Frequently Asked Questions

Can I access CATS using any internet browser?

CATS was configured for use with Internet Explorer. A minimum of Internet Explorer version 6 running on a Windows operating system is recommended. The use of other internet browsers, such as Mozilla Firefox, may cause the database not to function properly.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are using Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher, please see Appendix B: Other Important Notes in the User’s Guide for information on suppressing a warning message that may occur when editing license, certification, and degree comments, or deleting licenses, certifications, and degrees.

How do I access the CATS database?

Access the CATS website via the following URL: https://webapp.mis.vanderbilt.edu/cats

Managers, assigned Admin Department Assistants and nurses login to the database with their VU net ID and password.

The Manager and Admin Department Assistants view will include all the departments and staffs the manager is responsible for. The Manager will have rights to add or update the information in the database.

The nurse view will be of their individual record in a read-only format. It is the nurses’ responsibility to remain current in the licenses and certifications required to by their position and inform their manager/employer of any changes/updates in licensure status or information.

How long does it take for the license update in the CATS database to reflect in VandyWorks?

The update in CATS is immediate. You can see the status key for licensure turns from red, yellow or gray to green right away. VandyWorks is updated every night with information from CATS.

Should I enter TN at the beginning of the license number to indicate it is a TN license?

Some state use letters in as part of their official license number. In that case it is it ok to enter the letters. For example, R precedes the number in a Mississippi
Tennessee does not use letters in their license number. Therefore, the answer is no, do not insert TN in the license number field. Leading 0’s also should not be used.

If I manage a staff nurse that takes a management position do I still track the license information in CATS?

Yes, licensure and certifications are tracked in CATS for all nurses even if they do not provide direct patient care or work in a non-nursing capacity of any kind. This information is gathered for Magnet Recognition annual reports. Please note that you may need to update the patient care flag status on individuals that have a job change.

If an employee quits does CATS retain their information?

When an employee terminates with Vanderbilt they will no longer appear in CATS. However, CATS does retain the record. You just can’t see it.

Can my assistant update the information in the database for me?

Vanderbilt policy OP 30-10.03, Licensure: Primary Source Verification / Re-verification states the Department Manager is responsible to verify from the primary source the status of licensure. The individuals who are authorized access to update the CATS database are the Manager, the PAF responsible person, and the assigned Admin Department Assistants in the department. You will login to CATS using your VUnet ID and password. In addition, before you are granted access there a verification agreement must be reviewed and accepted. This is a "statement of truth“ stating that by accepting the agreement you are certifying the information you are capturing is true. If this agreement is not accepted the login is denied.

What happens if my employee has had a name change and the RN license is in a different name?

If the nurse has had a name change since the last time they renewed their license it is important to make a note of that in the comments section of their CATS database record. The individual’s name will be updated in the CATS staff member list once HR has been informed. However, when the license is checked on the TN website and it is listed to a person with a different name it will raise a red flag and require further investigation of the nurse to verify the license. If you have noted the previous name in the comments section this makes it easier to track it. Here is an example:

Nancy Jones RN TN 122345 10-31-08 License is in maiden name Smith
What if a type of certification or degree is not listed in the drop down list?

Send an email to lou.kaelin@vanderbilt.edu and request the information be added to the list. Then you can go back into the database and update the record later.

What is the difference between filter and sort?

The filter option allows for the ability to search for specific individuals(s) using full or partial search criteria. For example, a wild card “%” added to a partial name can help identify an individual in the database. For example, enter Jones,Sa% to find Salenia Jones.

Sort allows the list to be sorted in alpha or numeric order, ascending or descending. For example, if you want to sort the list by staff member last name, click the Name column header and the list will be sorted in ascending order by last name. Click the column header again to sort the list in descending order.

If I delete a license or certification by accident can I get it back?

You can re-create the license record by re-entering the information.

If I have created a license and saved it but want to go back and enter comments do I have to create a new license to do it?

No you do not need to create another license line to add comments. Select the edit box in the comments field of the existing license and you will be able to add comments to this item. You cannot add an exact duplicate license or certification. You will receive an error message to renew this license/certification or change information in one of the other fields such as the type of license/certification, issuing state and etc.

Are staffs that are on leave such as FMLA or military in the database?

Yes, all active staff and staff on leave status are shown in the database. Nurses on leave are still responsible to maintain their credentials and we need to track that information. However, you can temporarily hide them by selecting the hide flag and using the display options filter.

Where to I put the certificate of fitness number for APNs?
APNs are required to have an active RN license and an APN license (it is actually an APN Certificate but the state tracks this record as a license in their database, it will have the same expiration date as the RN license). Both the RN and APN license information is entered into CATS in the Licensure section of the record. The APN specialty information is entered into the Certifications section of the record. This information is required in the database.

At one time there was an additional certificate called the “Certificate of Fitness”. As of July 2005 the APN Certificate no longer requires a separate Certificate of Fitness. As the Certificate of Fitness is being phased out you may have some APNs that still hold this certificate. The Certificate of Fitness number may be entered in the comment field for clarification purposes.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the CATS database?

Contacts for Assistance:

For questions regarding licensure information:

You may email your questions to lou.kaelin@vanderbilt.edu

OR contact the following individuals:

Lou Kaelin, 6-2986

For questions regarding years of experience:

You may email your questions to compensation@vanderbilt.edu

OR contact the following individuals:

Hospitals & Clinic

Leslee Hughes, 3-4292

School of Medicine

Letosha Scruggs, 3-1254