AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER (ANCC) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Table of Contents

Copyright 1

Table of Contents 2

Introduction 3

How to Use This Guide 4

Questions 5

Answers 8

Explanations 10

Next Steps 16

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. **What is the objective of the ANCC's Family Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner certification?**

   A. To provide basic health education

   B. To prepare nurses for administrative roles

   C. To prepare nurses for advanced practice in mental health

   D. To enhance knowledge of general nursing principles

2. **How are ANCC certification exam questions developed?**

   A. By a team of nurses with no clinical background

   B. By subject matter experts using clinical practice guidelines

   C. By analyzing previous exam results only

   D. By using online surveys from nursing students

3. **What resource does the ANCC provide to help candidates understand the exam format?**

   A. Video tutorials

   B. Mock interviews

   C. Sample test questions

   D. Online quizzes

4. **According to national stroke prevention guidelines, what is the recommended antithrombotic management for a patient with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation and no major risk factors?**

   A. Aspirin (Bayer)

   B. Aspirin with dipyridamole (Aggrenox)

   C. Clopidogrel (Plavix)

   D. Warfarin (Coumadin)

5. **What should the nurse practitioner do first when discussing an HIV diagnosis with a patient and their spouse?**

   A. Ask the nurse to step into the room.

   B. Ask the spouse to step out of the room.

   C. Speak with the patient and spouse together.

   D. Speak with the spouse privately.

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6. What is the initial management for a 69-year-old female patient reporting dyspareunia with a pale, dry vagina?

A. A local, topical antifungal cream

B. A topical hormonal cream

C. A water-soluble lubricating jelly

D. Daily douching

7. What assessment is important to determine for a patient presenting with shortness of breath?

A. Neurological assessment

B. Cardiac auscultation

C. Respiratory rate assessment

D. Musculoskeletal examination

8. What assessment technique does a nurse practitioner use to evaluate for ankle clonus in a patient with hyperactive reflexes?

A. Firmly applying a low-pitched tuning fork to the lateral malleolus

B. Flexing the leg at the knee and striking the Achilles tendon

C. Sharply dorsiflexing the foot and maintaining this position

D. Stroking the lateral aspect of the sole with the percussion hammer

9. What funding agency does an 80-year-old male patient with dementia apply to after spending down to qualify for long-term care?

A. Medicaid

B. Medicare

C. The American Association of Retired Persons

D. The United States Social Security Administration

10. In addition to altered mental status, which is the best early indicator of pneumonia in older adults?

A. Cough

B. Fever

C. Malaise

D. Tachypnea

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Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. C
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. D

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Explanations

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1. What is the objective of the ANCC's Family Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner certification?

A. To provide basic health education

B. To prepare nurses for administrative roles

C. To prepare nurses for advanced practice in mental health

D. To enhance knowledge of general nursing principles

The objective of the ANCC's Family Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner certification is to prepare nurses for advanced practice in mental health. This certification focuses on equipping nurse practitioners with the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to provide comprehensive mental health care across the lifespan. This involves not only the assessment and diagnosis of mental health conditions but also the development and implementation of treatment plans and the ability to provide both pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions. With this certification, nurses are prepared to address the complexities of psychiatric-mental health care, which includes working with patients and their families to promote mental well-being, prevent mental illness, and manage existing conditions within various settings. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the unique aspects of mental health that differ from general nursing principles, demonstrating the commitment to advancing the practice and improving patient outcomes in the field of mental health.

2. How are ANCC certification exam questions developed?

A. By a team of nurses with no clinical background

B. By subject matter experts using clinical practice guidelines

C. By analyzing previous exam results only

D. By using online surveys from nursing students

The reason B is the correct answer is that the development of ANCC certification exam questions is undertaken by a team of subject matter experts who have extensive clinical knowledge and experience. These experts utilize current clinical practice guidelines as well as evidence-based research to ensure that the questions are relevant and reflect the competencies required in nursing practice. This process is critical to maintaining the integrity and validity of the certification examination. Developing questions based solely on previous exam results, as mentioned in another option, would ignore the evolving nature of nursing practice, which is influenced by changes in clinical guidelines and emerging healthcare evidence. Relying on online surveys from nursing students would also not provide the rigorous, expert-informed approach required for creating meaningful assessment questions. Furthermore, having a team of nurses without clinical backgrounds would not generate questions grounded in practical application and relevant experiences, which are essential for effective assessment in nursing.

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3. What resource does the ANCC provide to help candidates understand the exam format?

A. Video tutorials

B. Mock interviews

C. Sample test questions

D. Online quizzes

The ANCC provides sample test questions as a crucial resource for candidates to familiarize themselves with the exam format. These sample questions are designed to reflect the actual content and structure of the certification exam, allowing candidates to practice and assess their knowledge in a realistic setting. By reviewing sample questions, candidates can gain insights into the types of questions they will encounter, the competencies being tested, and the overall layout of the exam. This preparation tool helps build confidence and improves test-taking skills, making it an essential part of the study process. Other options, while potentially useful in their own contexts, do not specifically focus on simulating the exam experience in the way that sample questions do.

4. According to national stroke prevention guidelines, what is the recommended antithrombotic management for a patient with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation and no major risk factors?

A. Aspirin (Bayer)

B. Aspirin with dipyridamole (Aggrenox)

C. Clopidogrel (Plavix)

D. Warfarin (Coumadin)

The recommendation for using aspirin as the antithrombotic management for a patient with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation and no major risk factors is grounded in clinical guidelines which suggest that aspirin is appropriate for individuals who are deemed to be at low risk for stroke. Paroxysmal atrial fibrillation indicates that the atrial fibrillation episodes occur intermittently rather than being persistent, and when patients do not present with additional stroke risk factors—such as prior stroke, transient ischemic attack (TIA), or the presence of significant comorbidities—anticoagulation may not be necessary. In such cases, aspirin serves as an antiplatelet therapy that aims to reduce the risk of thromboembolic events without the potential complications associated with more potent anticoagulants, which are generally reserved for those with higher risk profiles. Other options would not be the preferred choice for a patient with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation and no major risk factors. For example, warfarin is indicated for individuals with a high risk of stroke due to its effectiveness in known cases such as persistent atrial fibrillation or patients with previous stroke history. Clopidogrel could serve as an alternative antiplatelet agent but lacks the specific

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5. What should the nurse practitioner do first when discussing an HIV diagnosis with a patient and their spouse?

A. Ask the nurse to step into the room.

B. Ask the spouse to step out of the room.

C. Speak with the patient and spouse together.

D. Speak with the spouse privately.

When discussing an HIV diagnosis, the priority is to ensure the patient's comfort and confidentiality. The nurse practitioner should assess the situation and recognize that the patient may not be ready to disclose sensitive information in front of their spouse. By asking the spouse to step out of the room, the nurse can create a safe space for the patient to express their feelings, concerns, and the specifics of their diagnosis without the added pressure of having someone else present. This approach prioritizes the patient's autonomy and emotional well-being, allowing them to process their diagnosis privately. Once the nurse has had the opportunity to discuss the diagnosis and any related concerns with the patient, they can later involve the spouse, promoting an open and supportive dialogue when the patient feels more comfortable. This strategy aligns with principles of patient-centered care and respects the need for privacy in discussing sensitive health issues.

6. What is the initial management for a 69-year-old female patient reporting dyspareunia with a pale, dry vagina?

A. A local, topical antifungal cream

B. A topical hormonal cream

C. A water-soluble lubricating jelly

D. Daily douching

The initial management for a 69-year-old female patient experiencing dyspareunia, accompanied by a pale, dry vagina, focuses on addressing vaginal atrophy, which is common in postmenopausal women due to decreased estrogen levels. The use of a topical hormonal cream is particularly effective because it helps restore estrogen in the vaginal tissues, which enhances moisture, elasticity, and overall vaginal health. This approach directly targets the underlying condition leading to dyspareunia, rather than merely addressing symptoms. Topical hormonal therapies can significantly improve comfort during intercourse and alleviate symptoms of vaginal dryness. They are often considered the first-line treatment for postmenopausal women presenting with these symptoms, as they tackle the root cause rather than just providing symptomatic relief. Additionally, the recommendation aligns with current clinical guidelines for managing atrophic vaginitis associated with hormonal changes. Other management strategies, such as lubricants, may provide symptomatic relief but do not address the underlying atrophic changes. Antifungal creams are indicated in cases where a yeast infection is suspected, which is not the case based on the described symptoms. Daily douching is not recommended, as it can disrupt normal vaginal flora and lead to further irritation.

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7. What assessment is important to determine for a patient presenting with shortness of breath?

A. Neurological assessment

B. Cardiac auscultation

C. Respiratory rate assessment

D. Musculoskeletal examination

The most relevant assessment for a patient presenting with shortness of breath is cardiac auscultation. This technique involves using a stethoscope to listen to heart sounds, which can reveal important information about the heart's function and any potential underlying conditions contributing to respiratory issues. In cases of shortness of breath, assessing cardiac function is crucial because conditions such as heart failure, arrhythmias, or other cardiac conditions can manifest with respiratory symptoms. Abnormal heart sounds, such as murmurs or gallops, can provide insight into whether the heart is the source of the problem. Additionally, understanding the interplay between cardiovascular and respiratory systems can guide treatment decisions and diagnosis. While assessing respiratory rate is important, since it reflects the patient's current respiratory status, it does not provide the detailed information about the underlying cardiovascular health that auscultation offers. Other assessments, such as neurological or musculoskeletal examinations, are generally less directly related to the immediate concerns of shortness of breath and are not the primary focus in this context.

8. What assessment technique does a nurse practitioner use to evaluate for ankle clonus in a patient with hyperactive reflexes?

A. Firmly applying a low-pitched tuning fork to the lateral malleolus

B. Flexing the leg at the knee and striking the Achilles tendon

C. Sharply dorsiflexing the foot and maintaining this position

D. Stroking the lateral aspect of the sole with the percussion hammer

The technique of sharply dorsiflexing the foot and maintaining this position is crucial for evaluating ankle clonus because it directly assesses for the presence of involuntary muscle contractions that can occur in response to this maneuver. When the foot is dorsiflexed, an absence of clonus would typically result in no further movement; however, if ankle clonus is present, there will be rhythmic contractions and relaxations of the calf muscles, causing a recognizable oscillatory movement of the foot. This assessment is particularly relevant in patients with hyperactive reflexes, as clonus is often a manifestation of an upper motor neuron lesion or heightened excitability in the neural pathways involved in reflex action. By sustaining the dorsiflexed position, the practitioner can effectively observe for the involuntary contractions that characterize clonus, thereby making a critical evaluation of the patient's neuromuscular status. Other options do not specifically elicit or assess for clonus. For instance, applying a tuning fork, striking the Achilles tendon, or stroking the sole may yield reflex responses or assess other reflexes, but they do not provide the focused evaluation needed for ankle clonus.

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9. What funding agency does an 80-year-old male patient with dementia apply to after spending down to qualify for long-term care?

A. Medicaid

B. Medicare

C. The American Association of Retired Persons

D. The United States Social Security Administration

The appropriate funding agency for an 80-year-old male patient with dementia who has spent down to qualify for long-term care is Medicaid. Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that provides health coverage and assistance for individuals with low income, including older adults and those with disabilities. Individuals often spend down their assets to meet Medicaid's eligibility requirements, as the program is designed to assist those who have limited financial resources. This lack of assets enables them to access benefits that cover various health services, specifically long-term care, which is essential for patients with dementia who may require assistance with daily living activities and medical care. In contrast, Medicare generally covers hospital stays and some short-term rehabilitation services but does not typically cover long-term care services unless it is in a skilled nursing facility for a limited period following hospitalization. The American Association of Retired Persons is an advocacy organization rather than a funding agency and does not provide direct financial assistance. The United States Social Security Administration primarily administers Social Security benefits and does not function as a funding source for long-term care. Therefore, Medicaid is the correct answer for this scenario.

10. In addition to altered mental status, which is the best early indicator of pneumonia in older adults?

A. Cough

B. Fever

C. Malaise

D. Tachypnea

Tachypnea, or an increased respiratory rate, is the best early indicator of pneumonia in older adults. This group may present atypically when facing infections, including pneumonia, which makes traditional symptoms less reliable. In older individuals, the body's physiological response to infection often manifests in respiratory changes. Tachypnea can indicate respiratory distress and the body's effort to compensate for reduced oxygenation that often occurs with pneumonia. This symptom may be observed before other classic signs, such as cough or fever, become evident. The early recognition of tachypnea allows for timely intervention, which is critical in managing pneumonia effectively, particularly in older patients who are more vulnerable to severe complications. Other symptoms, while present, do not provide as clear an early indicator of pneumonia. Cough may occur in various respiratory conditions, fever can be absent in some elderly patients with pneumonia, and malaise is a non-specific symptom that could relate to numerous other conditions. Thus, tachypnea stands out as a reliable early sign of pneumonia in this demographic.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://ancc.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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