



APPLIED MEASUREMENT PROFESSIONALS, INC.

Executive Summary
A National Practice Analysis of the
Hospice and Palliative Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse

Conducted by the:
National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses

The purpose of this study was to identify the responsibilities of hospice and palliative licensed practical/vocational nurses (LP/VNs) as a first step in the development of a job-related certification examination. The National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses (NBCHPN[®]) requested the services of Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc. (AMP) to design and conduct a study that would provide the support necessary to develop specifications upon which a content valid certification examination could be built. The NBCHPN[®] identified the need to ensure that the examination specifications would be representative of the role of the hospice and palliative licensed practical/vocational nurse.

The NBCHPN[®] LP/VN practice analysis Advisory Committee (AC) worked to conduct the activities necessary to identify hospice and palliative LP/VNs' responsibilities and develop examination specifications. The diversity of this group was reflective of the population of hospice and palliative LP/VNs, and all committee members had demonstrated expertise in this field.

The study involved development of a practice analysis survey, distribution of that survey to practitioners, and an analysis of the responses. Test specifications for the Certified Hospice and Palliative Licensed Nurse (CHPLN[®]) exam were developed on the basis of these data.

The NBCHPN[®] LP/VN AC met during July 2008 to initiate the following six tasks:

1. Develop a sampling plan
2. Identify tasks for the survey instrument
3. Identify classifications of core tasks
4. Determine the rating scales
5. Determine the relevant demographic variables of interest
6. Integrate demographics, rating scales, and tasks into a survey instrument

A total of 912 emails containing a link to the online practice analysis survey were sent out by the NBCHPN[®] to hospice and palliative LP/VNs. After adjusting for undeliverable addresses, unusable responses, and people who indicated they did not wish to participate, it was determined that approximately 21% of the sample provided usable response ($N = 152$). The responses to the demographic questions indicated that there were sufficient numbers of respondents in relevant groups for subsequent analysis. Approximately 98% of survey respondents felt that the practice analysis survey at least adequately addressed the responsibilities of the hospice and palliative LP/VN. In addition, respondents used all rating scales with an acceptable level of reliability.

During web conference meetings held in October and November 2008, the AC adopted and used decision rules to determine which tasks were appropriate for assessment, and therefore for inclusion in the final Detailed Content Outline. Application of the decision rules resulted in retention of 147 tasks. It was determined that a total of 135 multiple-choice items would be sufficient to assess the tasks.

The NBCHPN® LP/VN Examination Development Committee (EDC) will use the resulting Test Specifications in building the Certified Hospice and Palliative Licensed Nurse examination beginning March 2010, and all items appearing on the examination will be linked to the specifications based on the unanimous agreement of the committee. In addition, the Detailed Content Outline will be made available to candidates and education providers for use in preparing to attempt certification.

Overview of Test Specifications

Content Category	# of Items
1. Patient Care: End-Stage Disease Process in Adult Patients	14
2. Patient Care: Pain and Comfort Management	17
3. Patient Care: Symptom Management	36
4. Patient Care: Treatments and Procedures	7
5. Care of Patient, Family, and Other Caregivers	23
6. Patient and Family Education and Advocacy	12
7. Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Practice	11
8. Practice Issues	15
Total	135

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