



APPLIED MEASUREMENT PROFESSIONALS, INC.

Executive Summary

A National Practice Analysis of the Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Registered Nurse

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

The purpose of this study was to identify the responsibilities of pediatric hospice and palliative registered nurses (RNs) as a first step in the development of a proposed 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 pediatric hospice and palliative registered nurse.

The NBCHPN[®] Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Registered Nurse Practice Analysis Advisory Committee (AC) worked to conduct the activities necessary to identify pediatric hospice and palliative RNs' responsibilities and develop examination specifications. The diversity of this group was reflective of the population of pediatric hospice and palliative RNs, 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 proposed Certified Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Registered Nurse exam were developed on the basis of these data.

The NBCHPN[®] Pediatric Hospice and Palliative RN AC met during July 2009 to initiate the following seven tasks:

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

After discussion, and consideration of the definition of practice for other NBCHPN[®] certification programs, the AC established the following definition of the target practitioner:

Hospice and palliative nursing practice by the Registered Nurse is the provision of care for perinatal, infant, pediatric, adolescent, or young adult patients and their families with the emphasis on their physical, psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual needs. The care is patient and family centered with a focus on quality of life through pain and symptom management from the time of diagnosis throughout the trajectory of care. This care is provided in a collaborative, interdisciplinary manner in diverse settings to those experiencing life-threatening or progressive illness.

Approximately 14,452¹ emails containing a link to the online practice analysis survey were sent out to pediatric hospice and palliative RNs. After adjusting for undeliverable addresses, unusable responses, and people who indicated they did not wish to participate, it was determined that approximately 3.4% of the sample provided usable response ($N = 464$). 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 pediatric hospice and palliative RN. In addition, respondents used all rating scales with an acceptable level of reliability.

During web conference meetings held in December 2009 and January 2010, 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 192 tasks. It was determined that a total of 135 multiple-choice items would be sufficient to assess the tasks.

The NBCHPN[®] Board decided to proceed with development of a Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Registered Nurse certification offering. NBCHPN[®] has begun the process of writing items (test questions) and has selected an Examination Development Committee (EDC), which will use the Test Specifications resulting from this study in building a Certified Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Registered Nurse examination. All items appearing on such an examination will be linked to the specifications based on the unanimous agreement of the committee. In addition, a version of the Detailed Content Outline will be made available to candidates and education providers for use in preparing to attempt certification. It is expected that the initial administration of the examinations will begin in March 2011.

Overview of Test Specifications

Content Category	# of Items
1. Life-Threatening Conditions in Children	8
2. Pain Management	19
3. Symptom Management	50
4. Treatments and Procedures	4
5. Family Centered Care	12
6. Education and Advocacy	18
7. Care at the End of Life	7
8. Grief and Bereavement	5
9. Professional Issues	12
Total	135

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¹ Invitations were distributed by a number of sources, some of whom were unable to provide exact counts, therefore response rate values are estimates.