

Should I Apply for the PCCN or CCRN Exam?

PCCN—Progressive Care

Refer to the PCCN Test Plan

Patients are acutely ill and moderately stable with potential to become unstable

Typical assignment of 1 nurse to 3-4 patients based on acuity

Progressive Care Unit
Telemetry Unit
Stepdown Unit
Intermediate Care Unit
Observation Unit
Cardiac Catheterization Lab
Cardiac Rehabilitation
Interventional Radiology

**Patient Problems/
Nursing Actions**

Patient Stability

Patient Complexity

Practice Areas

Determination of eligibility is not based on unit location but is based on patient acuity, as patient placement varies by facility and bed availability.

CCRN—Critical Care

Refer to the CCRN Test Plan

Patients are critically ill and unstable

Typical assignment of 1 nurse to 1-2 patients based on acuity

Critical Care Unit
Intensive Care Unit
Emergency Department
PACU/RR
Trauma Unit
Transport Flight

Test plans and table data based on results of PCCN and CCRN Studies of Practice and Direct Care Eligibility Pathway requirements.

For test plans and more details, download the Exam Handbook for PCCN or CCRN at www.aacn.org/certhandbooks.

- Prospective candidates must work with acutely/critically ill patients for eligibility hours specified in the Exam Handbook for PCCN or CCRN.
- A majority of the practice hours for CCRN eligibility must be focused on **critically ill** patients.
- Nurses who are unsure if they are eligible for the PCCN or CCRN exam should discuss eligibility with their supervisor and/or contact AACN before applying.

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