

**AACN Certification Corporation
PCCN Test Plan**

PCCN Test Plan - Based on Patient Care Problems

1. Clinical Judgment (80%)

A. Cardiovascular (36%)

1. Acute coronary syndromes
2. Acute inflammatory disease
3. Cardiac surgery
4. Cardiac tamponade
5. Cardiogenic shock
6. Cardiomyopathies
7. Conduction defects
8. Dysrhythmias
9. Heart failure
10. Hypertensive crisis
11. Peripheral vascular disease
12. Peripheral vascular surgery
13. Pulmonary edema
14. Ruptured or dissecting aneurysm
15. Structural heart defects

B. Pulmonary (14%)

1. Acute lung injury (ALI)
2. Aspirations
3. Chronic ventilatory failure
4. Exacerbation of COPD
5. Pneumothorax
6. Pulmonary embolism
7. Pulmonary hypertension
8. Respiratory infections
9. Severe asthma
10. Sleep disordered breathing
11. Thoracic surgery

C. Endocrine (4%)

1. Diabetic ketoacidosis
2. Hypoglycemia

D. Hematology/Immunology (2%)

1. Anemia
2. Life-threatening coagulopathies

E. Neurology (5%)

1. Intracranial hemorrhage
2. Seizure disorders
3. Stroke

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F. Gastrointestinal (5%)

1. GI hemorrhage
2. GI infections
3. GI motility disorders
4. Hepatic failure
5. Malnutrition
6. Pancreatitis

G. Renal (5%)

1. Acute renal failure
2. Electrolyte imbalances
3. End-stage renal disease (ESRD)

H. Multisystem (5%)

1. Infectious diseases
2. Shock states
3. Systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS)/sepsis/
severe sepsis/septic shock/MODS

I. Behavioral (4%)

1. Delirium and dementia
2. Mood disorders and depression
3. Substance abuse

II. Professional Caring and Ethical Practice (20%)

A. Advocacy/Moral Agency (3%)

B. Caring Practices (4%)

C. Collaboration (4%)

D. Systems Thinking (2%)

E. Response to Diversity (2%)

F. Clinical Inquiry (2%)

G. Facilitation of Learning (3%)

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TESTABLE NURSING ACTIONS

CARDIOVASCULAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform a comprehensive cardiovascular assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify, interpret, and monitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dysrhythmias ○ ST segments ○ QTc intervals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select leads for cardiac monitoring for the indicated disease process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize indications for and manage patients requiring hemodynamic monitoring using non-invasive hemodynamic monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor hemodynamic status and recognize signs and symptoms of hemodynamic instability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize indications for and monitor/manage patients requiring cardiovascular therapeutic intervention using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cardioversion ○ transcutaneous pacing ○ defibrillation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor normal and abnormal diagnostic test results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calculate dosages, administer cardiovascular medications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Titrate vasoactive medications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize signs and symptoms of cardiovascular emergencies, initiate standardized interventions, and seek assistance as needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor patient and follow standardized protocols pre-, intra-, and post-procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor and manage patients following coronary intervention
PULMONARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform a comprehensive pulmonary assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor normal and abnormal diagnostic test results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interpret ABGs and report findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor patient for response to pulmonary medications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage patients requiring the following the non-invasive O₂ or ventilation delivery systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ nasal cannula ○ face masks ○ non-rebreather mask ○ BiPAP ○ CPAP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage patients requiring mechanical ventilation via: tracheostomy tube
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage patients requiring the following respiratory monitoring devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continuous SPO₂ ○ intermittent SPO₂
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize signs and symptoms of respiratory complications, and seek assistance as needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain patient airway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage patients with chest tubes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist with the following procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ thoracentesis ○ chest tube insertion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administer medications for procedural (conscious) sedation and monitor patients response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor patient and follow standardized protocols pre-, intra-, and post-procedure

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TESTABLE NURSING ACTIONS (CONTINUED)
ENDOCRINE
▪ Perform a comprehensive endocrine assessment
▪ Monitor normal and abnormal diagnostic test results
▪ Administer medications, treatments or interventions and monitor patient response
▪ Manage and titrate insulin infusions
HEMATOLOGY/IMMUNOLOGY
▪ Perform a comprehensive hematology/immunology assessment
▪ Monitor normal and abnormal diagnostic test results
▪ Administer medications, treatments or interventions and monitor patient response
NEUROLOGY
▪ Perform a comprehensive neurological assessment
▪ Monitor normal and abnormal neurological diagnostic test results
▪ Administer medications, treatments or interventions and monitor patient response
GASTROINTESTINAL
▪ Perform a comprehensive gastrointestinal assessment
▪ Monitor normal and abnormal gastrointestinal diagnostic test results
▪ Recognize indications for and complications of enteral and parenteral nutrition
RENAL
▪ Identify normal and abnormal renal assessment findings
▪ Monitor normal and abnormal diagnostic test results
MULTISYSTEM
▪ Administer medications, treatments or interventions and monitor patient response
▪ Recognize signs and symptoms of emergencies, initiate standardized interventions, and seek assistance as needed
▪ Manage patients with complex wounds with fistulas, drains, and vacuum-assisted closure devices
BEHAVIORAL
▪ Perform a psychosocial assessment
▪ Administer medications, treatments or interventions and monitor patient response
▪ Recognize signs and symptoms of behavioral emergencies and initiate interventions

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NURSING ACTIONS EXCLUDED FROM PCCN EXAM

CARDIOVASCULAR

- Recognize indications for and manage patients requiring hemodynamic monitoring using:
 - an arterial line
 - CVP monitoring
- Recognize indications for and monitor/manage patients requiring cardiovascular therapeutic intervention using:
 - transvenous pacing
 - epicardial pacing
 - arterial sheath removal
 - venous sheath removal
 - ventricular assist devices
- Manage continuous veno-venous hemofiltration for heart failure

PULMONARY

- Manage patients requiring mechanical ventilation via: endotracheal tube
- Manage patients requiring an ETCO₂ respiratory monitoring device
- Remove:
 - pleural chest tubes
 - mediastinal tubes
- Manage patients requiring:
 - ventilator weaning
 - extubation or decannulation
- Assist with the following procedures:
 - bronchoscopy
 - intubation

ENDOCRINE

- Manage patients using insulin pumps

NEUROLOGY

- Manage patients requiring:
 - lumbar drains
 - ventriculostomy
 - neurological monitoring devices and drains for intracranial pressure
- Recognize signs and symptoms of increased intracranial pressure

GASTROINTESTINAL

- Perform intra-abdominal hypertension monitoring

RENAL

- Assist with:
 - hemodialysis
 - peritoneal dialysis
 - continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT)

MULTISYSTEM

- Manage patients with intraosseous devices