



National Consortium of Breast Centers
Breast Health Navigator Certification Programs

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
BY
NATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF BREAST CENTERS
CERTIFICATION BOARD



National Consortium of Breast Centers Breast Health Navigator Certification Programs

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Welcome and Introduction

The Breast Navigator Certification Program is a certification that has been developed by a peer review team of the National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC). The Navigator program identifies the purpose of certification as a means to: [1] set standards of achievement and the navigator's role; [2] enhance patient safety, quality of care and delivery of services through recognition and resolution of barriers to care; and [3] recognize professionals who advance beyond basic knowledge in a specialty field.

Definition of a Navigator

A certified breast navigator is a dedicated person experienced in the flow of events in the screening, diagnostic breast care, treatment, and survivorship setting of breast cancer. The certified breast navigator uses specific navigation tools to assess barriers, educate, and support the patient throughout the continuum of breast care with a set of holistic standards. These standards include ongoing assessment and support of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, legal, educational, sexuality, and family needs. The certified breast navigator effectively utilizes assistance from facility, community, and national sources to lessen the severity of impact on a diagnosis of breast cancer.

Mission of NCBC

The mission of the National Consortium of Breast Center's Navigator Certification program is to optimize care of patients affected by a diagnosis of breast cancer. Through standardized certification, we recognize highly skilled navigators who excel in communication, support, education, assessment, and elimination of barriers to care from initial screening imaging to survivorship or end of life care, with a goal of continual support offered for every patient, every time.

Vision

To show recognition of certified breast navigators who are trained and knowledgeable in breast patient navigation.



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NCBC Certification Board

The governance of the Breast Navigator (CN-B*) and the Breast Health Clinical Navigator (BHCN) certifications is a function of the NCBC Certification Board. It is the role and responsibility of the NCBC Certification Board to create, update and maintain the NCBC Certification Program, Exams, Policies and Procedures and Bylaws.

President

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Vice President

Edie Smith DNP (SME) Doctor of Nursing Practice, Nurse Practitioner, Advanced Genetics Nurse, Women's Health NP, Regional Medical Specialist III at Myriad Genetics.

Executive Director

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Mary Freivogel MS, Genetic Counselor (SME), Immediate Past President of the National Society of Genetic Counselors' (NSGC) Board of Directors. Product Manager-Invitae, (NSGS)

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NCBC Navigator Certification

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Cancer Program Coordinator

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10. Lauren Lafrenz RN (SME) Surgical Oncology Navigator
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Organizational Representative

1. Mary Freivogel MS, Genetic Counselor (SME), Immediate Past President of the National Society of Genetic Counselors' (NSGC) Board of Directors. Product Manager-Invitae, (NSGS)
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Roles and responsibilities of the NCBC Certification Board

The NCBC Certification Board has autonomy in decision making for all certification policies and activities associated with our certifications. It is the role and responsibility of the NCBC Certification Board to create, update and maintain the NCBC Certification Program, Exams, Policies and Procedures and Bylaws.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Exam Review
- Research nationally recognized guidelines that pertain to each of the certification programs to make sure that our programs are aligned with those guidelines
- Set the cut score for each of the exams
- Schedule the job task analysis for each certification and set the guidelines for the length of time needed to review and decide when the job task analysis will be repeated
- Set guidelines for exam security and meet those guidelines
- Update policies and procedures
- Update bylaws
- Elect trustees
- Serve the appointed term of two (2) years



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Navigator Program information

Exam Purpose

The purpose of this exam is to identify applicants that have met the standards of achievement and the navigator's role; enhance patient safety, quality of care and delivery of services through recognition and resolution of barriers to care; and recognize professionals who advance beyond basic knowledge in the specialty field of breast patient navigation.

Target Audience

Preferred candidates are physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, certified physician assistants, social workers, radiologic technologists, radiology practitioner assistants, advanced practice nurses, medical technicians, licensed practical/vocational nurses, volunteers or lay navigators seeking to demonstrate their skilled ability to optimize care of patients affected by diagnostics and cancer of the breast. Highly skilled navigators who excel in communication, support, education, assessment and elimination of barriers to care from outreach to survivorship or end of life care, with a goal of continual support offered for every patient, every time.

Navigation ROLE Description

The Certified Breast Navigator:

- Utilizes best practices for the improvement of patient access to timely and appropriate breast care, evidence-based guidelines, and the cancer care experience in accordance with his/her scope of practice.
- Provides patient-centered navigation, education, and care coordination across the breast care continuum (screening, diagnosis, active treatment, survivorship and/or end-of-life care)
- Identifies potential and realized barriers to care (i.e. financial, practical, and social). Partners with patients/families to address their concerns, issues, and needs. Identifies appropriate and available resources/programs/support system to reduce or eliminate needs and barriers.
- Assists patients in accessing care and navigating health care systems. Supports patients through advocacy, education, coordination of care and continued assessment of barriers and needs.



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Education and Experience

Navigators are expected to be trained and working in the field of Navigation prior to taking the certification exam. NCBC recognizes that navigation includes a wide spectrum of roles providing care to a diverse patient population. Breast health is an evolving field of medicine and ongoing education is essential to the practice; options include self-study, the NCoBC National Conference, or other available nationally recognized continuing education providers. The applicant applying for certification should have a minimum of 1 year breast care navigation practice prior to certification testing, or A minimum 1500 hours of breast care navigation practice within the past 2 years

NCBC ADA Rules and Regulations

Compliance

NCBC is fully compliant with sections 504 and 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including the accessibility requirements for the hearing and visually impaired. We provide test integrity solutions with a strong focus on accessibility, ensuring equitable access for all test-takers and instructors.

Special Accommodations

It's easy to add special accommodations for specific test-takers. As an In-Person Exam a Proctor is always in the room, the accommodation will be viewed by the proctor before the test-taker engages.

Supported Accommodations

Below is a list of some of the many accommodations we support:

- Extended time
- Medications during test
- Stretch breaks (only if needed)
- Diabetic testing, food & beverage allowed

Rules to approve ADA's

- Applicant to provide report with diagnosis must be current within the last 3 years
- Applicant to provide a letter from their prescribing physician with detailed explanation of the patients' needs and recommendations within reason to accommodate the patient during the 3-hour time frame of the test.



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Exam description

NCBC conducts a regular review of its standard setting, item analysis and equating plan.

Questions are reviewed by minimum of two (2) Medical Advisors before being finalized as a test question. Medical Advisors are medical doctors in the breast health and cancer field.

Test components

CN-B* (Advocate/Management exams) All eligible navigators are required to understand the full extent of patient movement through this documented system of care. Each CN-B* test has 150 questions, and the questions are divided in this manner:

Navigation questions (common with all tests)	35
Diagram of breast (common with all tests)	5
<u>Questions/Answers based on National Standards</u>	<u>110</u>
TOTAL Questions	150

BHCN (All Licensed Professionals) All eligible navigators are required to understand the full extent of patient movement through this documented system of care. The BHCN test has 125 questions, and the questions are divided in this manner:

Navigation questions (common with all tests)	19
Diagram of breast (common with all tests)	1
<u>Questions/Answers based on National Standards</u>	<u>105</u>
TOTAL Questions	125

Examinations consist of a three-hour written test, formatted as multiple choice and true-false questions. It is important to note that while each test has similar national standards and common core knowledge test questions, the questions are written specific to the scope of practice as recognized by the individual designation.



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The Breast Navigation Certification examination is based upon the role of a breast navigator. The examination reflects the knowledge and skills a breast navigator should understand in order to successfully navigate a breast patient.

The assessment measures an individual's competency as a navigator through a series of 150 for CN-BA and CN-BM and 125 questions for BHCN questions based on navigational skills by job specific scopes of practice. While it is important to note that the tests are not designed to assess licensure knowledge, licensure plays a role in specifying the areas needed to work effectively as a patient navigator.

Navigators have a specific function at any given space in time during patient care, but to be an effective navigator is to have knowledge of the full spectrum of care. The National Consortium of Breast Center's test bases questions then on these criteria:

- Scope of practice
- Licensure and Certification Standards
- Nationally recognized guidelines

It is important to note that while navigators must understand the spectrum of care, proper use of this Navigational model includes the understanding that no one can work outside their specific parameters as defined by licensure, state and national regulations, or facility protocol. Anyone working outside these parameters is subject to inquiry and disciplinary action.

Tests are developed with the criteria by subject matter (peer) experts in breast patient navigation. Each subject matter expert (SME) represents a distinct designation and leads the designation task force for tests, test reviews, study guidelines, and annual test updates based on national guidelines. Task forces are comprised of primarily peers to the designation, but also selections from other designations to balance the product and support continued continuum of care between the respective navigators.

Guidelines

Guidelines are constantly monitored for changes or upgrades to patient care based on evidenced based practices in patient care. For any major changes or additions to the program, a presentation, review, and vote is requested of the NCBC Certification Board for final approval before use. Some facilities may deviate from national practice standards, but the test will remain fair and impartial based on following these guidelines at all times. Nationally Recognized Standards/Guidelines include:

1. CoC: Commission on Cancer
2. NQMCB: National Quality Measures for Breast Centers



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3. ACS: American College of Surgeons
4. NAPBC: National Accreditation Programs for Breast Centers
5. ASBS: American Society of Breast Surgeons
6. ONS: Oncology Nursing Society

And others....

Test validity is supported by continual test review and annual review for changes to nationally accepted practice and protocol.



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Certification Eligibility Requirements and Recommendations

To become Certified through the NCBC Breast Patient Navigator Certification Program (CN-BA, CN-BM and BHCN) the Certification Eligibility Requirements are:

<u>Individual Designation based on Licensure</u>	<u>Need to send in Proof of Licensure</u>	<u>Taken a patient Navigation course or be highly prepared in a health-related field</u>	<u>Navigate patients for 25% of job responsibility or have supervision over breast navigators</u>	<u>Cost for exam</u>	<u>Annual renewal required</u>
BHCN- Breast Health Clinical Navigator - Licensed healthcare professionals (i.e. registered nurses, imaging technologists)	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$295	Yes
CN-BM - Management/Social Worker (All Social Workers and Managers of Navigators)	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$295	Yes
CN-BA - Advocate (All Volunteer/Lay Navigators)	No	Yes	Yes	\$295	Yes

Certification Eligibility Recommendation; not a Requirement

- The applicant applying for certification A minimum of 1 year breast care navigation practice prior to certification testing or A minimum 1500 hours of breast care navigation practice within the past 2 years. The examinations cover knowledge the navigator has gained through licensures or certifications and career experience to navigate breast care/cancer patients efficiently and effectively. Reminder: this test is for currently practicing navigators.
- For applicants with 3-6 months of the required experience, an alternative is to obtain a certificate of attendance for a breast care/cancer navigation course.



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Certification Process

Interested participants contact the National Consortium of Breast Centers office by phone, or email or visit <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certification-schedule/> and fill out the application . Once the participant is deemed eligible to test and has submitted the required application and fees, a policy guide and list of reference material is sent to their listed email address at least three weeks prior to the testing. Tests are held multiple times per year: in March at the annual NCBC conference and at least twice a year online please visit <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certification-schedule/> for a schedule of open windows

Test format includes... and eligible participants are allotted up to 3 hours to complete the certification exam. The tests are developed and updated on an annual basis by peer review and recognized changes in national standards. All navigators are expected to understand the full spectrum of breast diagnostics and cancer care that a patient may undergo. The test is designed to verify navigational knowledge from outreach through survivorship or end of life care.

CN-BM or CN-BA Exam Testers can achieve a passing score by answering at least 81% score. This cut score was determined by the NCBC Certification Board upon completion of a standard setting study.

Any tester achieving 80% or less has failed the test and has the option of retaking the test within one year at no additional charge. If an applicant desires to sit for the examination again after 12 months of their first registration (or examination) they will need to pay the registration fee again to take the examination. If the tester fails a second time, they must wait 6 months to retest and must pay a retest fee of \$295.

BHCN Exam Testers can achieve a passing score by answering at least 75% score. This cut score was determined by the NCBC Certification Board upon completion of a standard setting study. Any tester achieving 74% or less has failed the test and has the option of retaking the test within one year at no additional charge. If an applicant desires to sit for the examination again after 12 months of their first registration (or examination) they will need to pay the registration fee again to take the examination. If the tester fails a second time, they must wait 6 months to retest and must pay a retest fee of \$295.

Certification informational materials are provided via email, within seven (7) business from the time of your registration. We strongly recommend that you register no later than 30 days prior to the test date.



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Certificant Information

With a passing score of 81% or higher for the CN-BM or the CN-BA, or a 75% with the BCHN you will receive the certification mark associated with the exam they took. (see table on page 10).

Qualifications of Certificants

Certified Navigators with NCBC have met the following criteria:

- Completed and NCBC accredited certification exam
- Have an active NCBC membership
- Maintain Continuing Education requirements for renewal
- Uses the certification mark and credentials within the scope in which the certification was granted
 - NCBC maintains the right to take all appropriate steps including legal or other action, such as requiring the discontinuation of the use of the designation, suspension during investigation, or revocation of the certification, to protect its rights from unauthorized use.

Certification Mark

Any certification mark issued by NCBC-CB or BCHN is the property of NCBC and may be revoked by NCBC-CB or BHCN as determined by NCBC. In such event, any former certification holder shall no longer be deemed to be a Certificant and shall discontinue use thereof.

Posting of Test Scores

Test Scores will be emailed within three weeks of the test date.

Annual Report

All testing information including pass and fails rates can be found on the Breast Navigator Certification website(bpnc.org) under the Certification Guide tab.



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Certification Annual Renewal

The Breast Navigator Certification requires annual renewals with eight (8) continuing education credits earned per year, a failure to renew will result in inactive certification after 60 days past expiration and decertification after 1 year past expiration.

Certification Renewal Instructions

The online renewal form can be found at <https://www.bpnc.org/certified-navigators/>
Applicant Information: Complete this section with information about the applicant to maintain current certification records.

Active Certification

To maintain an active certification status, all certified individuals must annually submit the required data and documentation via the online system at:
<https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certified-navigators>

Inactive Certification or Decertification

Individuals will become inactive when they have not renewed their certification 60 days past their expiration date. Individuals holding Inactive Certification status will not be listed as Navigators on the NCBC directory. A previously certified individual not currently performing as a Breast Navigator may choose to hold an Inactive Certification. Individuals holding an Inactive Certification may become active again, upon submission of required forms, payment, and documentation for active Certification without taking another examination. With Inactive Certification you are not required to pay the annual \$153 Navigator renewal fee. Decertification will commence once a certification has been expired for one year and will require recertification.



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Certification Annual Renewal Requirements

Required for Active and Inactive Certification

All applicants must be in good standing with their Respective licensure board in order to hold active or inactive certification. Documentation is not required at time of renewal but may be requested in an audit.

Membership

Active Certification comes with an NCBC Individual Membership that will renew with each Navigator Certification Renewal

For Active Certification only

Performance/Data: Complete the online Performance/Data Survey if required (based on needs of NCBC).

Completing the CEU Validation

Required information includes:

- Name of Conference: Identify the conference name, if the CEU was for a session which was part of a conference.
- Conference/Session Host: The name of the organization/business hosting the conference or if the session is not part of a conference, the entity hosting the session.
- Session/Course Title:
- Approval Number:
- Number of CEUs received:

The purpose of the continuing education credits requirement is to ensure the Certified Breast Navigator continues to provide enhanced breast patient care, through the annual expansion his/her knowledge base of both general breast patient care and specifically in the care of patients they are/will be navigating.

Requirements for active certification renewal includes a minimum of 8 contact hours from an approved provider specific to breast care or breast patient navigation.

General breast credits may include content that includes administration, personal growth, or general medical information. Breast care/breast cancer continuing education credits reflect



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information that a breast navigator may use in providing navigation support to patients. Content areas may include:

- Role of navigator across the continuum of breast care (screening, diagnosis, active treatment, survivorship and/or end-of-life care)
- Navigation role differences (clinically licensed and non-licensed professionals) and scope of practice
- Breast navigation program development, implementation, and metrics
- Breast health, breast cancer, cancer treatment and supportive care options
- Evidence-based guidelines for multidisciplinary breast health and breast cancer care
- Breast cancer prevention/risk reduction, health promotion, community outreach
- Breast cancer genetics
- Barriers to care (financial, practical, and social) and resources
- Physical, psychological, social and spiritual impacts of breast cancer and its treatment on patients and families
- Communication skills, motivational interviewing, and shared decision making
- Patient advocacy; patient engagement/empowerment
- Sensitivity and awareness to a diverse patient population; health literacy and cultural competency
- Health care payment structure, billing/coding, and financing
- Time management, problem-solving and critical thinking
- Conflict resolution, stress management

Options for credit may also include vendor sponsored training or online credit organizations like Medscape.com or rn.com. Specific breast navigation credits reflect information that a breast navigator would utilize when navigating a breast care/cancer patient. This might include: communicating and interacting with the patient, patient information flow, role of the navigator, fatigue and its management, cancer's impact on all family members, handling work related stress, anger/grief management, balancing work and personal time, goal setting, etc. Ideally, content that relates to any stage of breast care/cancer patient navigation is appropriate. Referencing the care Matrix will reacquaint individuals with the various stages of breast patient navigation.

Up to 4 hours of breast tumor board (conference) may be used to fulfill these requirements. Dates and times must be able to be verified by your supervisor or facility registrar.



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Renewal Fee

Identify and complete the required method of renewal fee payment of \$159.34 (includes a printed and mailed certificate).

Submit using online link found at <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certified-navigators/>

Discipline, Appeals, Test Integrity, and Privacy

Equitable disciplinary policies to address complaints or ethics issues:

The individual scope of practice of navigators is emphasized as the primary job description based on facility, state regulations, and national standards. Navigators are instructed and expected to work within those parameters. Any complaints brought to the attention of NCBC of a certified patient navigator will be determined in the following manner:

1. Complaint received.
2. Letter to Navigator/Supervisor detailing the complaint received. Request rebuttal to complaint.
3. Complaint and rebuttal to be reviewed by NCBC Certification Board.
4. Findings and recommendations forwarded to Executive Director.

Possible recommendations:

1. No fault found. No further intervention required.
2. Fault found. (See discipline standard for possible action)

Discipline, non-discrimination, and accommodation following applicable laws and regulations:

If fault is found, disciplinary action will be applied as follows:

1. Minor offense: written warning given. Follow up in one month for resolution.
2. Major offense or two or more minor offenses: revocation of certification.
3. If certification is revoked:
 - a. No refund of fees,
 - b. Navigator may not apply for retesting for a period of 1 year.

Major offense is defined as an action or words that cause harm or undue stress on a patient based on state regulations. Example: [1] HIPPA violation; [2] Navigator working outside scope of practice; [3] Loss of primary licensure. Minor offense is defined as an action or words that have the potential of causing harm or undue stress on a patient based on state regulations. Appeals to fault/no-fault recommendations by the NCBC Certification Board will be sent to the Executive Director for review of appeal. All decisions made are final.



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Appeals policies and procedures to question eligibility, exam results, certification status can be found here: <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/navigation-policy-and-procedures>

Testing Policies and Exam Security

All exams and score keys are password protected at the NCBC office. During the development and update of the exams, the NCBC Certification Manager, the NCBC Certification Board Item Writing Committee and the NCBC Certification Board Exam Review Committee have access to the full test during the meetings.

All Certification Board members, item writers, item reviewers and exam reviewers have signed a letter of agreement which requires confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Additionally, all candidates must complete a signed Exam Security document agreeing to all NCBC Certification Exam policies. Testing policies and exam security information for the exam candidates can be found here: <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/navigation-policy-and-procedures/>

Information and Data Retention

NCBC maintains copies of electronic files, including communications with participants, decisions made by the NCBC Certification Board regarding discipline, appeals, or other requests on a password required secure server protected by a firewall.

Result Retention

NCBC policy is to maintain physical records of examination results for 7 years after the last certification renewal of the Navigator. Electronic files will be retained permanently or until the Certification program is no longer administered by the NCBC. Physical and electronic files will only be accessed by paid NCBC staff. Requests for information regarding a certified navigator can be made from outside auditing organizations with written permission from the Navigator.