

## Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist Board Certification Examination

Test Content Outline  
Effective Date: October 31, 2022

There are 175 questions on this examination. Of these, 150 are scored questions and 25 are pretest questions that are not scored. Pretest questions are included to determine how well these questions will perform before they are used on the scored portion of the examination. The pretest questions cannot be distinguished from those that will be scored, so it is important for a candidate to answer all questions. A candidate's score, however, is based solely on the 150 scored questions. Performance on pretest questions does not affect a candidate's score.

This Test Content Outline identifies the areas that are included on the examination. The percentage and number of questions in each of the major categories of the scored portion of the examination are also shown. *Note: The examples in parentheses are not all-inclusive and do not indicate importance.*

Category	Content Domain	Number of Questions	Percentage
I	Assessment and Diagnosis	41	27%
II	Planning and Implementation	64	43%
III	Evaluation	45	30%
TOTAL		150	100%

This examination will be developed in consideration of the below secondary classifications, whenever applicable.

Body Systems	Drug Agents	Age Groups
1. Cardiovascular	1. Analgesic	1. Young Adult
2. Endocrine	2. Anti-Infective	(including late
3. Gastrointestinal	3. Cardiovascular	adolescent and
4. Genitourinary and Renal	4. Endocrine	emancipated
5. Head, Eyes, Ears, Nose, and Throat	5. Eye, Ear, Nose, and Skin	minors)
6. Hematopoietic	6. Gastrointestinal	2. Adult
7. Immune	7. Genitourologic	3. Older Adult
8. Integumentary	8. Musculoskeletal	4. Frail Elderly
9. Musculoskeletal	9. Neurological	
10. Neurological	10. Psychiatric	
11. Psychiatric	11. Reproductive	
12. Reproductive	12. Respiratory	
13. Respiratory		

## **I Assessment and Diagnosis**

### **A. Knowledge of:**

1. Normal age-related changes
2. Pathophysiology across the lifespan (e.g., etiology, presentation, risk factors)
3. Individual determinants of health (e.g., aging, genetics, developmental, stress)
4. Environmental determinants of health (e.g., socioeconomic, cultural, geographic)
5. Abuse and neglect
6. Nursing theories
7. Diagnostic testing (e.g., laboratory, radiographic, physical, psychological)

### **B. Skill in:**

1. Comprehensive assessment
2. Problem-focused assessment
3. Differential diagnoses
4. Ethical healthcare practice (e.g., confidentiality, capacity, futility, consent, assent)

## **II Planning and Implementation**

### **A. Knowledge of:**

1. Pharmacotherapeutics
2. Polypharmacy
3. Substance use disorders
4. Family and caregiver roles
5. Palliative and end-of-life care
6. Care transition and coordination
7. Adult learning theories
8. Information technology (e.g., informatics, telehealth, patient portals)
9. Change management (e.g., communication planning, stakeholder buy-in, resource access)
10. Educational initiatives (e.g., design, development, delivery, evaluation)

### **B. Skill in:**

1. Pharmacologic interventions
2. Non-pharmacologic interventions
3. Complementary and alternative therapies

4. Patient, family, and caregiver education, coaching, and advocacy
5. Coordination of nursing and healthcare resources (e.g., staffing, surge planning, disaster management)
6. Health promotion (e.g., community-based education, disease screening, wellness programs)
7. Evidence-based practice process
8. Nursing and healthcare advocacy

### **III Evaluation**

#### **A. Knowledge of:**

1. Scope and standards of healthcare practice (e.g., prescriptive authority, licensure, certification, credentialing, liability)
2. Patient outcomes (e.g., nursing-sensitive indicators, publicly reported measures)
3. System outcomes (e.g., length of stay, readmission rate, patient satisfaction)
4. Research methodology and statistical analysis
5. Quality and process improvement (e.g., root cause analysis, gap analysis, just culture, structure-process-outcome evaluation)
6. Regulatory compliance (e.g., policies and procedures, clinical practice guidelines, accreditation and regulatory standards)
7. Healthcare business and finance

#### **B. Skill in:**

1. Patient response to interventions
2. Family and caregiver response to interventions
3. Care plan modification
4. Organization and systems leadership (e.g., project management, risk management)
5. Developing and collaborating with interdisciplinary team members (e.g., continuing education, role-modeling, mentorship, coaching, preceptorship, conflict resolution)

*Updated: August 29, 2025*