# HESI Mental Health Care Practice Exam (Sample)

**Study Guide**

BY EXAMZIFY

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

• Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
• Improve accuracy and speed,
• Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
• Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

## 4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

## 6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

# **Questions**

1. **What should a nurse do if a client expresses fears about their treatment plan?**

   A. Dismiss the concerns to avoid reinforcing negativity

   B. Reassure the client that their fears are unfounded

   C. Listen and validate their concerns while providing information

   D. Indicate that the client should trust the healthcare provider's experience

2. **In which phase of the therapeutic relationship does the nurse establish trust with the patient?**

   A. Working phase

   B. Termination phase

   C. Orientation phase

   D. Assessment phase

3. **What is the main focus of family therapy in mental health care?**

   A. Solving individual psychological issues

   B. Improving communication and resolving conflicts

   C. Assessing family medical history

   D. Providing medication management

4. **Which question is essential in determining nursing negligence?**

   A. "Was reasonable care provided?"

   B. "Was there a breach of nursing duty?"

   C. "Was there an act of omission that resulted in harm?"

   D. "Except for the nurse's action, would the injury have occurred?"

5. What should a nurse do when a client elopes while other clients are being supervised?

   A. Get the client who eloped and send both NAs back to the unit with the other clients

   B. Send both NAs to follow the client while the RN returns to the unit with the other clients

   C. Have one NA trail the client while the RN and the other NA bring the other clients back to the unit

   D. Return to the unit with both NAs and then send one NA to find the client who eloped

6. What behavior does a nurse leader expect from group members when achieving group objectives?

   A. Attending every session of the group

   B. Commenting on each topic discussed by the group

   C. Making an effort to include one another in discussions

   D. Following through on rules governing behavior

7. What is a primary goal of cognitive therapy?

   A. To enhance art skills

   B. To prepare for employment

   C. To modify harmful thought patterns

   D. To improve physical health

8. What is a key feature of schizophrenia?

   A. Excessive social interactions

   B. Clear and rational thought processes

   C. Disturbances in thought processes, perceptions, and emotional responsiveness

   D. Consistent mood regulation

9. **What is the difference between active suicidal ideation and passive suicidal ideation?**

    A. Active involves planning or intent, while passive involves thoughts of wishing to be dead without a plan

    B. Active involves withdrawal from social activities, while passive relates to coping mechanisms

    C. Active is associated with psychiatric hospitalization, while passive is not

    D. Active involves seeking help, while passive is about avoidance

10. **What therapeutic technique involves the patient visualizing a peaceful scene?**

    A. Guided imagery

    B. Progressive muscle relaxation

    C. Cognitive restructuring

    D. Mindfulness meditation

# **Answers**

**1. C**
**2. C**
**3. B**
**4. A**
**5. C**
**6. C**
**7. C**
**8. C**
**9. A**
**10. A**

# Explanations

## 1. What should a nurse do if a client expresses fears about their treatment plan?

A. Dismiss the concerns to avoid reinforcing negativity

B. Reassure the client that their fears are unfounded

**C. Listen and validate their concerns while providing information**

D. Indicate that the client should trust the healthcare provider's experience

Listening to and validating a client's concerns while providing information is crucial in mental health care. When a client expresses fears about their treatment plan, it is essential for the nurse to create an open environment where the client feels safe to share their thoughts and feelings. This approach helps to build trust and rapport between the nurse and the client, which is vital for effective patient care. By actively listening, the nurse not only acknowledges the client's feelings but also demonstrates empathy, showing that their concerns are valid and important. Providing clear, factual information can help alleviate fears or misconceptions the client might have regarding their treatment. This process empowers the client to engage more actively in their care and can enhance their overall treatment adherence and satisfaction. Engaging in this supportive dialogue allows the nurse to address any misinformation and provide reassurance based on evidence, helping the client to feel more informed and less anxious about the decisions affecting their health. This patient-centered approach is a key aspect of effective mental health nursing practice.

## 2. In which phase of the therapeutic relationship does the nurse establish trust with the patient?

A. Working phase

B. Termination phase

**C. Orientation phase**

D. Assessment phase

The establishment of trust is a foundational aspect that occurs during the orientation phase of the therapeutic relationship. In this initial phase, the nurse begins to build rapport with the patient, engaging in introductions and creating a safe and supportive environment. This includes discussing the purpose of the relationship, setting mutual goals, and outlining confidentiality, all of which contribute to developing trust. The focus is on fostering an atmosphere where the patient feels comfortable sharing personal thoughts and feelings, which is crucial for effective therapeutic communication. Trust is essential in any therapeutic relationship, as it allows the patient to feel secure and open, thereby promoting better engagement in their care. While the working phase involves more active problem-solving and the application of interventions, it is built upon the trust established during the orientation phase. The termination phase, on the other hand, is when the relationship is brought to a close, and the focus shifts to summarizing the progress made. The assessment phase involves gathering information and does not specifically target trust-building in the same manner as the orientation phase.

### 3. What is the main focus of family therapy in mental health care?

    **A. Solving individual psychological issues**

    **<span style="color:green">B. Improving communication and resolving conflicts</span>**

    **C. Assessing family medical history**

    **D. Providing medication management**

Family therapy primarily centers on improving communication and resolving conflicts within the family unit. This therapeutic approach recognizes that the family is a significant support system for individuals and that dynamics within the family can greatly impact mental health. By fostering open communication and addressing interpersonal issues, family therapy aims to enhance relationships, promote understanding, and create a healthier family environment. While individual psychological issues, family medical history, and medication management are important aspects of mental health care, they do not encapsulate the main focus of family therapy. Instead, this therapy seeks to engage all family members in the treatment process, encouraging them to work together to identify and address problems collaboratively, which ultimately benefits individual members and the family as a whole.

### 4. Which question is essential in determining nursing negligence?

    **<span style="color:green">A. "Was reasonable care provided?"</span>**

    **B. "Was there a breach of nursing duty?"**

    **C. "Was there an act of omission that resulted in harm?"**

    **D. "Except for the nurse's action, would the injury have occurred?"**

Determining nursing negligence revolves around whether a standard of care was met and whether any breach of duty occurred. The most essential question to ask in this context is whether there was reasonable care provided. This question addresses whether the nurse acted within the established standards of nursing practice and whether the actions taken were appropriate given the situation. By establishing whether reasonable care was provided, one can explore whether the nurse's actions were consistent with the expectations of a reasonably competent nurse under similar circumstances. If it is determined that reasonable care was not provided, it serves as the foundation for further analysis of negligence, including the identification of any breaches in duty and potential acts of omission that may have directly resulted in harm. Understanding this crucial aspect is fundamental, as it directly influences the subsequent evaluation of whether the nurse's actions contributed to any patient injury.

## 5. What should a nurse do when a client elopes while other clients are being supervised?

**A.** Get the client who eloped and send both NAs back to the unit with the other clients

**B.** Send both NAs to follow the client while the RN returns to the unit with the other clients

**C. Have one NA trail the client while the RN and the other NA bring the other clients back to the unit**

**D.** Return to the unit with both NAs and then send one NA to find the client who eloped

In a situation where a client elopes while other clients are being supervised, the priority is to ensure the safety of all clients while addressing the issue of the eloped client. Having one nursing assistant (NA) trail the client who has eloped while the registered nurse (RN) and the other NA return the remaining clients to the unit is the most effective approach. This strategy allows for immediate attention to the eloped client, which is critical to ensure their safety and prevent them from wandering into potentially harmful situations. Meanwhile, the remaining clients are returned to the unit under the supervision of the RN and the second NA, ensuring that they are not left unattended or placed in a situation where their safety might be compromised. Balancing the responsibilities of supervision for the group of clients while also addressing the urgent need to locate and assist the eloped client is key. By implementing this plan, the team maintains a controlled environment for those still in the unit while responding promptly to the eloped client's needs. Other approaches may result in delaying the response to the eloping client, not properly supervising the remaining clients, or unnecessarily complicating the situation by sending multiple personnel away from the unit.

## 6. What behavior does a nurse leader expect from group members when achieving group objectives?

**A.** Attending every session of the group

**B.** Commenting on each topic discussed by the group

**C. Making an effort to include one another in discussions**

**D.** Following through on rules governing behavior

The expectation for group members to make an effort to include one another in discussions is essential for fostering a collaborative environment. This behavior demonstrates respect for diverse perspectives, encourages active participation, and promotes a sense of belonging among group members. When individuals feel included, they are more likely to share their ideas and contribute to group objectives, which enhances overall group dynamics and effectiveness. In contrast, simply attending every session does not guarantee active participation or engagement; attendance alone does not equate to contribution. Commenting on each topic discussed is not practical, as it might lead to redundancy or superficial engagement rather than meaningful dialogue. Following through on rules governing behavior is certainly important for maintaining a productive environment, but it does not inherently promote inclusion or collaboration, which are vital for achieving group objectives. Thus, the emphasis on making an effort to include one another is fundamental for a successful group process.

## 7. What is a primary goal of cognitive therapy?

A. To enhance art skills

B. To prepare for employment

**C. To modify harmful thought patterns**

D. To improve physical health

The primary goal of cognitive therapy is to modify harmful thought patterns. This form of therapy is built on the premise that an individual's thoughts significantly influence their emotions and behaviors. By identifying and challenging negative or distorted thinking, cognitive therapy helps clients develop healthier thought patterns, improving their emotional well-being and overall functioning.   This approach is particularly effective for various mental health issues, including depression and anxiety, as it empowers individuals to recognize and alter unhelpful cognitive distortions, fostering a more positive and realistic perspective on their circumstances. Through techniques such as cognitive restructuring, clients learn to replace harmful thoughts with more balanced and rational ones, leading to improved emotional outcomes and behavioral changes.   The other options focus on unrelated areas. Enhancing art skills, preparing for employment, and improving physical health do not align with the specific goals of cognitive therapy, which is primarily concerned with mental processes and emotional health.

## 8. What is a key feature of schizophrenia?

A. Excessive social interactions

B. Clear and rational thought processes

**C. Disturbances in thought processes, perceptions, and emotional responsiveness**

D. Consistent mood regulation

A key feature of schizophrenia is the presence of disturbances in thought processes, perceptions, and emotional responsiveness. Individuals with schizophrenia often experience a range of symptoms including delusions, hallucinations, and disorganized thinking, all of which indicate that their thought processes are not functioning in a typical manner. Furthermore, emotional responses may be blunted or inappropriate, contributing to the struggle in social interactions and personal functioning.   The manifestation of these disturbances is crucial to the diagnosis of schizophrenia, as they significantly impact an individual's ability to perceive reality and respond emotionally to their environment. This element of the disorder creates challenges in various areas of life, including personal relationships and employment, thus underscoring its importance in understanding the condition.   In contrast, conditions characterized by excessive social interactions or clear and rational thought processes do not align with the clinical realities of schizophrenia, where social withdrawal and cognitive disruptions are prevalent. Similarly, consistent mood regulation is not typical for individuals with schizophrenia, who may experience heightened emotional volatility or flat affect.

9. **What is the difference between active suicidal ideation and passive suicidal ideation?**

   **A. Active involves planning or intent, while passive involves thoughts of wishing to be dead without a plan**

   B. Active involves withdrawal from social activities, while passive relates to coping mechanisms

   C. Active is associated with psychiatric hospitalization, while passive is not

   D. Active involves seeking help, while passive is about avoidance

The distinction between active suicidal ideation and passive suicidal ideation is critical in mental health assessment and intervention. Active suicidal ideation refers to thoughts that not only include a wish to die but also involve planning or intent to carry out self-harm or suicide. This could manifest as specific thoughts about how to commit suicide, identifying means, or setting a timeline, indicating a higher level of risk.  In contrast, passive suicidal ideation reflects a more general desire to be dead without any specific plans or intentionality to cause harm. Individuals with passive ideation may think about wanting to die but do not have specific methods or an intention to act on these thoughts. This indicates a lower level of immediacy and risk compared to active ideation. Understanding this difference is vital for mental health professionals when evaluating the severity of a patient's condition and determining the necessary level of care or intervention. The other options provided do not accurately capture the critical components of intent and planning that differentiate active from passive suicidal ideation.

10. **What therapeutic technique involves the patient visualizing a peaceful scene?**

   **A. Guided imagery**

   B. Progressive muscle relaxation

   C. Cognitive restructuring

   D. Mindfulness meditation

Guided imagery is a therapeutic technique that involves the patient visualizing a peaceful scene or a soothing environment. This approach utilizes the power of the mind to evoke positive images, sensations, and feelings, promoting relaxation and reducing anxiety. By encouraging individuals to picture calming scenarios, such as a serene beach or a tranquil forest, guided imagery can help facilitate emotional healing, enhance coping skills, and support mental well-being.  In this technique, the individual is often directed through a verbal guide or script that helps them delve deeper into their visualization, enabling a more immersive experience. The benefits of this practice extend to various mental health issues, including stress, anxiety, and even pain management, making it a versatile tool in therapeutic settings. This makes it especially effective for individuals who respond well to visualization and imagination as part of their healing process.

# Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://hesimentalhealthcare.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!