



National Consortium of Breast Centers
Breast Health Navigator Certification Programs

Breast Health Clinical Navigator (BHCN) Certification Exam Description

BY

NATIONAL CONSORTIUM
OF BREAST CENTERS
CERTIFICATION BOARD



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Exam Description

All navigators, regardless of designation, are required to understand the full extent of patient movement through this documented system of care.

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.

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.

NCCA Accreditation for the Breast Health Clinical Navigator (BHCN) Certification

ACCREDITED
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



NCCA BY ICE

On July 4, 2023, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) granted accreditation to the National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC) for demonstrating compliance with the *NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs*. NCCA is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. The NCCA Standards were created in 1977 and updated in 2016 to ensure certification programs adhere to modern standards of practice for the certification industry. The National Consortium of Breast Centers joins an elite group of more than 130 organizations representing over 315 programs that have received and maintained NCCA accreditation. [Click here for the official press release](#)



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Taking an Exam

The exams are available multiple times per year through live remote proctoring or paper/pencil administration.

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.

- paper/pencil exam – offered each March at the annual NCoBC conference – To find specific dates and locations: <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certification-schedule/>
- live remote proctoring exam – offered during two testing windows each year – To find specific dates: <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/certification-schedule/>
- Information on how to request ADA special accommodations: <https://www.navigatorcertifications.org/navigation-policy-and-procedures/>

Format: The BHCN exam is a multiple-choice exam with 125 questions. 100 questions are scored, and 25 questions are un-scored pre-test questions. Candidates have three hours to complete the test.

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: BHCN certification is available only in the US. Candidates are licensed Registered Nurses or medical imager/radiologic technologists with experience and/or training in patient navigation seeking to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and experience in breast care navigation to optimize the quality of and delivery of breast care. These healthcare professionals work in a variety of healthcare settings.

BHCN Exam Content Outline

Breast Health/Breast Cancer	15%
Recognize anatomical structures related to the breast	
Differentiate between benign, high-risk, malignant breast pathology and conditions	
Know current breast cancer statistics	
Demonstrate understanding of principles of clinical breast exam (CBE) and breast selfawareness	
Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment	28%
Discriminate between breast imaging modalities used for screening vs diagnosis of breast lesions	
Recognize Breast Imaging Reporting and Data Systems (BI-RADS) categories	



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Understand the effects of breast density on screening mammography and breast cancer risk	
Identify surveillance and screening recommendations based on risk assessment	
Distinguish various Breast Cancer Risk Assessment models	
Understand risk reducing options for individuals at high-risk of breast cancer	
Understand local-regional and systemic breast cancer treatment options	
Recognize elements of breast cancer staging – Tumor Node Metastasis (TNM)	
Care Coordination	19%
Facilitate patient-centered breast care coordination across the continuum in collaboration with multidisciplinary healthcare team	
Evaluate the physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and socioeconomic impacts across the breast care continuum.	
Address barriers to care with appropriate referrals and resources/services	
Assess patient and family coping skills	
Education & Resources	28%
Provide evidence-based education about breast cancer screening and diagnosis.	
Provide evidence-based education about treatment, side effects and management, and complementary and alternative approaches to care	
Provide evidence-based education about surgical and breast reconstruction options.	
Provide evidence-based education about survivorship/end of life care.	
Apply shared decision making (SDM) principles to support multidisciplinary care	
Provide education regarding lifestyle modifications to reduce breast cancer risk (e.g., limiting alcohol, smoking cessation, diet, and exercise, etc.)	
Identify appropriate resources to meet patient needs (support groups/organizations)	
Communication	10%
Communicate effectively to cultivate trusting relationships	
Identify communication issues/challenges (e.g., difficult conversations, language barriers, cognitive disability)	
Practice in accordance with HIPAA regulations	

What to Expect on Exam Day

Paper/Pencil Testing Rules

- All test takers will be required to show identification at check-in:
 - Valid state-issued photo ID, name must match name on badge



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- Badge with pink stand up that says NAVIGATION EXAM or green stand up for CGRA EXAM
2. All personal belongings must be placed along the wall.
 - Test takers are allowed only a drink in a clear water bottle and/or tissues. Items are checked before they are approved.
 - NO other personal items will be allowed at tables.
 - Phones must be shut off and placed in bags along the wall. Smart watches must be left in bags on airplane mode.
3. No breaks will be provided and all test takers must stay in their seats. Talking is not permitted during testing. Test takers should raise their hand if they need assistance from a proctor.
4. If for any reason an exam is interrupted, instructions will be provided to the examinees.

Online Testing Rules:

1. Valid State ID is required at the beginning of the exam
2. Desk and the surrounding area must be clear
3. Stay connected to a power source
4. No phones or headphones
5. No dual monitors
6. No leaving your seat
7. You must be alone in the room
8. No talking
9. Your webcam, speakers, and microphone must remain on throughout the test
10. You must stay in view of the webcam for the duration of the test
11. A drink in a clear bottle or glass on the desk is allowed

Device Requirements

Exams can only be taken with supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebooks. Some exams with higher security may limit the use of Chromebooks. Tablets and mobile devices are NOT supported for testing.

Browser Requirements

Exams can only be taken with Google Chrome on supported Windows, MacOS, or ChromeOS devices.

Webcam Requirements

A built-in or external webcam is required for testing

Microphone Requirements

A built-in or external microphone is required for testing. Microphones in headsets are not allowed unless previously approved.



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Connectivity Requirements

A download speed of at least 2Mbps is required, with 10Mbps preferred for testing. Mobile hotspots are not recommended.

Confidentiality and Misconduct

All content, specifically questions and answers where applicable of the exams are the exclusive and confidential property of the National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC) and are protected by NCBC's intellectual property rights. They may not be copied, reproduced, modified, published, uploaded, posted, transmitted, or distributed in any way without the express authorization of NCBC. Candidates who sit for NCBC certification exams must agree they have read and will abide by the terms and conditions of the NCBC Confidentiality Agreement before beginning each exam. The agreement applies to all exams. Signing and adhering to this agreement is required to be officially credentialed and to maintain a valid credential. Penalties for violating the policy can include up to and including a lifetime ban on all future exams and the nullification of all previous credentials.

Candidates must take no action to compromise the integrity or confidentiality of any NCBC exams. Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to any of the following:

- Utilizing an unauthorized copy of the exam
- Reproducing exam materials by any means, including reconstruction through memorization.
- Misconduct as determined by statistical analysis.
- Requesting access to exam questions or other protected exam material in forums or social networking sites.
- Altering exam scores, score reports or certificates.
- Selling, licensing, distributing, giving away or obtaining from any source other than NCBC the Exam Materials, questions or answers
- Distributing actual exam content via Web postings, discussion groups, chat rooms, study guides, etc.
- Use of falsified or altered Certificates, Score Reports, or other documents or electronic media used to misrepresent the Certification status of a candidate
- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind from anyone for any examination
- Using any aids, notes, equipment or other materials not authorized by NCBC during the exam
- Providing falsified documentation as a means of a false identity, false address, false email address, or solicitation of someone to take a test on another's behalf
- Failure to protect Certification content through carelessness or in an attempt to shield facts regarding a violation
- Causing a disturbance of any kind in a testing facility; removing or attempting to remove questions and/or responses (in any format) or notes, note board, or scratch paper from the testing room

Suspicious activity should be reported promptly to the NCBC staff. NCBC may use exam statistics to identify anomalies in the exam results. If NCBC determines that any misconduct has occurred, NCBC



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reserves the right to investigate and is subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to lifetime ban on all future participation in exams and the nullification of scores and/or previously awarded credentials.

Exam Results

For both in person and online testing, Test Scores will be emailed within three weeks of the test date, unless we are in a period of performing a standard setting on new test forms, during that time there may be a longer waiting period for test results.

Understanding Your Scores

A criterion-referenced standard setting process is used to establish the passing point for the exams. This means that each candidate's performance on the exam is measured against a predetermined standard. Candidates are not graded on a curve and do not compete against each other or against a quota.

Exams are designed to measure a candidate's overall performance. Scores are reported as the percentage of correct test questions. Each item is worth one point, so the sum of correct responses is the candidate's total score. A candidate's total score determines whether he/she has passed or failed the examination after a comparison to the cut score. The cut score for a multiple-choice examination is the result of a study that is intended to define the minimum acceptable performance level and link this level to an examination score by relying on data collected from a panel of subject matter experts.

Retesting Policy

If an individual does not pass the examination, they may sit for the examination again during the next 12 months for no additional fee (except travel to where the exam is being offered). A minimum 6 month waiting period is required between all exam attempts. If an applicant does not pass and 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. There is no limit on retakes as long as the required waiting periods are met.

How the Exams were Developed

Job Analysis Studies

A job analysis study is conducted to establish the content for each exam. Each job analysis includes input from a group of subject matter experts and validation through a national survey. Results of the survey and subject matter expert analysis serve to ensure the certification program is consistent with the knowledge and skills essential to providing breast health services related to each exam.

Examination Development

Test questions are written and approved by trained subject matter experts under the guidance of test development experts. All test items undergo multiple levels of review and editing.



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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.

Standard Setting

The passing point for each exam is established using a criterion-reference technique. Passing scores are based on the difficulty rating for each item established by a panel of subject matter experts under the guidance of a psychometrician.

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 always following these guidelines. Nationally Recognized Standards/Guidelines include:

1. CoC: Commission on Cancer
2. NQMBC: National Quality Measures for Breast Centers
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
7. Other national standards could be considered for validation purposes of examination including SBI, ASTRO, etc.

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