

## Background

Nursing certification stands as a high point of specialized knowledge and expertise. However, barriers, including limited resources, time constraints, inadequate support, and financial hindrances, continuously deter staff from seeking specialty certification leaving to low levels of certification rates.

This project aims to promote an understanding among nurses regarding the significance of certification and to increase the specialty certification rates within the perioperative department.

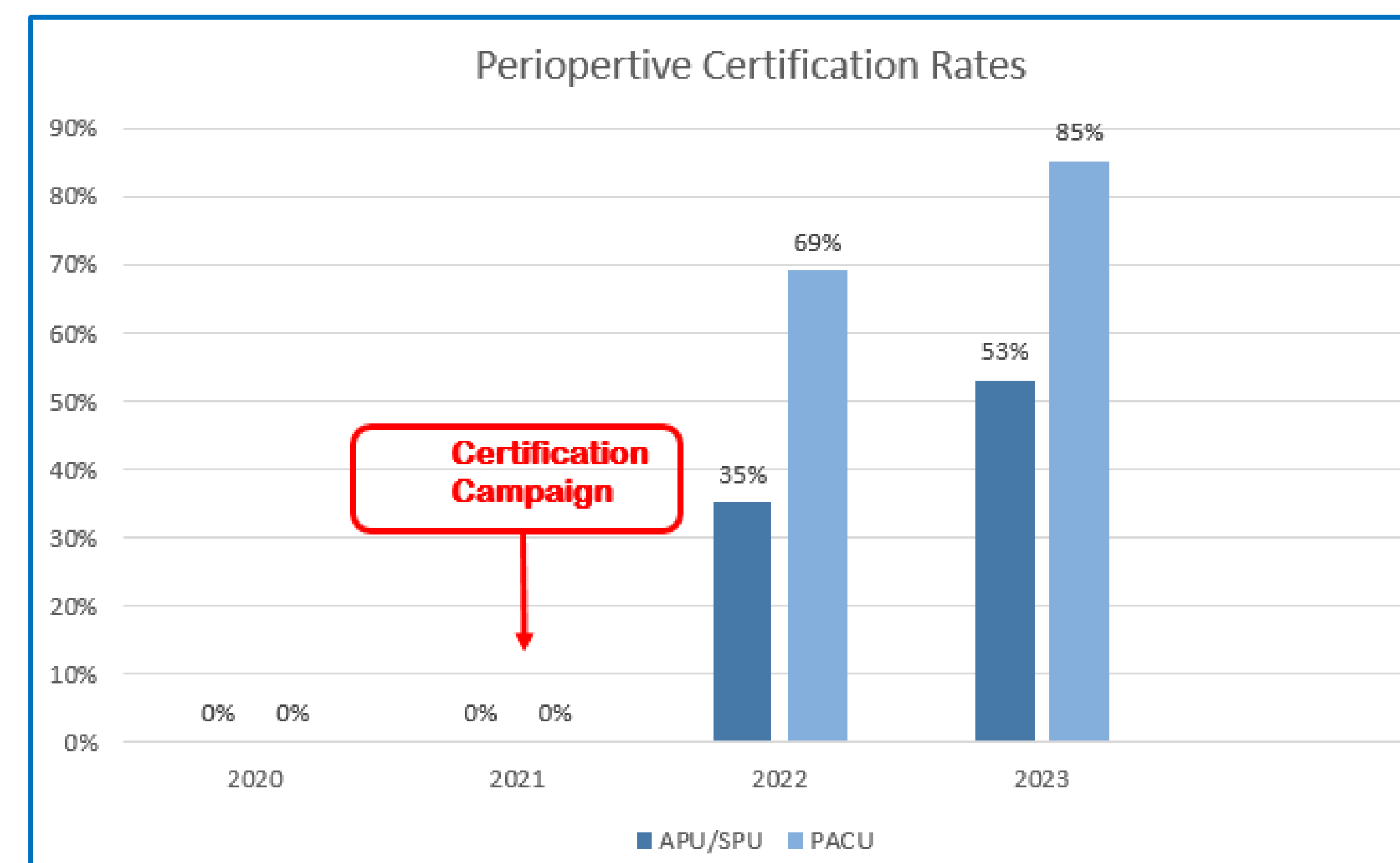
## Methods & Intervention

- Employing the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Methodology for guidance, the initiative commenced with a rigorous identification of certification-related barriers, which set the stage for developing targeted action plans in 2020.
- Despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, the campaign was revitalized in 2021 with significant adaptive strategies.
- Multi-faceted interventions were deployed to educate staff about specialty certification, clarify its theoretical underpinnings, and highlight organizational resources.
- Strategically, the implementation encompassed the distribution of flyers, insertion of weekly queries in newsletters, a systematic study plan, availability of specialized review courses, and online references.
- Moreover, a review book and corresponding blank answer keys were provided.
- Zoom sessions were judiciously designed, executed, and archived to focus on meticulous question reviews.
- To alleviate financial barriers, vouchers for the "take two" program were made available.



## Results

- The campaign's success was evident when two nurses secured certifications on their first attempt in 2021.
- The APU saw certification rates leap from 0% to over 50% for CAPA. Concurrently, PACU's rates soared from 0% to 85% for CPAN by spring 2023.
- Certified nurses received accolades in team huddles and staff assemblies.
- Leadership acknowledged their achievements through congratulatory emails, and commemorative photographs were captured where several achievers were prominently featured on the organization's social media platforms, exemplifying professional success.



## Implications for Advancing the Practice

Competence is non-negotiable in delivering high-caliber nursing care. Specialty certification, a robust marker of a nurse's competencies and professional commitment, is pivotal. Cultivating an organizational milieu that offers structured avenues for professional development, coupled with formal acknowledgment systems, has significantly increased specialty certification rates, affirming its indispensable role in enhancing the quality of nursing practice.



## References

1. Dierkes, A. M., Schlak, A. E., French, R., McHugh, M. D., & Aiken, L. (2021). Why some nurses obtain specialty certification and others do not. *JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 51(5), 249–256. <https://doi.org/10.1097/nna.0000000000001009>
2. Garrison, E., Schulz, C., & Lindquist, C. (2018). Specialty certification nurses perceived value and barriers. *Nursing Management*, 49(5), 42–47. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.NUMA.0000532328.69992.fc>
3. Worksheet for Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle planning. (2018, November). Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. <https://www.ahrq.gov/evidencenow/tools/pdsa-worksheet.html>