

Nursing Ethics, Laws, and Practices Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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

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- 1. Which activity is recommended for self-care in nursing?**
 - A. Exercise**
 - B. Overtime work**
 - C. Skipping meals**
 - D. Ignoring mental health**

- 2. PICOT stands for which of the following?**
 - A. Population; Time frame; Intervention; Outcomes; Comparison**
 - B. Population; Intervention; Comparison; Outcomes; Time frame**
 - C. Population; Intervention; Control; Outcomes; Time frame**
 - D. Population; Intervention; Comparison; Time frame; Outcomes**

- 3. HIPAA primarily protects which aspect of healthcare?**
 - A. Staffing ratios**
 - B. Confidentiality of patient information**
 - C. Payment processing**
 - D. Licensing renewals**

- 4. Ethical decision making requires integrating which elements?**
 - A. The clinician's personal preferences only**
 - B. The patient's preferences only**
 - C. A comprehensive integration of personal, societal, and professional values and codes**
 - D. Financial incentives**

- 5. Which function is a characteristic of clinical support systems?**
 - A. They provide reminders and alerts about potential dangers**
 - B. They replace clinicians in all decision making**
 - C. They store only demographic data**
 - D. They have no impact on patient safety**

- 6. In the hierarchy of evidence, which type is at the top as the best evidence?**
- A. Case reports / case series**
 - B. Cohort studies**
 - C. Meta-analysis (best)**
 - D. Randomized controlled trials**
- 7. The Self-Determination Act, enacted in 1991, emphasizes what principle in health care decisions?**
- A. Autonomy**
 - B. Confidentiality**
 - C. Licensing**
 - D. Scope of practice**
- 8. Negligence is best described as**
- A. Intentional harm**
 - B. Failure to exercise the care that a reasonably prudent person would exercise, resulting in harm**
 - C. Breach of confidentiality**
 - D. Malpractice**
- 9. Which criterion best evaluates web-based health information?**
- A. Up-to-date/current info**
 - B. Based on scientific evidence**
 - C. Original source listed**
 - D. Supported by facts**
- 10. Which statement best describes the nurse as a moral agent?**
- A. A moral agent for patients only**
 - B. A moral agent for families and communities only**
 - C. A moral agent for patients, families, communities, societies, populations, and organizations**
 - D. A moral agent only within hospital settings**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which activity is recommended for self-care in nursing?

- A. Exercise**
- B. Overtime work**
- C. Skipping meals**
- D. Ignoring mental health**

Engaging in activities that support physical health and emotional well-being is essential for nurses because self-care directly influences stamina, mood, and the ability to provide safe, compassionate care. Regular exercise helps regulate stress hormones, boosts endorphins, improves cardiovascular health, and increases energy and resilience during long shifts. It also models healthy behavior for patients and contributes to long-term well-being, making it easier to handle the demands of nursing. In contrast, overtime work repeatedly cuts into rest and recovery, leading to fatigue, higher risk of errors, and burnout. Skipping meals deprives the body of fuel, causing low energy, poorer concentration, and irritability. Ignoring mental health allows stress to accumulate, which can erode judgment, empathy, and overall performance. These patterns undermine self-care and patient safety. So, the activity that best supports self-care is regular exercise.

2. PICOT stands for which of the following?

- A. Population; Time frame; Intervention; Outcomes; Comparison**
- B. Population; Intervention; Comparison; Outcomes; Time frame**
- C. Population; Intervention; Control; Outcomes; Time frame**
- D. Population; Intervention; Comparison; Time frame; Outcomes**

The main idea tested is how to build a focused clinical question using the PICOT framework for evidence-based practice. PICOT stands for Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Time (frame). The order matters because it guides you to clearly define who you're studying, what you're doing to them, what you're comparing it with, what results you care about, and over what period you'll measure those results. The correct formulation lists Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Time frame. Other options shift or alter components—such as swapping Time frame with Outcomes, using a different term like Control instead of Comparison, or using Outcomes in singular—so they don't align with the standard PICOT structure and could lead to an unfocused or mismatched search.

3. HIPAA primarily protects which aspect of healthcare?

- A. Staffing ratios
- B. Confidentiality of patient information**
- C. Payment processing
- D. Licensing renewals

HIPAA centers on safeguarding patient privacy and the security of health information. It sets the rules for how protected health information (PHI) can be used and disclosed by health plans, providers, and other covered entities. The Privacy Rule gives patients rights over their PHI—such as viewing and requesting corrections to their records—and restricts who can access information without explicit consent. The Security Rule requires safeguards—administrative, physical, and technical—to protect electronic PHI. Together, these provisions ensure that private health details stay confidential and are shared only when necessary and appropriate, with patients' rights and protections in mind. This focus on confidentiality and secure handling of information distinguishes HIPAA from other areas. Staffing ratios pertain to workforce policy and labor regulations, which are not the primary aim of HIPAA. Billing and payment processes are involved in health information handling, but HIPAA's central purpose is privacy and security of PHI, not payment policy. Licensing renewals are governed by professional licensing bodies and standards, not by HIPAA.

4. Ethical decision making requires integrating which elements?

- A. The clinician's personal preferences only
- B. The patient's preferences only
- C. A comprehensive integration of personal, societal, and professional values and codes**
- D. Financial incentives

Ethical decision making in nursing relies on weaving together personal values, patient preferences, societal norms, and professional codes to guide actions. Patient preferences are essential for honoring autonomy, but they must be weighed alongside beneficence, nonmaleficence, and the duties outlined in professional codes. Personal values influence how a situation is interpreted, yet they cannot override patient rights or established standards of care. Societal values about justice and fair distribution of resources shape decisions that affect groups of patients, while professional codes provide clear obligations and ethical expectations for practice. Financial incentives have no place in ethical judgment and can bias care, undermining fairness and integrity. Integrating these elements ensures decisions are patient-centered, just, and professionally responsible rather than driven by a single perspective.

5. Which function is a characteristic of clinical support systems?

- A. They provide reminders and alerts about potential dangers**
- B. They replace clinicians in all decision making**
- C. They store only demographic data**
- D. They have no impact on patient safety**

Clinical support systems are designed to enhance patient safety by delivering reminders and alerts about potential dangers during care. They continuously analyze patient information—such as medications, allergies, lab results, and dosing plans—and flag issues like dangerous drug interactions, contraindications, or incorrect dosages. When something risky is detected, they prompt the clinician to review and adjust the plan before proceeding, helping prevent errors. They do not replace clinicians in decision making; the clinician remains responsible for final judgments and uses the system as a guide to make safer choices. These systems also store much more than demographic data, including medications, test results, diagnoses, and clinical notes, which is how they can assess risk and generate meaningful alerts. Because of these alerts and checks, they have a positive impact on patient safety by reducing preventable harm.

6. In the hierarchy of evidence, which type is at the top as the best evidence?

- A. Case reports / case series**
- B. Cohort studies**
- C. Meta-analysis (best)**
- D. Randomized controlled trials**

Meta-analysis sits at the top of the evidence hierarchy because it combines results from multiple studies to produce a single, overall estimate of effect. By systematically identifying and pooling data from many investigations, it increases statistical power, improves precision, and helps determine whether findings are consistent across different populations and settings. When done well, with rigorous study selection, quality appraisal, and assessment of heterogeneity and bias, a meta-analysis provides a more reliable, generalizable conclusion than any single study. Individual randomized trials are indeed strong sources of evidence, but their findings can be limited by sample size, specific contexts, or occasional biases. Observational designs like cohort studies are more prone to confounding and bias, which can distort associations. Case reports and case series lack comparison groups, so they cannot establish causality or generalize reliably. A well-conducted meta-analysis synthesizes the strengths of many studies, offering the best evidence for guiding practice when available.

7. The Self-Determination Act, enacted in 1991, emphasizes what principle in health care decisions?

- A. Autonomy**
- B. Confidentiality**
- C. Licensing**
- D. Scope of practice**

Autonomy is the guiding principle here. The Self-Determination Act requires health care facilities to inform patients about their rights to participate in decisions about their care and to establish advance directives. It centers on the patient's control over medical choices, including the ability to consent to or refuse treatment and to have those preferences respected, even if the patient's ability to communicate later changes. This emphasis on self-governed decision-making, rather than on privacy of information (confidentiality), regulatory licensing, or the boundaries of professional practice (scope of practice), is what the act is designed to safeguard.

8. Negligence is best described as

- A. Intentional harm**
- B. Failure to exercise the care that a reasonably prudent person would exercise, resulting in harm**
- C. Breach of confidentiality**
- D. Malpractice**

Negligence means failing to provide the level of care a reasonably prudent nurse would give in a similar situation, and as a result, the patient is harmed. It rests on a duty to act and a breach of that duty through action or inaction that a competent professional would avoid. The harm must flow from that failure, which sets it apart from intentional harm (done on purpose), breaches of confidentiality (privacy issues), and the broader term malpractice (professional negligence). In short, negligence is about not meeting the standard of care and causing harm as a result.

9. Which criterion best evaluates web-based health information?

- A. Up-to-date/current info**
- B. Based on scientific evidence**
- C. Original source listed**
- D. Supported by facts**

Evaluating web-based health information relies on whether the claims are grounded in scientific evidence. When information is based on scientific evidence, it has been tested and supported by research methods, data, and peer review, making the conclusions more reliable and less prone to bias or misinterpretation. It allows you to check how conclusions were reached, understand the study design, evaluate the strength of the results, and see if findings have been replicated or supported by higher-quality sources like systematic reviews or clinical guidelines. Up-to-date information is important, but currency alone doesn't guarantee accuracy. An article can be current yet still rest on weak or unsubstantiated claims. Having the original source listed helps you trace the claim, but the origin could be a preliminary report, opinion, or misinterpretation if it isn't backed by solid evidence. Being "supported by facts" sounds good, but without knowing what kind of evidence underpins those facts, it can be vague or misleading. In contrast, information backed by scientific evidence demonstrates a clear link to methodologically sound research, which is the most trustworthy standard for health guidance.

10. Which statement best describes the nurse as a moral agent?

- A. A moral agent for patients only**
- B. A moral agent for families and communities only**
- C. A moral agent for patients, families, communities, societies, populations, and organizations**
- D. A moral agent only within hospital settings**

Moral agency in nursing means the ability and obligation to act ethically across multiple levels, not just at the bedside. A nurse's responsibilities extend beyond caring for individuals to include advocacy and ethical action for families who support patients, for communities facing health challenges, for societies and populations shaped by public health needs, and for the organizations that govern practice and allocate resources. This broad scope recognizes that health outcomes are a product of personal care plus systemic factors, policies, and collective action. Therefore, describing the nurse as a moral agent for patients, families, communities, societies, populations, and organizations captures the full range of ethical duties nurses hold. Narrow options—focusing only on patients, only on families and communities, or only within hospital settings—leave out important aspects of professional responsibility and advocacy that occur beyond the individual bedside.

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://nursingethincslawspractices.examzify.com>

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

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