To Test or Not to Test
That is the Question: How to Prepare for the WOCNCB Certification Exam

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Objectives

• Discuss the importance of specialty certification.
• Identify strategies that will enhance preparation for the certification exam.
• Define helpful test-taking techniques when taking the certification exam.
What is Certification?

• **Licensure**: State grants authority to practice nursing

• **Certification**: formal recognition of knowledge, skills, experience
  – Standards set by the profession
  – Voluntary
  – Specialty practice – above and beyond
What is the WOCNCB?

- Related to but separate from the WOCN Society
- Is run by your fellow certificants
  - Elected
  - Volunteers
- Abides by stringent national standards for certification and is accredited by
  - American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS)
  - National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)
- We contract with
  - Management company - EDI
  - Professional testing company - AMP
- Works hard to protect and promote your certification
- Over 5,600 certified nurses

www.wocncb.org
Why should I get certified?

- Commitment to Quality Patient Care\(^2\)
- Recognizes specialization\(^{1,2}\)
- Enhances professionalism\(^{1,2}\)
- Encourages and recognizes professional achievement\(^1\)
- Financial benefits\(^1\) Preferential hiring\(^2\)

1. ANCC – http://www.nursecredentialing.org/cert/certfaqs.html
Why should I stay certified?

“The process of recertification seeks to assure the public that the certificant has maintained a level of knowledge in the specialty, as well as ongoing participation in activities that support the maintenance of competence in that specialty”

What is the Value of Certification?

- Job Satisfaction
- Empowerment
- Enhanced Collaboration
- Patient Satisfaction
- Skills and Knowledge Enhanced and Validated
- Improved Patient Outcomes


www.wocncb.org
How to become a Certified Nurse

Certification
- Completion of a WOCN Society Accredited School
- Experiential Pathway

Re-certification
- Examination
- Professional Growth Portfolio

Advanced Practice
- Advanced Practice Portfolio
- Advanced Practice Examination (in development)
Getting Ready for the Exam
Know your learning style
Preparation: Develop a Study Plan

Set a plan and stick to it!

• Make a timeline
  – Set a goal for when you will take the exam
  – Set aside daily/weekly study time commitments

• Refer back to your plan and make sure you are on track

• Readjust the plan regularly as you learn where you need to spend more time

• Gather study resources
Preparation: Study with a friend!
Procrastination: Not Me!

• Pinpoint why you put things off
• Focus on getting started
• Use a “to-do” list

  • Study when you are rested
  • Reward yourself

www.wocncb.org
Preparation for the Exam

Use the exam-detailed content outline to study

– Verify content you know and are comfortable with
– Identify areas less comfortable with
– Test yourself

http://www.wocncb.org/become-certified/wound,-ostomy,-continence/how-to-apply.php
Preparation: Concept Mapping

- Visual map of connections
- Connect new ideas to current knowledge
- Prompts critical thinking

Preparation: Concept Mapping

Hierarchical

Spider

Flow chart
Preparation: Focus your study

Study to your weaknesses

– What is not part of your everyday practice?
– What are the rare but important complications to remember?
– Study what you do not like!
– Are there areas that you consistently have problems with?
  • ie: diagnostic testing
  • ie: anatomy
Preparation: Review Courses

WOCN Society Annual Conference
  – Preconference: One day review course
  – CD-ROM: Purchase from WOCN Society
  – www.prolibraries.com/wocns/

Other Review courses
http://www.wocncb.org/become-certified/test-preparation/
Certification Exam Development

• Committee formed
• Job analysis
• Create detailed content outline – topics for exam questions based on outline
• Exam questions are drafted, re-drafted, and re-drafted……...
• New questions are tested
• All questions are statistically analyzed for validity and reliability
  – Poorly performing questions are revised or retired

www.wocncb.org
Conquering Test Anxiety

I think it's stress!!
How are you coping with Test Anxiety... There are other ways that work better!
Practice Taking the Exam

• Take the free sample test on the WOCN CB Website

Practice Taking the Exam

• Self Assessment Exam (SAE)
  - [www.goamp.org](http://www.goamp.org) Click “e-store”, “Health Care” “Wound, Ostomy, Continence Nurses”
  - $90 for all 3 ($30 each)
  - 40 questions for each specialty
  - Unlimited access for 90 days after purchase
  - References and rationales for each question (right & wrong)
Relaxation Techniques

1. Sit in comfortable position, close your eyes
2. Focus on relaxing your muscles starting with your feet
3. Breathe deeply through your nose
4. When you breathe out, say a single word or short phrase
5. Practice prior to the test
What is on the Exam?

- 90 questions for each specialty exam
- 10 questions are items we are testing for reliability and validity
- All multiple choice
- There is only one correct answer
- 90 minutes to take the exam
What kind of questions are on the exam?

• Knowledge from each area of the content outline is tested
• Questions have three levels of difficulty
  – Recall
  – Application
  – Analysis
What kind of questions are on the exam?

- **Recall level**
  - Recall specific factual information
  - The answer is easily located in a reference

What best describes a stage 2 pressure ulcer?

- a. Skin damage evidenced by non-blanching erythema
- b. Shallow crater involving epidermis and dermis
- c. Deep crater with damage to subcutaneous tissue
- d. Deep crater with damage to bone
Recall Question

What best describes a stage 2 pressure ulcer?

a. Skin damage evidenced by non-blanching erythema
b. Shallow crater involving epidermis and dermis

What best describes a stage 2 pressure ulcer?

c. Deep crater with damage to subcutaneous tissue
d. Deep crater with damage to bone
What kind of questions are on the exam?

- **Application level**
  - Solve a problem using your knowledge

What is the best initial treatment for a draining lower extremity venous ulcer?

a. Support stockings  
b. Layered compression bandages  
c. Antibiotic therapy  
d. Anti-embolism stockings
Application Question

What is the best initial treatment for a draining lower extremity venous ulcer?

a. Support stockings
b. Layered compression bandages
c. Antibiotic therapy
d. Anti-embolism stockings
What kind of questions are on the exam?

• Analysis level
  – Looking at patterns, organize knowledge, need to use understanding of other information to solve the problem

A patient with multiple sclerosis reports large volume urinary leakage every 1-2 hours, dribbling, intermittent urinary stream and poor sensation of urge. What initial action is most appropriate?

a. Start a prompted voiding program
b. Check a post-void residual
c. Recommend multi-channel urodynamics
d. Teach clean intermittent catheterization
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The Race Model

R – Recognize information in the stem
  – Identify key words
  – What information is important
  – What is topic

A – Ask what the question is asking
  – What needs to be done, What do I think is the answer?

C – Critically analyze options in relation to the stem
  – Compare options to key words in stem
  – Identify rationale for each option
  – Compare each option to each other, is it complete!

E – Eliminate as many options as possible
  – Which option is absolutely WRONG!
  – Eliminate one at a time
Test Taking Techniques

• Look for qualifiers – Key word like least, most, best, first, essential, chief
  – Tells you that one answer is more correct than another
• If two choices both seem correct – always look for the more specific option
• Priority questions – all choices may be true, but the highest priority option is the best response.
  – Key words: initial, highest, best, most
Test Taking Techniques

- Answer the question – avoid reading into the question!!
- Remember, this is an entry level test!
Your first choice of the correct answer is usually the right one! **NEVER** change an answer unless you are absolutely sure that you made the wrong choice!

Trust your intuition!
Test Taking Techniques

• What if I have NO clue what the answer is?
  – Leave it and go on, come back to it later
  – Your memory may be “jogged” as you answer other questions
Sample Questions

R  Recognize information in the stem
A  Ask what the question is asking
C  Critically analyze options in relation to the stem
E  Eliminate as many options as possible
Intervention for a patient with a *necrotic tunneling ulcer* on the plantar surface of an *insensate* foot should include

A. debridement
B. toenail care
C. compression therapy
D. hydrocolloid dressings
Ostomy Sample Question

Which of the following stomas is most prone to prolapse?

A. ileostomy
B. end colostomy
C. ileal conduit
D. loop colostomy
A patient complains of bloating, cramping, explosive gas, and a gradual increase in the passage of unformed stools within an hour after meals. The physical examination reveals a snug anal sphincter, empty rectal vault, and a soft, non-tender abdomen with normal bowel sounds. Which of the following should the nurse ask?

A. "Do you take any pain medicine?"
B. "Have you taken antibiotics recently?"
C. "Does the diarrhea get worse after dairy products?"
D. "Have you traveled out of the country recently?"
Foot & Nail Sample Question

Which of the following would MOST likely cause **corns** and **calluses** on the foot?

A. friction  
B. warts  
C. viruses  
D. infection
A 68-year-old, semicomatose male is admitted with a 6 cm diameter sacral pressure ulcer covered with dry eschar, no drainage, and nonerythemic wound edges. He was ambulatory until 7 days prior to admission. Which of the following is the initial intervention for this patient?

A. Initiate negative pressure wound therapy
B. Initiate turning schedule
C. Perform conservative sharp debridement
D. Perform pulsatile lavage
Ostomy Sample Question

The WOC nurse consults with a patient with ulcerative colitis. Recently, the patient has been having 10 to 15 loose bowel movements per day and surgery is required. Which of the following surgical procedures will most likely be performed on the patient?

A. left hemicolecetomy
B. Ileal pouch anal anastomosis
C. low anterior resection
D. Total proctocolectomy
A patient’s catheter is leaking. The WOC nurse should recommend:

A. to increase the size of the catheter and balloon.
B. more water be instilled in the balloon.
C. the catheter be changed and culture obtained.
D. the catheter securement device be removed.
Foot & Nail Sample Question

Preventive measures such as wearing open footwear and keeping the area between the toes dry can prevent skin problems such as

A. scabies.
B. paronychia.
C. soft corns.
D. tinea pedis.
The *most* important intervention for the patient with neuropathic ulcers is:

A. off-loading and orthotic referral
B. toenail care and callus debridement
C. toenail debridement and daily soaking
D. compression stockings and daily lotion
A patient with stress incontinence has responded poorly to pelvic floor exercises and is not a candidate for surgical repair. Which intervention should be recommended next?

A. apply an incontinence barrier cream  
B. initiate use of incontinence pads  
C. referral for a pessary  
D. insert an indwelling catheter
A patient with severe vision problems has diabetes with significant neuropathy. Which of the following is the MOST appropriate advice to help avoid potential foot problems?

A. Soak the feet in lukewarm water for 15 minutes daily.
B. Have someone inspect the feet daily.
C. Wear backless footwear to prevent callus formation on the heels.
D. Moisturize the feet daily with a medicated lotion.
Test Success

• Be prepared, don’t assume you should remember everything!
• Plan ahead
  – Directions to test site
  – Do a dry run
  – Overnight accommodations
• Eat a normal meal
• Be there early
• Tell yourself the truth….

“I am prepared for the test. I am a skilled, knowledgeable professional.”
You can do it!