

The Clinical Lipid Specialist (CLS) designation has been invaluable to me in many ways. First and foremost, while studying for the examination, my knowledge of the treatment of complex disorders increased exponentially. As a nurse practitioner treating underserved patients in a rural setting our patients do not have access to experts in the management of lipid disorders, obtaining the CLS certification increased my confidence in treating these patients.

Within a year of achieving the CLS certification, I applied to the doctor of nursing (DNP) program at Johns Hopkins University (JHU), I feel this certification was a contributory factor to acceptance into their program. My DNP researched centered around lipid guideline implementation. While at JHU I had the opportunity to network with world-renowned specialists in the lipid management field and those contacts have continued post-graduation.

The ability to obtain prior authorization for necessary lipid medication has become very difficult. In fact, there are some payors that will only approve the medication if ordered by a CLS, lipidologist or a cardiologist. As a CLS I have been able to obtain approval in many of this instances otherwise my patients would not receive life-saving care.

There are many other benefits that I have received as a result of my CLS certification. Among them are:

- I have been invited to co-author papers for national publication in respected journals
- I serve as peer-reviewer for several cardiology journals
- I have been appointed to national councils in the National Lipid Association and the American College of Cardiology
- It has offered career opportunities
- Patients have researched my credentials and have self-referred to my practice
- I have been asked to speak at local, regional and national events
- I serve as mentor for other professional and students in my practice

The CLS certification examination is available nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists, registered dietitian/nutritionists, clinical exercise physiologists/specialists and other healthcare professionals who meet qualifying criteria. More recently it has been opened to licensed physicians who are clinical based. I highly recommend all clinicians who are involved in treating patients with lipid disorders to take the examination I can assure you it will enhance your knowledge and change your practice.