTED IN THE FALL	IF YOU TESTED IN THE SPRING
Early Recertification Registration (Begins 1 year prior to Certification Expiration)	September 1 through April 30	March 1 through October 31
Regular Recertification Registration (if you submit fulfillment materials within 3 months of your due date, there is a possibility that there will be an interruption in your certification status.)	May 1 through August 31	November 1 through February 28

WHAT IS THE CBN "GRACE YEAR"?

If your CBN credential expires, you have a **one-year grace** period to submit your recertification application without retaking the exam. All **recertification credits must be earned during your active 4-year certification period**, but the **recertification application can be submitted during the grace year**. If you do not complete the process within the grace year, you'll need to **retake and pass the CBN exam** to regain certification. **Stay on track**—log your CEUs early and don't wait until the final year!

See the **2025-2026 CBN Handbook** for additional information on Recertification (page 19) and Retired Status (page 27).

THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT?

If you hold an active **CBN credential in good standing and are fully retired from all nursing practice**, including teaching, you may apply for CBN Retired Status (Ret). This **honorary designation** may be used on your résumé, CV, or business card, but not in clinical documentation or any setting implying active practice. If you return to work, Retired Status is forfeited, and you must notify the CBN Accreditation Council. Applications are accepted **up to one year after certification expiration**, and must be submitted via your CBN LearningBuilder account at least 30 days before the deadline.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

One concern regarding metabolic and bariatric nursing is the sparse amount of attention obesity and metabolic and bariatric surgery (MBS) nursing practice has received in the literature. For this issue, we will bring to light, a sampling of recent (within the last 2 years) articles written by nurses on nursing practice topics related to obesity and MBS that are in the literature. We thought it might be interesting for you to see what your nursing colleagues have submitted and were accepted into the nursing literature regarding nursing practice in obesity and MBS. We hope to encourage you to consider adding to the obesity and MBS nursing practice literature with your expertise.

Christiansen NMN, Oxlund J, Dreyer P, Gram B. Recovery After Bariatric Surgery: The effects of Mobilization-A Study Protocol. *Pain Manag Nurs*. 2025 Dec 19;S1524-9042(25)00332-7. doi: 10.1016/j.pmn.2025.11.017. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 41421861. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41421861/> (Denmark)

Keogh N, Horsom D, Lee G, Saab MM. Factors that influence an individual's decision to undergo bariatric surgery: A qualitative systematic review. *PLoS One*. 2025 Oct 17;20(10):e0334837. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0334837. PMID: 41105640; PMCID: PMC12533836. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41105640/> (Ireland)

Williams LF, Derouin A. Long-Term Follow-Up and Monitoring of Patients Who Undergo Bariatric Surgery. *Am J Nurs*. 2025 Oct 1;125(10):30-36. doi: 10.1097/AJN.000000000000157. Epub 2025 Sep 25. PMID: 40993865. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40993865/> (US)

Mokhlesi SS, Vasilevski V, Sweet L. Factors associated with breastfeeding in women with a history of bariatric surgery: A cross-sectional survey study. *Midwifery*. 2025 Sep;148:104496. doi: 10.1016/j.midw.2025.104496. Epub 2025 Jun 18. PMID: 40544670. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40544670/> (Australia)

Clark P. Iron Deficiency Related to Obesity. *J Infus Nurs*. 2024 May-Jun 01;47(3):163-174. doi: 10.1097/NAN.0000000000000546. Epub 2024 May 10. PMID: 38744241. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38744241/> (US)

Coordinated by: *Willam Gourash, PhD, CRNP, RN, CBN*
Senior Research Coordinator & Nurse Practitioner -Pittsburgh, PA

CERTIFIED BARIATRIC NURSE COMMITTEE & SUBCOMMITTEES

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Karen Flanders

CO-CHAIR
Sharon Hillgartner

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Open (coleader)
Kellie Armstrong (IHLC Director)
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Bill Gourash
Anne Miranda

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Lana Fontana

The CBN Newsletter was developed by the CBN Certification Committee and produced by the ASMBS Director of Certification and Credentialing and ASMBS Marketing Department