Test Taking Tips & Study Strategies

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The speaker has signed a disclosure form and indicated she has no significant financial interest or relationship with the companies or the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product and/or service that will be discussed as part of this presentation.

Session Summary

This session is presented in two parts. First, the presenter will provide an overview of the certification examination and its rules, regulations, eligibility and format. Participants will be given evidence-based study and test taking strategies as preparation for taking a multiple-choice certification examination. Secondly, the participants will be encouraged to take part in answering practice questions in a relaxed, fun game show atmosphere.

Session Objectives

Upon completion of this presentation, the participant will be able to:

- site internet resources that will assist in examination preparation;
- define the NCC and understand the mechanism by which questions are formulated;
- understand the format of the examination;
- anticipate eligibility requirements;
- proceed with application for the examination;
- formulate a study plan using the examination content outline;
- anticipate anxiety and identify mechanisms by which to minimize stress;
- understand the importance of a study plan as it relates to examination preparation;
- choose recommended study resources, references, and texts;
- identify areas of strength and weakness, enhancing study plan;
- formulate multiple-choice question test-taking strategies;
- be adequately prepared to take the NCC NNP certification examination;
- participate in a game-show style practice question event.

Session References


www.memorizationtips.com

### References for Test Preparations 2014

**NCC Study Resources – www.nccwebsite.org**


Session Outline

See presentation handout on the following pages.
Test Taking Tips & Study Strategies for Passing the NCC NNP Exam

Lisa Glantz Williamson
RNC-NIC, MSN, ARNP, NNP-BC

Congratulations Super Stars!

Look at what you have accomplished!
Pat yourself on the back!
Be proud of yourself!

Test Taking Tips & Study Strategies for Passing the NCC NNP Exam

- The Test.
- Tips & Study Strategies.
- Practice Questions in a Game-Style Format.

The Test
**Important Internet Resources**

- National Certification Corporation (NCC)  
  www.nccwebsite.org

- The Center for Certification Preparation and Review (CCPR)  
  www.ccprwebsite.org

- Pediatrix University  
  www.pediatrix.com/homepage_university.cfm?id=92&o=10&plid=92

- PEC Professional Education Center  
  www.proedcenter.com

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**Important Internet Resources**

- The National Certification Corporation (NCC)  
  www.nccwebsite.org

- 2014 Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Registration Catalog  
  2014 Candidate Guide Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

  Catalog & guide discuss eligibility criteria, important facts, content outlines with study resources, bibliography, testing options, scoring, payment and general policies.

- **MANDATORY** Online Exam Registration

  Register for the exam completely online! Simple, easy to follow directions.

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**Important Internet Resources**

- The Center for Certification Preparation and Review (CCPR)  
  www.ccprwebsite.org

- Provides test-taking tips

- On-line practice test ($52)

- Core text (Manual of Neonatal Care, Cloherty, et al., 7th edition) with exercise workbook ($114) or exercise workbook only ($59)

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**Important Internet Resources**

- Pediatrix University  
  www.pediatrix.com

- **FREE**  
  NNP Certification Prep Course

  - 7 modules, each with a self-assessment quiz:
    - Pulmonary
    - Perinatal Risk Factors
    - General Management
    - Cardiac and Gastrointestinal
    - Integument, Hematopoietic and Genetics
    - Multi-System Review
    - Infectious Disease and Neurology

  - Multiple choice, 125-question exam

  - Presented in 3 segments
Important Internet Resources

PEC Professional Education Center
www.proedcenter.com

- Utilizes Core Curriculum for Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing 5th Edition along with comprehensive home study guide ($134.95)
- Also offer 3 day review course multiple times/year with opportunity to take RNC-NIC exam onsite ($449-$469)

Flashcards...Another way to study!

- Available from www.flashcardsecrets.com
- Cost $49.99 plus shipping
  OR
- Make your own

Who is the NCC?

The National Certification Corporation.
Not-for-Profit organization.

Provide certification credentials via voluntary examinations that validate entry level knowledge.

Neonatal Nurse Practitioner 2014 Exam Content Team

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NCC NNP Certification Exam
How to Apply

- Your application, fee and documentation MUST be submitted together...
  - Completed application
  - Official transcript issued from the registrar
  - Copy of master's diploma/master's degree
  - Post master's candidates must also include a copy of post master's certificate
- Processing can take up to 4 weeks
- New since 2012 – Apply online ONLY

NCC NNP Certification Examination
Eligibility
Certification exam MUST be taken within 8 years of graduation from an accredited program...
No exceptions!

- All requirements for graduation must be completed before application is filed.
- Current RN in USA or Canada.
- Certification is maintained every 3 years from date of official results - retest OR CEUs based on competency assessment...see www.nccwebsite.org for details

NCC NNP Certification Exam
Format & Fees

2 exam formats...
1) Computer → available on demand with a 90 day testing window
2) Paper and pencil → sponsored test sites only starting in 2014 with 90 day cycles for 1-24 applicants

Application fee...
$325 ($50 non-refundable application fee and $275 testing fee) payable by electronic check or credit card

Computer testing myths:
Must have computer savvy - NOT!
You cannot revisit questions - NOT!
The computer test content is harder - NOT!

NCC NNP Certification Exam
Format

- 3 hour examination.
- 150 questions counted for scoring with up to an additional 25 pre-test questions for a total of 175.
- Each question has three possible answers.
- Tests knowledge and application of knowledge.
- Lab data, conventional measurements.
- Generic and trade drug names.
- Passing scores are predetermined and based upon Item Response Theory (Rasch analysis)...in other words "criteria" based.
NCC NNP Certification Examination Content

General Assessment (15 - 20%)
Family Integration (<5%)
General Management (20 - 30%)
The Disease Process (45 - 55%)
Professional Issues (<5%)

NCC NNP Certification Examination Content

General Assessment
• Perinatal History
  • Antepartum
  • Intrapartum
• Neonatal
  • Physical Examination
  • Gestational Age Assessment
  • Behavioral Assessment
  • Clinical Laboratory Tests
  • Diagnostic Procedures, Techniques & Equipment

Family Integration
• Communication
• Grieving Process
• Discharge Planning

General Management
• Thermoregulation
• Resuscitation & Stabilization
• Nutrition
• Fluids & Electrolytes
• Pharmacology
  • Principles
  • Drug Therapies
The Disease Process: Embryology, Physiology, Pathophysiology

- Cardiac
- Pulmonary
- Gastrointestinal
- Renal/Genitourinary
- Metabolic/Endocrine
- Hematopoietic
- Infectious Diseases

- Musculoskeletal
- Integumentary
- Genetics
- Neurological
- Ears, Eyes, Nose & Mouth/Throat
- Intrauterine Drug Exposure

Professional Issues

- Principles of Nursing Research
- Legal/Ethical Problems
- Patient Safety

Expanded outline, sample questions and bibliography located in:

NCC 2014 Candidate Guide Neonatal Nurse Practitioner
http://www.nccwebsite.org

Please refer to the appendix.
Test Taking Tips & Study Strategies for Passing the NCC NNP Exam

Tips and Strategies

Be Prepared!

www.resptrec.org/resources/Test_Strategies.pdf

“For every disciplined effort there is a multiple reward.”

~Jim Rohn

Start Early!

• Get organized.
• Review content outlines.
• Identify strengths and weaknesses.
• Plan and schedule time for study.
• Develop personalized study plan.
• Select review courses, resources, practice tests.

“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.”
~Vincent Van Gogh

Start Early!

• Customize a calendar.
• Divide and conquer the outline.
• Check off content identified as a strength, highlight content identified as a weakness.
• Practice tests are great tools that can identify strengths and weaknesses!

“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.”
~Robert Collier
Plan to study!

- Keep up with your calendar.
- Stay true to your planned study sessions!!
- Work ahead if possible.
- Organize a study group if this approach has proven successful in the past.
- Silence your phone, remove distractions.
- Schedule breaks.

Manage Anxiety!

- Send application early.
- Schedule exam date as soon as eligibility letter received.
- If possible, take time off before and after the exam. Make any necessary work, travel, or childcare arrangements.

Manage Anxiety!

- Consider a dry run to the test site.
- Schedule rest and relaxation time.
- All things in moderation. If it is study time, study. If it is play time, play!

“Lack of direction, not lack of time, is the problem. We all have twenty-four hour days.”
~ Zig Ziglar

Note case studies that match outline topics ~
- A notorious patient with PPHN.
- Management of a crisis in the delivery room.
- Interdisciplinary rounds regarding a chronic, complicated patient.
• Seek out clinical experiences matching topics identified as areas of weakness.

• It is easier to remember a story than it is to remember a list of facts.

How do you learn?

*See it. **Hear it. ***Say it. ****Do it. *****Teach it!

Consider preparing an in-service for staff, nursing students or ancillary departments. Choose a topic or a case study that can combine many outline topics.

Memory Joggers

Jingles
Acronyms
Acrostics
Vivid mental pictures

Memories...Like Footprints on My Mind

• Create an acronym for a list
• Sing it!
• Practice, practice, practice
• Use flash cards or play games
• Chunk it!
• Use patterns
• Associate
• Visualize it!
• Repeat, repeat, repeat
• Get your ZZZZs
The Week Before...

- Scan entire outline. Determine areas requiring last minute study.
- Allow for small increments of review time for all content topics.
- Put main ideas, information and formulas onto a sheet that can be quickly reviewed many times.
- Verify travel arrangements.

The Week Before...

- Locate admission ticket. Get a silent, approved calculator. Assure you have photo identification.
- Review preparations, rules, and regulations relating to the chosen examination format, computer or paper/pencil.

The Day Before...

- Review briefly.
- Review test strategies, time table, etc.
- Travel to stay near test site if necessary.

The Day Before...

- Plan on an early dinner and bedtime.
- Avoid sleep aids, stimulants, alcohol.
- Don’t try or do anything new.
- Set an alarm, consider a wake-up call.
Test Day...Finally!

- Feed your brain. Avoid excess fluids.
- Get an early start. Arrive 30 minutes prior to your scheduled start time.
- Wear layered, comfortable clothing. Go ahead, wear those lucky socks!
- Listen carefully and remain alert.

“One important key to success is self confidence. An important key to self confidence is preparation.” - Arthur Ashe

Specific Test Taking Strategies

- Take advantage of the practice test session.
- Wisely use allotted time. Allow time for review.
- Each exam question has three parts: the question (stem), the correct answer and two distracters.
- Read the entire question thoroughly before looking at the answers.

Specific Test Taking Strategies

- First impressions matter. Think of your own answer before reading choices.
- Read every choice before choosing answer.
- Throw out unlikely answers.
- Correct answers are often longer and more descriptive.
Specific Test Taking Strategies

• Answer the questions in the order that they appear.

• If you do not know the answer, read the questions a second time. If you cannot make a guess, leave it blank and come back. Don’t panic and don’t waste time.

• Don’t allow yourself to become frustrated over a specific question. If it is deemed flawed, statistical standards will not be met and it will be discounted.

Specific Test Taking Strategies

• If “all of the above” is a choice, and more than one of the choices is correct, then choose “all of the above.”

• If two answers are similar, one of them is probably the correct answer.

• Don’t be afraid to change an answer.

Specific Test Taking Strategies

BEWARE of the EXTREME modifiers!
Use of these words usually makes the choice incorrect:

- always
- only
- absolutely
- nobody
- invariably
- all
- none
- worst
- everybody
- no one
- never
- best
- absolutely not
- certainly
- everyone

Specific Test Taking Strategies

LOOK for QUALIFIERS!
Use of these words often make a choice correct:

- seldom
- usually
- some
- a majority
- might
- unlikely
- often
- frequently
- probably
- apt to
- may
- many
- nearly
- much
- most
- some
Specific Test Taking Strategies

- Look for keywords found in the question and in the choices.
- Watch for peculiar wording. If the phrasing does not seem to fit it is probably an incorrect choice.
- If the choices contain common elements, the choice with the greater number of elements is probably the best answer.
- Look for opposites. One of them is usually the correct choice.
- Leave no answer blank. You are not penalized for incorrect answers. You only risk guessing correctly!

Celebrate!
When the test is over...REJOICE!

If you have taken the computer test, you will know immediately that you have PASSED the exam!

Have fun and treat yourself to something special!

Let it go! Bask in the joy of your accomplishment!

The sky is the limit!

Next up...
Practice Questions in a Game-Style Format
AND
The Practice Test