Using the CEN Review Manual

This manual is organized into two parts. The first part includes five chapters that provide information on how you can prepare to take the CEN examination. You are encouraged to read these five brief chapters (part 1) before you start to take the practice tests (part 2) beginning in Chapter 6.

Chapter 1 answers questions that nurses ask about the CEN examination and how to prepare for it. Chapter 2 describes the test blueprint concept and the content areas contained in the CEN exam, which are based on the BCEN test blueprint. The stages of the nursing process are described in Chapter 3, with an emphasis on how these concepts are integrated into the CEN exam. Chapter 4 contains information and strategies to maximize test-taking skills for the CEN exam. The current chapter will help you benefit optimally from using this book’s practice examinations as a method of CEN test preparation.

Using the Rationale Section of the CEN Review Manual

A useful aspect of this manual is the rationale section that follows each practice exam. To enhance your preparation for the CEN examination, read the rationales for each correct answer and each incorrect answer (distracter). By reviewing this material, you are using a highly effective study technique to reinforce your emergency nursing knowledge.

Another strategy for using the rationale section to identify content knowledge with which you may be insufficiently familiar is to evaluate the items you have answered incorrectly. Determine whether the content is really unfamiliar to you or if there was some other reason that you answered the items incorrectly. Studying the rationales carefully may provide enough of a review of content. If not, you may decide to use other resources to review the areas in which your emergency nursing knowledge is weakest.

Getting the Most Out of the Practice CEN Examinations

This manual consists of five practice CEN tests that contain 150 questions each. General subjects (content categories) in these practice exams are proportional to those in the CEN test blueprint.

Blank answer sheets for the practice examinations are provided at the back of the manual. Follow the steps below to develop strategies that can assist you in assessing your emergency nursing knowledge. What you learn in these self-assessments will serve as the basis for implementing additional test-taking strategies and identifying areas for additional study.
**STEP 1: DETERMINE YOUR TOTAL SCORE**

1. Use the practice exam blank answer sheet found at the end of the manual to mark your answers as you complete a written practice examination.

2. Then turn to the section of the practice examination that contains the correct answers and explanations (rationales) for every multiple-choice answer.

3. Indicate on your answer sheet whether each of your answers is correct or incorrect.

4. Count the total number of items that you answered correctly (or count the items answered incorrectly and subtract from 150).

5. Look on the Scoring Equivalent grid to compare the total number answered correctly with the percentage. Your goal is to achieve a score of 70% or greater, for which you must answer 105 items correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Answered Correctly</th>
<th>Percentage Correct</th>
<th>Number Answered Correctly</th>
<th>Percentage Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STEP 2: DETERMINE CONTENT AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

1. Begin by completing the first exam. Some people prefer to look at the answer and rationale section as they answer each question. Some prefer to complete the whole exam and then go through the answer and rationale section.
2. The content category for each question is found following each rationale. They are
   - Cardiovascular Tasks (items 1–21)
   - Gastrointestinal Tasks (items 22–30)
   - Genitourinary/Gynecology/Obstetrical Tasks (items 31–40)
   - Maxillofacial/Ocular Tasks (items 41–46)
   - Medical Emergency Tasks (items 47–61)
   - Neurological Tasks (items 62–76)
   - Orthopedic/Wound Tasks (items 77–89)
   - Patient Care Management Tasks (items 90–98)
   - Professional Issue Tasks (items 99–105)
   - Psychological/Social Tasks (items 106–111)
   - Respiratory Tasks (items 112–129)
   - Shock/Multi-System Tasks (items 130–140)
   - Substance Abuse/Toxicological/Environmental Tasks (items 141–150)

3. Use the Self-Diagnostic Content Area worksheet as you look at the answer and rationale section or go through the answer sheet and transfer the number of each incorrect answer into the column for the corresponding content area on the Self-Diagnostic Content Area Worksheet.

4. Count the number of incorrect questions in each content category and total them in the appropriate column.

5. Refer to the last column of the Self-Diagnostic Content Area Worksheet for the number of incorrect answers that constitutes 30% of the total number of questions in that content area. If your incorrect answers are equal to or greater than that number (or the total number of all questions in the blueprint is greater than 30%), additional review in that particular content area is indicated. (You can also divide the number incorrect by the blueprint total to give you the percentage incorrect).

**Sample Self-Diagnostic Content Area Worksheet**

In the example that follows, the reader answered content category Cardiovascular Tasks questions 4, 7, 9, 18, and 21 incorrectly. The total number of incorrect answers is 5. The blueprint total number in that category is 21 and 7 or more incorrect would be an indication for further study. The reader did not get 30% incorrect.

In the example that follows, the reader answered content category Medical Emergency Tasks questions 47, 51, 53, 57, 58, 60, and 61 incorrectly. Total incorrect answers are 7. The blueprint total number in that category is 15 and 5 or more incorrect would be an indication for further study. Further study is indicated since there were more than 5 incorrect answers. (To find the exact percentage incorrect, divide the number incorrect by the number in the blueprint: 7/15 = 46%).
## Self-Diagnostic Content Area Worksheet (sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Category</th>
<th>Number of Each Question Answered Incorrectly</th>
<th>Total Number of Incorrect Questions in Category</th>
<th>Blueprint Total Number in Category</th>
<th>Number Incorrect to Indicate Further Study Necessary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular Tasks</td>
<td>4, 7, 9, 18, 21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Emergency Tasks</td>
<td>47, 51, 53, 57, 58, 60, 61</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remember:** If you have answered more than 30% of the questions in any content area incorrectly, you should see this discovery as a cue that you should focus your studying efforts more intensively on this content area.

## Summary

This manual can serve as an invaluable study aid as you prepare to take the CEN examination. You may discover additional strategies for using the manual constructively besides those described in this and previous chapters.

Review the manual and reflect on your own learning preferences. Then use the manual to prepare for the CEN exam. Good luck!