

Nursing Career Advancement: The Road to National Certification

Speakers

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Nursing Specialty Certifications

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2022



National Certifications

❖ What is a national nursing certification?

- Standardized examination testing your knowledge in a specialty area

❖ How does specialty certification differ from RN licensure?

- RN licensure examinations ensure that nurses meet the minimum qualifications to practice nursing, while specialty certifications validates mastery of knowledge in a specialized area (Halm, M. A., 2021).



National Certifications

What are the advantages of earning a specialty certification?

- ❖ Specialty certifications will enhance your professional presence and increase your marketability across the enterprise. It demonstrates that you personally are dedicated to improving your practice.
- ❖ Sense of accomplishment
- ❖ Validation of knowledge and skills in your area of expertise
- ❖ Recognition from your nursing co-workers and managers
- ❖ Credibility with the public
- ❖ # 1/Improves patient outcomes



Barriers to attaining a National Certification

- ❖ Cost of the exam
- ❖ Time
- ❖ Fear of failure
- ❖ Life
- ❖ Lack of support
- ❖ Lack of knowledge about available resources



Nursing Credentialing Organizations

Where can I find nursing specialty certifications?

❖ American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

- “ANCC's Certification Program enables nurses to demonstrate their specialty expertise and validate their knowledge to employers and patients. Through targeted exams that incorporate the latest nursing-practice standards, ANCC certification empowers nurses with pride and professional satisfaction.”

<https://www.nursingworld.org/ancc/>

❖ American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)

- “Achieving board certification demonstrates to patients, employers, and the public that a nurse's knowledge reflects national standards and a deep commitment to patient safety.” <https://www.aacn.org/certification?tab=First-Time%20Certification>

❖ Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN)

- “Board certification assures employers, patients and their families and the public that you are an expert in your specialty who stays on top of the latest advances and best practices, so you can deliver the safest, most efficient and highest quality care possible.” <https://bcen.org/value-of-certification/>



Nursing Credentialing Organizations

Other organizations that offer nursing certifications:

- ❖ Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC)
- ❖ The National Certification Corp. (NCC)
- ❖ The American Board of Neuroscience Nursing (ABNN)
- ❖ Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB)
- ❖ American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification, Inc. (ABPANC)
- ❖ The Competency and Credentialing Institute (CCI)
- ❖ National Association for practical nurse education and service (NAPNES)
- ❖ Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC)



National Nursing Specialty Certifications

- ❖ Medical-Surgical Nursing Certification
- ❖ Progressive Care Certified Nurse Exam
- ❖ Critical Care Registered Nurse Exam
- ❖ Cardiac Vascular Nursing Certification
- ❖ Trauma Certified Registered Nurse
- ❖ Ambulatory Care Nursing Certification
- ❖ Pediatric Nursing Certification
- ❖ Oncology Nurse Navigator- Certified Generalist
- ❖ Certified Rehabilitation Certified Nurse
- ❖ Inpatient Obstetric Nursing Certification



National Certifications available for LPNs

National Association for practical nurse education and service (NAPNES)

- ❖ IV Therapy Certification
- ❖ Long Term Care Certification
- ❖ Pharmacological Certification

www.napnes.org

Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC)

- ❖ Certified Dialysis Licensed Practical Nurse (CD-LPN)

<https://www.nncc-exam.org/certification/cd-lpn-cd-lvn>

❖ CORRECTION: CD-LPN CERTIFICATION NO LONGER AVAILABLE



National Certifications available for LPNs

Other certifications available for LPNs

- ❖ Certified Hospice and Palliative Licensed Nurse (CHPLN)
- ❖ Certified Gastroenterology Licensed Vocational/Practical Nurse (LPN/LVN)
- ❖ Wound Care Certified (WCC)
- ❖ Certified EKG Technician (CET)
- ❖ Certified Urologic Associate (CUA)



Steps to Certification

Steps

1. Choosing the right certification
2. Eligibility criteria
3. Gather study materials
4. Make a study plan
5. Schedule and Take the exam!!!



Choosing the Right Certification

Choosing the appropriate specialty certification is essential.

- ❖ What are your interests?
- ❖ What areas do you have the most experience?
- ❖ What are your nursing goals for the future?



Eligibility criteria

Each specialty certification has specific eligibility criteria that you must meet in order to test.

- ❖ Current unencumbered license
- ❖ Hours providing direct patient care
- ❖ CEUs requirements



Gather Study Materials

- ❖ Recommendations on certification books
- ❖ Certification handbook
- ❖ Online test question banks
- ❖ Review sessions



Make a Study Plan

- ❖ Most certification handbooks have developed study outlines and breakdown the content that you need to focus on
- ❖ Study with a group



Schedule and Take the Exam

- ❖ Each certification has a step-by-step process to schedule your test
 - Testing centers
 - Live Remote Proctoring
- ❖ 100-150 multiple choice questions
- ❖ Most get results immediately after testing

YOU CAN DO IT!!!!



Making the Grade: Test Taking Strategies

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2022



How It Works...

- The NCLEX and other national certification exams work by using a Computer Adaptive Test.
- As you answer a question, if it is correct the computer will pick the next question to be a little harder. If you chose an incorrect answer, the next question will be easier.
- The process continues until the test plan requirements have all been met and a reliable pass or fail decision has been identified.



Test Taking Strategies



- *Avoid reading into the question.*
 - Don't ask yourself “what if?”
 - Focus only on the information in the question and make a decision about what the question is asking.
 - Identify strategic words in the question
 - In multiple choice, multiple answer, read all the choices before you identify if they are correct or not.
 - Use process of elimination with choices presented then re-read the question to verify you chose the correct answer.



Ingredients of a Question

- Include:
 - Event (Client of Clinical Situation)
 - Event Query (Asking something specific about the event)
 - Options or answers



Multiple Choice

- Usually four options and you are asked to select one
- Read all options then select an answer using process of elimination.
- Reread the question and think about all that you have read or studied about the event



Prioritizing

- Think about what you know of the event then think about what order or sequence it should be in



Fill In the Blank

- Basically, you know it or you don't....



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Chart/Exhibit

- Read the question and identify the most important information in the exhibit before answering.



Strategic Words

- These words focus your attention on a critical point to consider when answering and can be used to eliminate incorrect answers
 - Can identify that all responses are correct but want the MOST correct answer provided.



Subject of a question

- The subject of the question is the topic the question is about.
 - It is imperative that you correctly identify the subject to help you eliminate the incorrect answers.
- The nurse is teaching a client in skeletal leg traction about measures to increase bed mobility. Which item would be most helpful for this client?
 - A. Television
 - B. Fracture Bedpan
 - C. Overhead Trapeze
 - D. Reading materials



Positive or Negative Event Queries

A positive event query uses strategic words that ask you to select an option that is correct.

- The nurse provides medication instructions to a client about digoxin (Lanoxin). Which statement by the client indicates an understanding of its adverse effects?
 - A. “Blurred Vision is expected”
 - B. “If I am nauseated or vomiting, I should stay on liquids and take some liquid antacids”
 - C. “This medication may cause headache and weakness but that is nothing to worry about”
 - D. “If my pulse rate drops below 60, I should let my health care provider know”



A negative event query uses strategic words that ask to select an option that is incorrect.

The nurse has reinforced discharge instructions to a client who has undergone a right mastectomy with axillary lymph node dissection. Which statement by the client indicates a need for further instruction regarding home care measures?

- A “I should use a straight razor to shave under my arms”
- B “I need to be sure that I do not have blood pressures or blood drawn from my right arm”
- C “I should inform all other health care providers that I have had this surgical procedure”
- D “I need to be sure I wear thick mitt hand covers or use thick potholders when I am cooking and touching hot pans.”



Questions that require prioritizing

- Remember all options may be correct but you need to determine the correct order.
- Strategies to use to prioritize are
 - ABC's
 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
 - Steps of the Nursing Process



ABC's

- Airway, Breathing, Circulation
- Always in that order and AIRway is always the first
- A client diagnosed with cancer is receiving morphine for pain. The nurse should employ which priority action in the care of the client?
 - A Monitor stools
 - B Encourage fluid intake
 - C Monitor urine output
 - D Encourage the client to cough and deep breathe



Maslow's

- Physiological needs are the priority
- Safety and security
- Love and belonging
- Self-esteem
- Self-actualization

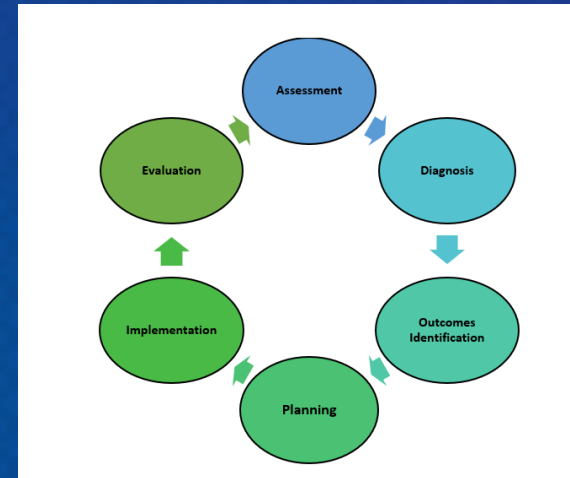


- *When the physiological need is not recognized in the event or is not an option move up the pyramid to the next need on the hierarchy.*



Nursing Process

- Assessment
- Analysis
- Planning
- Implementation
- Evaluation



- Assess questions address gathering data, confirming it then communicating and documenting the findings.
- When ask to select your first, immediate, or initial action, follow steps of the nursing process to answer the question.

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Look for strategic words to indicate the step of the process

- If an option indicates the concept of assessment or collection of data, this is the BEST option.
- If no assessment option is given, select your first, initial, or immediate action.
- Exception- if it is emergent situation the intervention is priority



Nursing process cont.

- Analysis
 - These are the most difficult questions and require critical thinking
- The Nurse reviews the arterial blood gas of a client and notes the following: PH 7.45, PCO₂ 30mm Hg, and HCO₃ 22 mEq/l. The nurse analyzes these results as indicating which condition?
 - A. Metabolic Acidosis, compensated
 - B. Respiratory alkalosis, compensated
 - C. Metabolic alkalosis, uncompensated
 - D. Respiratory acidosis, uncompensated



Nursing process cont.

ROME Respiratory Opposite
Metabolic Equal



Looking at your PH and PCO₂

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- Planning

- Require prioritizing the client problems, determining goals and outcomes, developing a POC and communication and documentation
- Priority will be actual client problems over potential ones



• Implementation

- Focus on a nursing action instead of a medical action
- Avoid What if?
- Give the answer that is ideal

* Remember that in the test question, the nurse has all the time, equipment, and resources he/she needs....



- Evaluation

- Focus on comparing the actual outcomes of care with the expected outcomes and on communication and documentation
- Frequently use negative event query questions



Client Needs

- Safe and Effective Care Environment
 - The nurse provides care, collaborates with others, protects clients and family and co-workers from environmental hazards.
 - Focus on safety.
 - Remember the importance of hand washing, call lights, bed position, appropriate side rail use, asepsis, precautions, triage, and emergency response.



Client Needs

- Physiological Integrity
 - These questions assess the nurse's ability to provide comfort and assistance in ADL's, meds, and parenteral nutrition
 - Also address the nurse's ability to reduce the client's potential for developing complications or health problems r/t treatments, procedures, or health problems
 - Focus on Maslow's Hierarchy
 - Physiological needs are priority
 - Remember ABC's



• Psychosocial Integrity

- Test the concept that nurses provide care that promotes and supports emotional, mental, social well-being of the client and family.
- Supporting the patient's ability to cope, adapt, and problem solve
- Communication-type questions
 - How you would respond to a client or family concerns

Remember to select the answer that focuses on the thoughts, feelings, concerns, anxieties, or fears of the client, their family, or significant other.



• Health Promotion and Maintenance

- These questions test the concepts that the nurse provides and assists in direct nursing care.
- Assist the client and family through the normal stages of growth and development, prevention of illness, and early detection.
- Use teaching and learning theory if the question addresses client teaching.
- Remember the client's willingness, desire, and readiness to learn is the first priority.
- Watch for negative event queries.



Eliminating comparable or alike options

- Look for answers that are alike or comparable
- Eliminate them!
- It is impossible for both to be right!

- The nurse is caring for a group of clients. On review of the client's medical records, the nurse determines that which client is at risk for excess fluid volume?
 - A. The client taking diuretics
 - B. The client with kidney disease
 - C. The client with a ileostomy
 - D. The client undergoing gastrointestinal suctioning



Eliminate Options containing close-ended words

- All, always, most, none, never, only
 - Eliminate answers that have these words d/t their extreme meaning
- May, usually, normally, commonly, are words that indicate the correct answer.



Look for umbrella options

- The umbrella option is broad and universal and usually contains the concept of the other options in it.
- The umbrella option is always the correct answer!

The client admitted to the hospital is diagnosed with urethritis caused by chlamydial infection. The nurse should implement which precaution to prevent contraction of the infection during care?

- A. Enteric precautions
- B. Contact precautions
- C. Standard precautions
- D. Wearing gloves and mask



Delegating and Making Assignments

- Use the Nurse Scope of Practice Guidelines
- Non-invasive interventions can be delegated to a non-licensed assistant
 - Skin care, ambulating, hygiene
- An LPN can do :
 - Dressing changes, suction, baths, administering medications oral, sub Q, or IV fluids
- A RN is responsible for all previous and
 - assessment, planning, analysis, implementation, evaluation, supervising, initiating, teaching, and IV push medications.



Pharmacology Questions

- If familiar with the med, use your nursing knowledge to answer
- The question will identify meds by trade and generic name
- Try to form a relationship between the med and the medical diagnosis of the client
- Try to determine the classification of the med. Identifying the class can help you determine the side effects
- Recognize common side effects and relate the appropriate nursing intervention



Pharm Cont.

- Focus on what the question is asking
 - Intended effect
 - Side effect
 - Adverse effect
 - Toxic effect
- Learn commonalities the meds have to determine classification (i.e. med endings such as lol)
- Look at the name to determine action
- If ask to calculate a dosage problem, always do the problem twice



Remember****

- If a client is taking an antacid with ANY med, teach that the antacid will interfere with the absorption of the medication.
- Enteric coated and sustained release meds should never be crushed
- Capsules should never be opened
- The client is NOT to change or abruptly stop any med
- The client should NOT change dose on their own
- AVOID OTC meds and herbs with prescription meds
- AVOID ETOH with prescription meds



Pre-payment and Reimbursement Programs

Andrea D. Gudenkauf

Fiscal Affairs Coordinator
UK HealthCare
2022



National Certifications

- ❖ We offer pre-payment for certification exams and renewal of certifications
- ❖ Please email hospitalpayments@uky.edu for the NNCP pre-payment agreement form
- ❖ You can also request reimbursement for certification exams after you have passed by completing the request for reimbursement form and emailing it along with a copy of payment receipt and proof of passing to hospitalpayments@uky.edu



National Certifications

- ❖ We have several programs setup for certifications that allow two attempts without charge including ANCC Success Pays and PNCB(CPN) No Pass No Pay Program.
- ❖ Please email hospitalpayments@uky.edu for more details on these programs



National Certifications

- ❖ The Professional Development Council has reached out to UK HealthCare nursing leadership to review the certification policy to include LPNs, but at the current time it does not cover LPN certifications

Links to info and policies

The first two links are policies on Careweb and must be accessed from a UK network or VPN

[Certification Exams for Registered Nurses Policy](#)

[Success Pays](#)

[PNCB No Pass, No Pay CPN Certification](#)

[BCEN Voucher Savings Program for CEN, CFRN, CPEN, CTRN,& TCRN](#)

Email hospitalpayments@uky.edu with any questions



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- Silvestri, L.(2014). *Comprehensive Review for The NCLEX-RN Examination*. St. Louis, MO: Elsevier, 19-34.



Contact Information

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UK HealthCare Career Center

Hours of Operation:

Waller Healthcare Annex

Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs 8:00 a.m. - 4:00pm

Appts. available in person, Zoom or phone

To schedule an appointment use Calendly:

<https://calendly.com/shstru2>

Or email me with questions:

sue.strup@uky.edu



Q & A

Questions & Answers



Q & A

1. What certifications are available for Women's Health OB/GYN?

- ❖ The NCC is a great resource for certifications r/t OB/GYN
- ❖ <https://www.nccwebsite.org/>

2. Nurse Navigator Certification

- ❖ The ANCC does not currently offer a nurse navigator certification however there is an oncology nurse navigator certification offered through the AONN.
- ❖ <https://aonnfl.org/>

3. Are reimbursement options specific to only bedside nurses or can nursing leadership take advantage of this opportunity as well? Are reimbursements limited to # of attempts (as in testers have a limited number of reimbursable attempts)?

- ❖ Yes, nursing leadership can get reimbursed for certifications and recertification.
- ❖ Reimbursements are paid when you pass the exam some certification exams offer one retake at no extra charge, but you would have to research the specific certification criteria to verify.



Q & A

4. What national certifications are available for Nurse Navigators- Pediatrics?

- ❖ The ANCC does not currently offer a nurse navigator certification however there is an oncology nurse navigator certification offered through the AONN. <https://aonnffl.org/>
- ❖ The ANCC offers a pediatric nursing certification you can explore <https://www.nursingworld.org/our-certifications/pediatric-nurse/>

5. Does UK Healthcare compensate for receiving national certifications?

- ❖ Jennifer Barnes in Nurse Recruitment Answer: “Although UK HC does not increase pay when a national certification is obtained like it does for degree attainment, the UK HealthCare Nursing Professional Advancement Program (NPA – formerly clinical ladder) for Gold Level; national certification is required. Additional hourly pay differentials, professional leave and conference money is awarded based on level criteria.”
- ❖ <https://ukhealthcare.uky.edu/medical-professionals/nursing/professional-advancement>



Q & A

6. Does UK pay for the exam or reimburse for the exam?

- ❖ Yes, see information presented by Andrea Gudenkauf

6. Where do you take the exam?

- ❖ Testing centers are available in Lexington, KY and various areas across Kentucky
- ❖ You can also take some exams at home through Live Remote Proctoring

7. What are the exams for certifications like (multiple choice, timed, etc.)?

- ❖ 100-150 Multiple choice questions
- ❖ Certifications are timed exams

9. Does UK offer any test prep courses?

- ❖ UK has offered review sessions in the past for specific certifications, such as a med-surg review, CCRN, PCCN, TCRN



Q & A

10. If someone plans to pursue the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner track, which certification, MEDSURG-BC or PCCN, would be more beneficial to obtain?

- ❖ Dr. Sheila Melander, Ph.D., APRN-BC, FCCM, FAANP, FAAN, Associate Dean of MSN/DNP Faculty and Nursing Practice UK College of Nursing: “Both (MEDSURG-BC or PCCN) certifications are great but probably if they need to choose the PCCN from AACN would be more helpful as it’s more focused on acute care. That was a great question. Please have anyone email me that has additional questions re: our UK graduate APRN tracks and programs. sheila.melander@uky.edu

Q & A

11. Which certifications would be available for ambulatory cardiology nurses?

- ❖ There are no specific cardiac ambulatory nursing certifications; however, ambulatory nurses are eligible to take the same exams as inpatient nurses.
- ❖ The Ambulatory Care Nursing Certification would also be an excellent option.



Q & A

12. Is there a book or other study material available for the new NCLEX format?

- ❖ Yes, the new NCLEX format will start in April of 2023 and will include 15 new style questions that involve scenarios. You can review information about the new format with Elsevier. Their program is called “Next Generation NCLEX Readiness” And you can find more info about it on [evolve.elsevier.com](https://www.elsevier.com/develop/nclex-readiness)

13. Can you recommend a book or website to study for the PCCN exam?

- ❖ There are multiple avenues to use while studying, it just depends on how you learn best. Here are a few options :
 - PCCN Exam Flashcards Study system from Mometrix test prep from [flashcardsecrets.com](https://www.flashcardsecrets.com)
 - [Study.com](https://www.study.com) has a AACN PCCN certification prep course with a 92% first time pass rate.
 - [AACN.org](https://www.aacn.org) PCCN practice exam and study materials
- ❖ Burns, S. M. & Delgado, S. A. (2018). AACN Essentials of Progressive Care Nursing (4th ed.). United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill Education.

Q & A

14. What national certifications are available for LPNs and does UK reimburse for them?

- ❖ See slide #9 and #10
- ❖ No, there is not a national certification reimbursement program for LPNs at this time; however, leadership has been asked to review the policy.



Q & A

The End

