



8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

1.800.284.2378
301.628.5000 *tel*
301.628.5004 *fax*

www.nursecredentialing.org

Medical-Surgical Nursing Board Certification Test Content Outline - effective date: April 6, 2012

There are 175 questions on this examination. Of these, 150 are scored questions and 25 are pretest questions that are not scored. Pretest questions are used to determine how well these questions will perform before they are used on the scored portion of the examination. The pretest questions cannot be distinguished from those that will be scored, so it is important for a candidate to answer all questions. A candidate's score, however, is based solely on the 150 scored questions. Performance on pretest questions does not affect a candidate's score.

This Test Content Outline identifies the areas that are included on the examination. The percentage and number of questions in each of the major categories of the scored portion of the examination are also shown.

Category	Domains of Practice	No. of Questions	Percent
I	Assessment and Nursing Diagnosis	25	17%
II	Planning and Outcomes Identification	21	14%
III	Implementation and Evaluation	50	33%
IV	Professional Role	54	36%
	Total	150	100%

Medical-Surgical Nursing

Test Content Outline - effective date: April 6, 2012

Please note that the entire test content outline is associated with functional health pattern related problems of adult patients (ages 18 and above) as indicated in the following notes:

Note 1: Functional health patterns:

0. Non-specific
1. Health perception and management
2. Nutritional, metabolic
3. Elimination
4. Activity and exercise
5. Sleep and rest
6. Cognitive, perceptual
7. Self perception, self concept
8. Role, relationships, family dynamics
9. Sexuality, reproduction
10. Values, belief patterns
11. Coping, stress, tolerance

I Assessment and Nursing Diagnosis (17%)

A. Gather Comprehensive Patient Data

Knowledge of:

1. Components of a health history and psychosocial assessment
2. Sources and procedures for obtaining diagnostic studies and test results
3. Normal structure and function (e.g., anatomy, physiology) across the life span

Skill in:

4. Collecting data from multiple sources using therapeutic interviews and observations (e.g., prescribed and non-prescribed medications, allergies, immunizations, psychosocial factors, nutrition, alcohol and drug use, suicide screening, abuse and neglect, environment)
5. Performing physical examinations using age- and developmentally appropriate, system-specific, evidence-based assessment techniques

B. Analyze and synthesize available data to identify patterns and variances

Knowledge of:

1. Abnormal structure and function resulting from disease processes, procedural interventions, etc.
2. Age-appropriate changes (e.g., physiological, psychosocial)
3. Normal and abnormal test results and diagnostic studies

Skill in:

4. Recognizing the therapeutic and/or adverse effects of medications
5. Determining the completeness and accuracy of information
6. Recognizing emergent or crisis situations

C. Nursing Diagnosis and Problem Lists

Knowledge of:

1. North American Nursing Diagnosis Association-International (NANDA-I) taxonomy

Skill in:

2. Formulating individualized nursing diagnoses
3. Developing individualized problem lists

Medical-Surgical Nursing

Test Content Outline - effective date: April 6, 2012

II Planning and Outcome Identification (14%)

A. Prioritize Nursing Diagnoses or Problems

Knowledge of:

1. Strategies for prioritizing diagnoses or problems (e.g., airway, breathing, circulation (ABCs), Maslow's hierarchy)

Skill in:

2. Engaging patient, family, significant other, interdisciplinary team, and caregiver in setting priorities

B. Formulate expected outcomes with patients, families, significant others, and interdisciplinary team members

Knowledge of:

1. Principles for formulating expected outcomes (e.g., realistic, understandable, measureable, behavior, and achievable)
2. Evidence-based guidelines

Skill in:

3. Developing expected outcomes that direct continuity of care
4. Creating an expected outcomes timeline

C. Develop an individualized plan of care

Knowledge of:

1. Resources for continuing care

Skills in:

2. Identifying evidence-based, cost-effective options that address the patient's nursing diagnoses or problems
3. Writing a plan of care that provides directions to other members of the healthcare team

III Implementation and Evaluation (33%)

A. Use Nursing Interventions Consistent with the Plan of Care

Knowledge of:

1. Evidence-based guidelines for nursing interventions

Skill in:

2. Performing evidence-based nursing interventions
3. Adapting evidence-based nursing interventions to specific patient needs
4. Anticipating the effects of multiple interventions for patients with co-morbidities
5. Reducing risk using evidence-based therapeutic interventions

B. Coordinate Patient Care

Knowledge of:

1. Role and function of medical and allied health professionals (e.g., medicine, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy)
2. Nursing care to support common therapies provided by other disciplines for Medical-Surgical patients

Skill in:

3. Organizing care and delegating
4. Advocating for the patient
5. Collaborating with the patient, family, and members of the interdisciplinary team

Medical-Surgical Nursing

Test Content Outline - effective date: April 6, 2012

6. Recognizing when interdisciplinary treatments are required

C. Administer Medications as Prescribed

Knowledge of:

1. Pharmacology, including polypharmacy
2. Patient safety related to medication
3. Complementary and alternative therapies

Skill in:

4. Recognizing clinical situations for Medical-Surgical patients that have implications for the administration of medications.

D. Evaluate the Patient's Responses to Interventions and the Effectiveness of the Plan of Care

Skill in:

1. Identifying data that are essential to the evaluation of clinical outcomes
2. Interpreting patterns and variances related to response to interventions
3. Evaluating the degree to which the patient has met expected outcomes
4. Updating the plan of care

IV Professional Role (36%)

A. Establishing and Maintaining Therapeutic Relationships

Knowledge of:

1. Psychosocial theories and factors that affect patient care (e.g., major life decisions, diversity (e.g., age, gender, culture, religion), family dynamics)
2. Grief and loss support and coping strategies

Skill in:

3. Using therapeutic communication with patients, family members, significant others, and members of the healthcare team

B. Patient, Family, Significant Other, and Caregiver Education

Knowledge of:

1. Concepts and principles of teaching and learning
2. Concepts and principles related to change
3. Health promotion and maintenance

Skill in:

4. Identifying learning needs, readiness, preferences, and barriers
5. Recognizing teaching opportunities
6. Developing an individualized education plan
7. Implementing the education plan
8. Evaluating the education plan and teaching effectiveness

C. Improve the Quality of Nursing Care Delivery

Knowledge of:

1. Impact of the National Patient Safety Goals (from the Joint Commission) on the practice of Medical-Surgical Nursing
2. Quality improvement strategies (e.g., score cards, root cause analysis, peer review)
3. Sources of information about evidence-based interventions
4. How information systems interface with nursing care delivery
5. Documentation specific to Medical-Surgical nursing diagnoses and interventions

Medical-Surgical Nursing

Test Content Outline - effective date: April 6, 2012

Skill in:

6. Using trend data and analysis to identify areas for improvement
7. Applying Medical-Surgical research findings to practice
8. Serving as a preceptor/mentor in Medical-Surgical nursing
9. Acquiring data needed for analysis of problems and improvement of processes

D. Comply with Ethical, Legal, and Regulatory Requirements in Nursing Care Delivery and Management

Knowledge of:

1. Actions to take when violations of legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements are observed
2. Legal and regulatory requirements for nursing care delivery and management (e.g., HIPAA, OBRA, scope of practice)
3. Requirements for documenting, reporting, and managing evidence that may be used for legal or regulatory purposes

Skill in:

4. Applying established codes of ethics and standards of practice to Medical-Surgical nursing
5. Recognizing breaches of legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements
6. Facilitating ethical decision making with family members, caregivers, and the healthcare team

Last Updated: 12/03/2010

Copyright © 2010 by American Nurses Credentialing Center. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system.