NATIONAL HEALTHCAREER ASSOCIATION

Certified Patient Care Technician Certification Exam (CPCT) Candidate Handbook

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Item #CANGUIDE 008 4/12

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1. INTRODUCTION

National Healthcareer Association is a certification organization with their headquarters located in Leawood, KS. The National Healthcareer Association (NHA) was established in 1989 with a vision of implementing national competency standards to promote patient safety and as an information resource and support network for allied health care professionals and the health care industry.

The allied health care field continues to be one of the fastest growing segments of the economy, demanding an ever increasing number of professionally trained, career oriented individuals. The increasing demand for skilled allied health care workers necessitated the development of an agency dedicated to testing the competencies defined by each profession.

The NHA's national examinations utilize a research and development team of psychometricians and test developers who strive to follow industry standards for certification exam development. Subject Matter Experts from the field with assistance from the test development experts define the competencies, write items, review them for appropriateness, and set the cut score. Candidates who earn certification with the NHA have demonstrated at least the minimum level of knowledge to competently practice the profession.

The NHA certification is supported within the health care industry by technical schools, 4- and 2-year colleges, unions, hospitals, associations, governmental agencies and state health departments, and recognized by more and more employers. The U.S. Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs also recognizes and sponsors the NHA certifications and exams.

Since 1989, the NHA national certification exams have been offered in all fifty states. As of October 2010, more than 150,000 national certifications have been issued throughout the country, making the NHA the largest Allied Health care Certification agency.

The NHA strives on a continuing basis to:

- Develop valid competency assessments for medical assistants.
- Maintain industry confidence by providing high-quality certifications that will enhance the provision of health care.

A. The NHA's Primary Functions, Strategic Vision, Mission And Core Values

The National Healthcareer Association's vision is to be the premier allied health certification organization.

- To be recognized as the leader and preferred certification sought by allied health professionals throughout the world;
- To contribute to global efforts that improve patient care and safety by the development, implementation, and continuation of high-quality competency exams for allied health care professionals.

The Primary Functions of the NHA are:

- To build certification examinations and competency assessments which are used as benchmarks for national and international industry standards and frameworks;
- To work with stakeholders in the profession to develop comprehensive frameworks and skill standards.

NHA definition of a Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician:

A Patient Care Technician/Assistant has the necessary knowledge and ability to perform basic and advanced direct patient care as delegated by a nurse in a variety of healthcare settings. These professionals have the ability to perform specimen collection and activities of daily living as a part of an interdisciplinary team.

B. The NHA's Core Values

In pursuit of the NHA's vision and mission, the quality of services will be guided by Excellence. We are committed to excellence by creating a culture that integrates best practices and professional development. Excellence at the NHA

means the highest quality products, the most competent staff, and continuous improvement of our products and services. Our Core Values include:

- **Integrity:** Integrity at the NHA is being honest and ethical and having the moral strength to do the right thing. We incorporate this value in every aspect of our personal and professional lives, and in our commitment to promoting patient care and safety.
- **Accountability:** the NHA's work produces greater accountability in the health care system by ensuring that our certified professionals seek to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of patient care services. Additionally, we set and maintain standards of accountability for the individuals we certify by expecting all to adhere to the Code of Ethics.
- **Caring:** Caring is central to the NHA's customer-oriented approach to our work. It is an intrinsic value, predicated upon mutual respect, and engendering trust in all of our settings and relationships within the allied health care system.
- **Creativity:** Creativity requires an innovative perspective, openness to change, and a management system capable of adapting and able to respond to the dynamic nature of our health care and educational environments.
- **Teamwork:** We are committed to fostering an environment that promotes respect, communication, and collaboration among all members of our teams and our partnerships.
- **Advocacy:** At the NHA, we advocate for the allied health care workforce, promoting policies, programs, and practices to secure the highest level of worker education, yielding high-quality patient care and societal well-being.

2. THE NHA PATIENT CARE TECHNICIAN/PATIENT CARE ASSISTANT/NURSE TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION BOARD

The NHA Certification Board is the autonomous governing board that has responsibility for the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Program. The NHA Certification Board operates independently to set policy over essential certification activities. The Board has the responsibility for oversight over all Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician certification and recertification decisions, including governance, eligibility standards, the development, administration and scoring of assessment instruments. Specifically, the Certification Board is responsible for:

- Adopting certification program policies and procedures
- Adopting its own rules of procedure
- Approving the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification exam content outline (aka blueprint)
- Approving appointments to the Exam Review committee and acting on their recommendations
- Appointing a Disciplinary and Appeals Committee
- Electing successors to the Board
- Appointing ad hoc committees as necessary

The NHA Certification Board represents leaders and important stakeholders in this field. The NHA Certification Board is composed of eight elected members. Seven members of the Board represent practitioners or educators and the eighth member is the public member representing a recipient of services. The Executive Director serves as the secretary of the Certification Board and is non-voting.

Members of the Board serve three year terms and may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

Nominations for Board positions are accepted throughout the year and can be sent to the Executive Director.

3. APPLYING FOR THE PATIENT CARE TECH/PATIENT CARE ASSISTANT/NURSE TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION EXAM

A. Eligibility

To be eligible to earn an NHA certification, the individual must meet the requirements below:

- Possess either a High School Diploma, or equivalency, and,

- Recently successfully completed a training program or have one year of work experience within the field Candidates must be able to provide written proof of training or experience. While candidates may obtain the NHA certification with 1 year experience and not have completed a training program, this may not be sufficient to meet any state registration or licensure requirements if they exist. Please check with your state regulatory agencies for specific requirements.

Candidates are ultimately responsible for knowing any registration or licensure requirements in their state.

An applicant scheduled to graduate from an accredited high school or GED Program may receive a provisional certification under the policies below.

Policy for Provisional Certification:

- Candidates must sit for the exam no more than 12 months prior to graduation
- The provisional certification expires 12 months after test date if no high school diploma/GED is submitted to the NHA by the candidate
- The provisional certification cannot be renewed or reinstated until it is converted to a full certification by providing the documentation to the NHA of education and/or work experience.
- Once the provisional certification is converted to a full certification, the expiration date will follow the initial testing date and all requirements for continuing competency to renew the certification will be required.

A provisional certificate issued by the NHA will be clearly marked with a provisional watermark. Provisionally certified candidates will have a "P" associated with their certification number and can be verified as such through the NHA candidate verification system accessible on the NHA Web site (www.nhanow.com).

B. Registration

Certification exams are offered in paper/pencil or computer-based at approved NHA test sites for students enrolled in those programs. Candidates not enrolled in a school program that meet the eligibility requirements and wish to challenge the NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam may register online and sit for the exam at PSI/Lasergrade test locations; there are currently over 550 PSI/Lasergrade test locations throughout the country. Candidates interested in sitting for an NHA certification exam should register online at the NHA Web site (www.nhanow.com). Registration requires payment in full for the exam, the cost of which is posted on the Web site.

C. Code of Ethics

Candidates certified by the NHA are expected to abide by the following Code of Ethics.

Professionals certified through the NHA, have a duty to:

- To use best efforts for the betterment of society, the profession, and the members of the profession.
- Uphold the standards of professionalism and be honest in all professional interactions.
- Continue to learn, apply, and advance scientific and practical knowledge and skills, stay up to date on the latest research and its practical application.
- Participate in activities contributing to the improvement of personal health, society, and the betterment of the allied health industry.
- Continuously act in the best interests of the general public.
- Protect and respect the dignity and privacy of all patients.

The NHA reserves the right to suspend or revoke a candidate's certification for documented violations of the Code of Ethics or for the following reasons:

1. Cheating or collaboration on the exam. If credible evidence of a candidate's misconduct is found, their certification will be placed in a pending state until an investigation is complete. Any right to retake the exam may be forfeited.

2. Unauthorized use of any NHA proprietary materials and or copyright infringement with regard to exams, study guides and any other materials distributed as property of the NHA.

3. Behavior that disregards the safety and rights of the patient.

4. Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to the NHA or to the public, including but not limited to statements made to assist the applicant, certificant, or another to apply for, obtain, or retain certification.

D. Cancellations

There are no refunds offered on certification exams unless the scheduled exam date is cancelled by the NHA. However, the exam fee may be transferred over to a new date for up to six months from the original date. All exams must be rescheduled a minimum of 24 hours in advance to avoid additional costs.

E. Special Accommodations (ADA)

If a special accommodation for testing due to disability or other reason is required, please consult our ADA Policy in Section V. of this document.

F. English as a Second Language

The exam is written in the English language. At this time there are no exams available in other languages. Translation assistance, including dictionaries, is not permitted during the exam.

G. Study Materials

Applicants may choose to receive the NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam Study Guide electronically or in print. Study guides are available on the NHA Web site where current pricing is listed. PLEASE NOTE: the purchase of an NHA Exam Review is not required. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician exam outline as a guide to material on the exam.

H. Grandfathering

The NHA Certification Board will not “grandfather” another certification, i.e., accept another organization’s certification or alternate pathway in lieu of meeting the certification requirements or for waiving a passing decision on the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification examination. All candidates must take and pass the NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam to receive certification.

I. Retaking the Exam

Candidates who fail the exam will have two chances to retake the exam. Candidates must wait at least one month before retaking an exam. Candidates that are unsuccessful after these two attempts will be required to wait one year before testing again. This year should be used to remediate and prepare for the exam. Candidates may utilize the appeal process to request a waiver of this requirement.

4. EXAMINATION INFORMATION

A. Exam Administration

Candidates will be expected to validate their identity with a current government-issued photo ID. A copy of this ID may be kept.

Candidates will be expected to attest to meeting the eligibility requirements, upholding the profession’s Code of Conduct and agreeing to the exam copyright and confidentiality policies.

General testing guidelines

- Eating or drinking in the testing room will not be allowed unless deemed necessary due to a documented medical condition.
- Use of: beepers, radios, cellular phones, watch alarms, translators, dictionaries, and all other electronic devices are prohibited in the testing room. All electronic devices must be in the OFF position.
- Test misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated, examples of which include, but are not limited to: consulting textbooks or notes; discussing or reviewing any items on the exam with anyone else during the

exam period; and talking to other students during the exam. If the exam proctor suspects anyone of talking or cheating during the exam, the proctor has the right to stop the exam. Candidates may be required to retake the exam at full price, if allowed to retest.

- Candidates should answer every question on the exam. Test results will be sent to candidates via mail. Please do not call the office for results; the NHA will not release grades on the telephone. Please allow approximately 30 days after the test date.

- The proctor will not answer any questions once the exam begins.

1) Paper/Pencil Exam

All exams will be proctored. Proctors are trained to follow specific requirements to maintain exam security and uniformity of the testing experience. Examinee instructions for taking the paper and pencil exam will be provided on site. Candidates should be aware of the following requirements:

- ONLY A #2 PENCIL may be used.

- The candidate's full name, test ID and social security number must be clearly printed on the answer sheet in the appropriate boxes, as well as on the sign-in sheet along with a complete mailing address. A complete mailing address is required to process the exam and certification.

- Candidates should review the answer sheet for completeness and clarity.

- On the testing date and at the scheduled time, the candidate's identity is verified against a current government-issued photo ID and is checked in by the proctor. The identification must be clear and legible. The name on the photo identification must be the same as on the original registration. If the names are different, then a certified or notarized copy of a marriage license, divorce decree, adoption papers or other legal documentation of name change must be provided. If the address on the government-issued photo identification is different from that supplied at the time of registration, the candidate must show proof of address, such as a current utility bill.

- Candidates complete testing using the internet delivered exam. Candidates should review for completeness.

2) Proctored Internet testing

Proctored internet testing occurs only approved NHA testing locations.

- Prior to the exam, the NHA will provide a roster to the testing site that lists all of the candidates who have enrolled, the organizational codes, the candidate's e-mail address and their password for security purposes.

- On the testing date and at the scheduled time, the candidate's identity is verified against a current government-issued photo ID and is checked in by the proctor. The identification must be clear and legible. The name on the photo identification must be the same as on the original registration. If the names are different, then a certified or notarized copy of a marriage license, divorce decree, adoption papers or other legal documentation of name change must be provided. If the address on the government-issued photo identification is different from that supplied at the time of registration, the candidate must show proof of address, such as a current utility bill.

- Candidates complete testing using the internet-delivered exam. Candidates should review for completeness.

3) PSI/Lasergrade testing

The general process for testing at PSI/Lasergrade centers includes:

- Testing at the PSI/Lasergrade centers is a computer-based exam offered during business hours and some evenings and weekends.

- A demonstration of the PSI/Lasergrade software used for the exam is shown on the PSI/Lasergrade Web site at http://candidate.psiexams.com. A brief practice/demonstration session is available for candidates to practice on the computer before the exam actually starts. This is not a practice exam but a demonstration of the software interface.

- Candidates are given an opportunity to comment on any item that they believe is ambiguous, inaccurate or deficient. Candidates are also asked to complete a brief survey at the end of the exam to rate the exam registration procedures, the testing facility and the testing experience. This information is reviewed by test development staff and referred as necessary to the Governing Committee/Board.

- Upon arrival at the PSI/Lasergrade test center, candidates will be required to present a current valid

government-issued photo ID (e.g. valid passport or driver's license). The identification must be clear and legible. The name on the photo identification must be the same as on the original registration. If the names are different, then a certified or notarized copy of a marriage license, divorce decree, adoption papers or other legal documentation of name change must be provided. If the address on the government-issued photo identification is different from that supplied at the time of registration, the candidate must show proof of address, such as a current utility bill.

B. Examination Content

The content of Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Program was established through a practice analysis survey. Practicing technicians were asked to rate the importance of job tasks/performance objectives. The results of the survey were used to determine the exam blueprint/content outline and the weight give to each major content area.

Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Program candidates please note: NHA has recently completed a new practice analysis survey and plans on implementing a new content outline based on these results. Candidates planning on sitting for the exam prior to July 9, 2012, should study and be familiar with the following test plan.

NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Program Test Plan (Prior to July 9, 2012):

- List the composition of Cells, Tissues, Organs and Systems
- Describe the correlation between cells and systems
- Identify the organs within each system and their function
- Identify and utilize the correct root word for each organ
- Explain the importance of controlling the spread of infectious organisms
- Identify the meaning of Infection, Microorganism, and Pathogen
- List the chain of infection
- Explain Universal Precautions
- Identify proper hand washing techniques as the most important step in Infection Control
- Differentiate isolation techniques and the purpose of their use
- List the equipment needed to perform a Phlebotomy procedure
- Use proper venipuncture cleansing technique
- Use a tourniquet and explain the purpose of its use
- Differentiate the two methods of draw
- List the order of draw for each method
- Identify the different needles used in Phlebotomy
- Understand the difference in the needle gauges
- Use the proper needle gauge and type for the procedure
- Differentiate the different color tubes used in phlebotomy
- Explain the purpose of the additives in the tubes
- Identify the tests, which can be taken in the presence of such additives
- Determine which color tubes to use for the tests ordered
- Identify the various special testing the technician may perform
- Explain why these tests are important in the diagnosing of diseases
- Identify normal ranges and abnormal results
- Perform the various tests and related procedures
- Recognize phlebotomy-related complications
- Identify possible life threatening complications
- Act upon the specific complication
- Properly notify Nursing personnel regarding such complication
- Discuss the various departments within the laboratory
- Explain the laboratory hierarchy, and the different personnel titles and job related duties
- Identify the collection schedules within the healthcare setting
- Differentiate the duties of the PCT within a blood collection bank
- Utilize the phlebotomy equipment ensuring patient safety, and employee safety
- Follow infection control procedure
- Observe universal precaution
- Obtain blood from the manikin
- Perform all of the tests utilizing proper technique
- List the procedures for electrocardiography
- Define Electrodes, Electrocardiograph, Electrocardiography, Electrolyte Gel
- Properly place the electrodes
- Perform a 12 lead EKG
- Connect Holter Monitors
- Perform Stress Tests
- Understand Angiocardiographic studies, Cardiac Catherization
- Use the proper Medical Terminology associated with EKG testing
- List the characteristics needed to be a successful member of the healthcare team
- List the duties of a Patient Care Associate/Technician
- Explain how interpersonal relations influence the well-being of the patient
- Describe the purpose of the interdisciplinary team
- Demonstrate professional attitude
- List ergonomic techniques, which can prevent incidents
- Demonstrate the correct use of body mechanics
- Use equipment safely
- Describe the proper use of oxygen and related safety
- Identify proper fire safety techniques
- Follow proper evacuation procedure guidelines
- List general measures to take in the event of an emergency
- Recognize the emergency situations
- Explain the purpose of the patient's bill of rights
- Follow the rule of personal liability

- Discuss and interpret informed consent
- Observe DNR orders
- Describe the legalities involving the patient's medical record
- Observe patient confidentiality
- Describe the laws pertaining to medicine
- Discuss quality assurance procedures
- Communicate with the patient, family members and staff
- Use the communication process
- Be aware of the body language being used
- Discuss the proper tone to use when communicating in different scenarios
- Receive, record proper phone messages
- Make subjective/ objective observation
- The student will demonstrate understanding of the theory of Patient Care Technician by scoring a minimum of 70% on the National Certification written exam.

Total exam time allowed prior to July 9th: 3 hours and 30 minutes

Total number of questions on examination prior to July 9th: 200 multiple choice items

Certified Patient Care Technician/Assistant (CPCT/A) exam candidates please note: NHA has recently completed a new practice analysis survey and plans on implementing a new content outline based on these results. Candidates planning on sitting for the exam after July 9, 2012, should study and be familiar with the following test plan.

NHA Certified Patient Care Technician/Assistant (CPCT/A) Test Plan (After July 9, 2012):

1. Patient Care (48 items)

A. General Patient Care (38 items)

1. Provide basic patient care under the direction of nursing staff (e.g., bathing, bedmaking, catheter care, transfer, assisting with ADLs).
2. Provide emotional support for patients and their families while performing patient care.
3. Support the coping mechanisms of patients and their families who are dealing with grief, death, and dying.
4. Set up equipment to be used by the patient (e.g., oxygen, alternating pressure mattresses).
5. Provide patient care for a patient with a feeding tube (e.g., aspiration precautions, observe tubing for kinks or problems).
6. Perform care related to the special needs patient (e.g., physically, sensory, cognitively or mentally impaired).
7. Report any new changes in the patient's condition (e.g., level of consciousness, shortness of breath).
8. Monitor and record functions related to digestion (e.g., bowel movements, percentage of meal eaten).
9. Monitor, record, and accurately measure intake/output (e.g., urine, emesis, wound drainage).
10. Assist in admission, discharge, and/or transfer of patient to another unit or facility.
11. Follow the established restorative plan of care ordered for the patient.
12. Perform passive Range of Motion (ROM) for the patient.
13. Assist with restorative rehabilitation activities (e.g., bowel and bladder retraining).
14. Use adaptive devices for activities of daily living (e.g., feeding and dressing devices).
15. Keep patient area clean.
16. Remove peripheral IVs.
17. Perform dressing changes.
    a) Sterile
    b) Aseptic
18. Transfer a patient using a mechanical lift.
19. Manually lift and transfer a patient.
20. Apply immobility splints to patients.
21. Provide one-on-one care for patients who are at risk for suicide.
22. Provide skin care (e.g., repositioning, creams, moisture barrier).
23. Identify and report changes in skin integrity.
24. Utilize devices to prevent skin breakdown (e.g., air mattresses, draw sheets).
25. Apply sequential compression boots.
26. Apply anti-embolitic stockings (e.g., TED hose).
27. Assist the patient with coughing, deep-breathing exercises.
28. Perform first aid, CPR, and rapid response procedures.
29. Report critical values to the appropriate nurse in charge of the patient.
30. Assist the patient with incentive spirometry.
31. Check dressings for increased saturation and changes.
32. Follow the 5 Rights of Delegation.
33. Prioritize patient care based on patient needs.
34. Recognize visual abnormalities in patient specimens (e.g., stool, sputum, urine, emesis).
35. Monitor vital signs and patient status during blood transfusions.
36. Assist patient with taking self-administered prescribed medications.
37. Apply oxygen therapy (e.g., nasal cannula, mask).
38. Assist with patient-administered nebulizer treatments.
39. Weigh a patient (e.g., standing, wheelchair, or bed scales).
40. Assist patients with orthotic or prosthetic devices (e.g., hearing aids, dentures, artificial eyes, or extremities).
41. Perform home health aide services.
42. Perform hospice/palliative aide care services.
43. Perform ostomy care (excluding irrigation).
44. Assist with ostomy care.
45. Perform postmortem care.
46. Observe for and report edema.
47. Observe and report patient pain using a pain scale.
48. Monitor and record vital signs
    a) Blood pressure (manually)
    b) Blood pressure (electronically)
    c) Pulse (manually)
    d) Pulse (electronically)
    e) Apical pulse
    f) Apical-radial deficit
    g) Respirations (manually)
    h) Respirations (electronically)
    i) Pulse oximetry

B. Patient Care and Preparation Related to Phlebotomy and EKG (10 items

1. Conduct appropriate introduction to the patient.
2. Explain the phlebotomy procedure to be performed to the patient.
3. Review the requisition for testing requirements and patient identity.
4. Receive implied or informed consent from the patient.
5. Determine venipuncture site accessibility based on patient age and condition.
6. Verify patient compliance with testing requirements (e.g., fasting, medication, basal state).
7. Prepare the patient
   a) EKG monitoring (e.g., patient history, cardiac medications, patient positioning).
   b) Holter monitoring
   c) Stress testing
   d) Telemetry monitoring
8. Apply electrodes on patients
   a) EKG monitoring
   b) Holter monitoring
   c) Stress testing
   d) Telemetry monitoring
   e) Pediatric patients
   f) Patients with special considerations (e.g., right-sided heart, posterior chest, amputations)
9. Respond to signs and symptoms of cardiopulmonary compromise.
10. Monitor patient condition during stress testing.
11. Respond to complications during stress testing.
12. Verify patient understanding of Holter monitor procedures.

2. Safety (10 items)

A. Identify and report

1. Abuse or neglect of patients
2. Sexual harassment involving patients or staff
3. Substance abuse involving patients or staff
4. Domestic violence/intimate partner abuse involving patients or staff

B. Transport patients using proper body mechanics.

C. Transfer patients using proper body mechanics.

D. Monitor patients' environmental safety (e.g., fall precautions, faulty equipment).

E. Prevent workplace injuries by following OSHA guidelines.

F. Recognize and respond to emergency situations (e.g., fire, hostage, biological hazard).

G. Follow the proper procedures for identifying patients.

H. Follow Joint Commission (JCAHO) patient safety guidelines.

I. Practice safety procedures when using medical supplies and equipment (e.g., lock the hospital bed, lock wheelchairs, raise stretcher side rails, apply safety belts and restraints).

J. Report and document work-related accidents.

3. Professional Responsibilities (5 items)

A. Obtain and maintain Basic Cardiac Life Support (BCLS) certification for health care providers.

B. Adhere to HIPAA regulations regarding Protected Health Information (PHI).

C. Communicate with other health care professionals using appropriate medical terminology.

D. Observe the chain of command in a healthcare setting.

E. Use therapeutic communication when talking to patients (e.g., interpersonal skills).

F. Adhere to regulations regarding operational standards (e.g., JCAHO, CLSI).

4. Infection Control (4 items)

A. Use universal, standard, and transmission-based precautions.

B. Dispose of biohazardous materials properly, as dictated by OSHA (e.g., sharps containers, red bags).

C. Follow exposure control plans in the event of occupational exposure.

D. Wear personal protective equipment while following standard precautions (e.g., gloves, gowns, masks, shoe covers).

E. Perform aseptic technique.

F. Perform sterile technique.

5. Phlebotomy (23 items)

A. Primary Collections (15 items)

1. Demonstrate proper insertion and removal techniques for venipuncture.
2. Perform capillary collection method based on patient age and condition.
3. Ensure patient safety throughout the collection process.
4. Perform venipuncture steps in correct order (e.g., evacuated tube system, syringe, winged collection set).
5. Perform capillary (dermal) puncture steps in correct order.
6. Recognize common complications from primary collection (e.g., lack of blood flow, hematoma, petechiae, nerve injury).
7. Identify problematic patient signs and symptoms throughout collection (e.g., syncope, diaphoresis, nausea, seizure).
8. Follow order of draw
   a) Venipuncture
   b) Capillary collection
9. Ensure that tube additives are appropriate for testing requirements.
10. Assemble equipment needed for primary blood collections.
11. Invert evacuated tubes with additives after collection.
12. Verify quality of equipment (e.g., sterility, expiration date, manufacturer's defects).

B. Special Collections (3 items)

1. Prepare peripheral blood smears.
2. Perform blood culture collections.
3. Assist other healthcare professionals with blood culture collections.
4. Collect blood samples for inborn errors of metabolism (e.g., PKU, galactosemia).
5. Perform phlebotomy for blood donations.
6. Calculate volume requirements to avoid causing iatrogenic anemia.

C. Processing (5 items)

1. Label all specimens.
2. Perform quality control for CLIA-waived procedures.
3. Transport specimens based on handling requirements (e.g., temperature, light, time).
4. Explain non-blood specimen collection procedures to patients (e.g., stool, urine, semen, sputum).
5. Handle patient-collected, non-blood specimen.

6. Avoid pre-analytical errors when collecting blood specimens (e.g., QNS, hemolysis).
7. Adhere to chain of custody guidelines when required (e.g., forensic studies, blood alcohol, drug screen).
8. Prepare samples for transportation to a reference (outside) laboratory.
9. Coordinate communication between non-laboratory personnel for processing and collection.
10. Use technology to input and retrieve specimen data.
11. Report critical values to point of care testing.
12. Distribute laboratory results to ordering providers.

6. EKG Monitoring (10 items)

A. Calculate patient heart rate from the EKG tracing (e.g., 6-second method, R to R, sequencing).
B. Identify artifacts from the tracing (e.g., wandering baseline, somatic, electrical).
C. Resolve artifacts from the tracing (e.g., wandering baseline, somatic, electrical).
D. Record leads on a patient
1. 3- lead
2. 5-lead
3. 12-lead
E. Verify the leads recorded on an EKG.
F. Upload a completed EKG to a patient's electronic medical record.
G. Mount a completed EKG for a patient's chart.
H. Measure a patient's heart rhythm from the EKG tracing.
I. Inspect the waveforms of a cardiac cycle for symmetry, direction, and amplitude (e.g., P waves, QRS complexes, ST segments, T waves).
J. Measure a patient's heart conduction from the EKG tracing (e.g., PR-interval (PRI), QRS duration, QT-interval).
K. Identify the major classifications of arrhythmias from the EKG tracing (e.g., sinus, atrial, ventricular, junctional).
L. Identify the major variances to waveforms related to ischemia, injury, or infarction.
M. Respond to potentially life-threatening arrhythmias.
N. Verify EKG machine paper speed (e.g., 25mm, 50mm).
O. Verify EKG machine sensitivity (e.g., h, 1, 2).
P. Maintain EKG equipment and the work environment.
Q. Recognize pacemaker spikes on an EKG tracing.

Total exam time allowed after July 9: 1 hour and 50 minutes

Total number of questions on examination after July 9: 110 multiple choice items

C. Exam Scoring

The NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam is designed to assess the competencies of the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician and award the NHA Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam credential only to those technicians competent in the knowledge and abilities to perform the duties of a patient care technician safely and effectively.

Paper and pencil exam answer sheets are scanned and software is utilized to score the answer sheets and record the results electronically. Online exams are scored immediately by the web-based testing software and record the results electronically. All exam data is stored on the NHA's own servers. Exam scores (name, overall score, passing decision) will be sent to the candidate's home address within approximately 3-5 business days after completed answer sheets are received by NHA. Score results include a letter that reports the candidate's score and if they passed or failed. If a candidate doesn't receive a passing score, the letter includes information regarding retaking the exam. If a candidate passed, they also receive a wallet sized certification ID card and certificate with the NHA seal as proof of certification.

Candidates have the opportunity to comment on specific items at the time of the exam. A candidate who feels their exam was scored incorrectly may file a formal request of the scoring process as stated in the Rescoring (Hand Scoring) section of this document. Should an candidate wish to appeal the exam results, please review the conditions under which appeals may be submitted and the full appeals process in the Appeals Section of this document.

In the event a school has made the certification exam available to their students, schools only receive an aggregate pass rate of candidates identified with that school compared to national and state pass rates. Individual candidate pass fail results are only reported to schools for those students who specifically consent to release.

D. Recertification

The purpose of recertification is to promote high standards of practice for Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technicians, to encourage continued competency in the field and promote safe and effective patient care. It is required that all certificants who wish to maintain their credential complete the necessary continuing education.

The NHA recertification program supports the professional medical assistants' desire to stay current in their field of expertise. The health care field is in constant change and the certified Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician must keep up with those changes. Therefore the NHA requires recertification every two years to stay current in the discipline, through evidence of at least 10 continuing education credits in every two year cycle.

The Certification Board believes a two-year period reflects a duration that accommodates the rate by which new information, skills and techniques are introduced into the medical assistant field.

Continuing education credits may be acquired through the NHA Continuing Education Program or through other outside educational programs or institutions. The NHA reviews credits based on the following criteria: current events, industry trends, and relevance to the allied healthcare field. If the credit meets any or all of the criteria, the credit will equal half the number of hours in attendance.

Continuing education credits and fees can be submitted to the NHA annually or at the end of the two year certification period. Upon recertification, the certificant will receive a new wallet-sized ID Card and certificate.

All recertification documents and fees must be submitted to the NHA national office by the certification's expiration date, with a one month grace period. The required pieces are: 1) evidence of 10 continuing education credits and 2) annual fee of $79.50 per year ($159 total).

Should a certification expire, reinstatement (recertification) is permitted within one year of the expiration date. If reinstatement is initiated within one year of the expiration date, the person must submit:

- A completed recertification application
- Evidence of 15 continuing education credits
- Annual fee of $79.50 per year ($238.50 total for the three years), and
- $99 reinstatement fee.

After one year from the expiration date, reinstatement is not permitted and a person must apply and again take the Patient Care Tech/Patient Care Assistant/Nurse Technician Certification Exam to become certified.

5. OTHER EXAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Special Accommodations (ADA)

Candidates with documented disabilities may submit an accommodations request form. Any accommodations will be granted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Upon request, the NHA shall make reasonable accommodations to assist candidates with disabilities. Special accommodations can be provided for individuals with documented disabilities by submitting an Accommodations Request form available on the NHA Web site (www.nhanow.com), along with the supporting documentation listed on the form.

Accommodations will be provided to qualified candidates with disabilities to the extent that such accommodations do not fundamentally alter the examination, create an unfair advantage, or cause an undue burden to the NHA or partner testing agent. The cost of excessive accommodation requirements is to be borne by the candidate (i.e., electronic communication equipment, etc.). Exams will not be translated into foreign languages, and interpreters will not be permitted to translate the examination.

B. Nondiscrimination Policy

The NHA does not discriminate or support the discrimination of or against any individual on the basis of gender, ethnicity, background, age, religion, marital status, national origin or physical disability, sexual orientation or veteran status.

C. Confidentiality Policy

Confidential information (non-public information including, but not limited to, name, address, social security number, bank account numbers, financial or financial aid information, student numbers, medical information, certification numbers, etc.) is protected by federal, state and local statutes, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). To protect privacy, the database of personal information is accessible only by designated staff and contractors operating under a nondisclosure agreement. This database may also be used in aggregate (such as pass rates, number of certificants, score trends, etc.) for the purposes of research reports and other published data. Schools may receive upon request to the Compliance Office various aggregate statistical information, such as regional or national score averages and pass/fail rates for school accreditation purposes.

Candidate information including certification, registration and testing information will remain confidential, with the exclusion of whether a candidate has a current/active certification, i.e., "certification status". Unless required by law, written authorization by the candidate is needed to release test score information. Additionally, test scores will not be provided over the phone. This policy helps to maintain confidentiality for the student and helps ensure accuracy of results.

A verification system is available to any healthcare professional or member of the general public wishing to verify a candidate's credential. This functionality is accessible on the NHA Web site (www.nhanow.com) and requires the input of a candidate's last name, certification number and expiration date. The system will return a positive confirmation for any candidate that holds an NHA credential.

D. Disciplinary Policy

The NHA has established a code of ethics and guidelines in order to protect the public and the profession and certificants agree to follow the code of ethics and guidelines. The NHA reserves the right to revoke a member's certification for the following reasons:

1. Cheating or collaboration on the exam. If an examinee is found cheating, he/she will be failed automatically. Any right to retake the exam will be forfeited as well as the right to retake the exam at a reduced rate.

2. Unauthorized use of any NHA proprietary materials and or copyright infringement with regards to exams, study guides and any other materials distributed as property of the NHA.

3. Behavior that disregards the safety and rights of the patient.

4. Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to the NHA or to the public, including but not limited to statements made to assist the applicant, certificant, or another to apply for, obtain, or retain certification.

If a consumer or other party reports an incident involving an candidate or certified member of the NHA, the candidate/certified member of the NHA will be notified of the report by registered mail. The candidate/certificant must provide a written response to the NHA Disciplinary and Appeals Committee within 15 days of receiving the letter. Upon review of the report, any supporting evidence, and the candidate's/certificant's response, the Committee will determine if further investigation is warranted. Upon the conclusion of any resulting investigation, the Committee shall determine whether grounds for disciplinary action exist and, if so, what disciplinary action should be taken. The Committee shall notify the charged member of their decision by certified U.S. mail, return receipt requested. If applicable, the charged member shall also be notified of his/her right to appeal.

E. Eligibility Appeals

The NHA reserves the right to deny certification applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements as set forth by the NHA Certification Board. Appeals to a denied application must be submitted in writing within 30 days of receiving the notice of ineligibility and must include an explanation for consideration. Eligibility appeals will be reviewed by the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee. The Committee shall notify the candidate of their decision in written form. Appeals may be filed by submitting an Appeals form.

F. Exam Question Challenges

Questions about the examination content, passing standard or specific items will be accepted and reviewed as part of NHA's quality control processes, but are not considered an acceptable reason to appeal the exam results and no formal actions will be taken. Candidate may submit comments at the end of the exam but any formal challenges must be submitted in writing to the NHA within 5 business days of the completion of the exam. The NHA does NOT provide an individual response to all challenges; however, every challenge is considered individually and acted on accordingly. Exam challenges may be faxed to NHA, Attn.: NHA Appeals Department, 913-661-6241, or may be sent via overnight courier to the following address: National Healthcareer Association, Attn.: NHA Appeals Department, 11161 Overbrook Road, Leawood, KS, 66211.

G. Violation of Exam Procedures

If there are any deviations from standard testing policies, or if candidates witness improper behavior by a proctor, instructor or other candidate, candidates should notify the NHA as soon as possible. Incidents involving instructors and candidates should also be brought to the proctor's attention at the time of the exam. Candidates experiencing such incidents may appeal exam results. An Incident Report must be submitted on the designated Incident Report form and must include an explanation of the incident and how it negatively impacted performance. The NHA will need verification of the event to render a decision. The report will be reviewed by the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee and will be responded to in written form. The decision of the Certification Board is final. Notification by the candidate of the incident must be made within thirty (30) days of examination to: Attn: Compliance, NHA, 11161 Overbrook Road, Leawood, KS, 66211.

H. Appealing Decisions

The Disciplinary and Appeals Committee is a subcommittee of the Certification Board and is appointed by the Chair of the Certification Board. Decisions of the Certification Board Disciplinary and Appeals Committee may be appealed by the individual on the following grounds only:

- The NHA Disciplinary and Appeals Committee violated its policies and procedures for processing complaints of ethical violations.
- The decision of the Committee was arbitrary and capricious and was not supported by the materials provided by the complainant and the charged member.
- The sanctions imposed are inconsistent with or disproportional to the violations found.

After the charged person has received written notification of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee's decision, the person may appeal the Committee's decision within thirty (30) days by sending a written response to Attn: Compliance, NHA, 11161 Overbrook Road, Leawood, KS, 66211. This appeal will be reviewed by the Certification Board.

The Certification Board will render a decision regarding the appeal and deliver the verdict in writing. The Certification Board is limited to the following types of decisions:

- Upholding the decision of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee;
- Upholding the decision of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee, but altering sanctions. These sanctions will be outlined in the letter.
- Reversing the decision of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee;

Appeal decisions by the Certification Board are final and are not subject to further appellate review.

I. Rescoring (Hand Scoring)

For security reasons, candidates will not be able to review their exam or obtain information on particular test questions. Although it is highly unlikely that a rescoring will result in a change of scores, any candidate who feels that there was an error in exam grading and wants his/her exam rescored by hand must submit a written request with reasoning. There will be an additional fee assessed for rescoring. Within 60 days of the examination date, the candidate must send the written request to: National Healthcareer Association, Attn: Processing Dept., 11161 Overbrook Road, Leawood, KS, 66211.

J. Record Retention

The purpose of NHA's record retention policy is to ensure that necessary records and documents are adequately protected and maintained and to ensure that records that are no longer needed or of no value are discarded at the appropriate time. The NHA requires that its records be maintained in a consistent and logical manner and be managed so that the NHA:

1. Meets legal standards for protection, storage and retrieval;
2. Protects the privacy of its members and those associated with the NHA;
3. Optimizes the use of space;
4. Minimizes the cost of record retention; and
5. Destroys outdated records in an appropriate manner.

The NHA Certification Board maintains a current list of certificants and provides verification of certification status to the general public accessible on the NHA Web site. Electronic candidate records are kept on file indefinitely and are not destroyed. In the event an individual's certification has lapsed, the records are still maintained in the database under "inactive" status. Electronically, the Certification Board will indefinitely maintain candidate personal information, scores, type of certificate, expiration dates and recertification information.

The item pool and master exam forms will be stored indefinitely in an electronic format as will be exam development documents such as the JTA Reports, Standard Setting Reports and item analyses. The item pool and master electronic

exam forms are stored on password protected NHA servers and is accessible only by the Certification Board, Executive Director, director of operations and the Compliance Team.

There is very limited personnel access to this area and only the exam coordinator, the coordinator's assistant, director of operations and the Compliance Team are allowed access. The printed exam form master, as well as all existing printed exam forms, are shredded upon the creation of a new exam form.

Paper Pencil answer sheets

- Sent to Iron Mountain for storage one month after received by the NHA office
- At the time they are ingested by Iron Mountain for storage, all paper pencil answer sheets are scanned and digital copies are loaded onto a disc which NHA will retain for 7 years
- Paper answer sheets will be retained by Iron Mountain for one year after the date they accepted into storage.

External CE Documentation

- Sent to Iron Mountain for storage one month after received by the NHA office.
- At the time they are received by Iron Mountain for storage, all documentation will be scanned and digital copies loaded onto a disc which NHA will retain for 7 years.
- Paper forms will be retained by Iron Mountain for one year after the date they accepted into storage.

Documentation for internally produced NHA CE product

- Paper copies will be retained by the NHA office for 1 month because all data entered on the paper forms will exist in the NHA candidate management system indefinitely.

Paper copies of JTA Reports, Standard Setting Reports, item analyses, proof of education, work history, answer sheets, sign in sheets and recertification paperwork are maintained at the NHA for one year.