

Perinatal Mental Health Certification (PMH-C) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright 1

Table of Contents 2

Introduction 3

How to Use This Guide 4

Questions 5

Answers 8

Explanations 10

Next Steps 16

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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 of the following strategies is part of the ACOG racial bias policy?**
 - A. Encourage health disparities**
 - B. Be aware of own biases**
 - C. Promote homogeneity in healthcare practices**
 - D. Ignore community feedback**

- 2. What is a crucial recommendation for using herbal remedies such as St. John's Wort during the perinatal period?**
 - A. It can be safely used with any medication**
 - B. It should not be taken with antidepressants**
 - C. It is effective for all types of depression**
 - D. It has no contraindications**

- 3. What action should all postpartum women, men, and families be encouraged to take?**
 - A. Engage in competitive sports**
 - B. Maintain adequate nutrition**
 - C. Isolate themselves to avoid stress**
 - D. Reduce contact with healthcare providers**

- 4. Which mood disorders are included in PMADs?**
 - A. Only anxiety and depression**
 - B. Depression, bipolar, and psychosis**
 - C. Only bipolar disorder**
 - D. Anxiety disorders only**

- 5. Which of the following is NOT a symptom of neonatal adaptation syndrome?**
 - A. Tremors**
 - B. Cardiac arrhythmias**
 - C. Severe jaundice**
 - D. Irritability**

- 6. What symptom may indicate the presence of somatic issues in someone with perinatal distress?**
- A. Faking wellness to please others**
 - B. Heightened auditory perception**
 - C. Increased laughter**
 - D. Improved sleep quality**
- 7. What indicates a significant source of distress for parents during NICU stays?**
- A. Lack of understanding of medical interventions**
 - B. Limited visitation hours**
 - C. Not being able to touch or hold the baby**
 - D. Access to unlimited information**
- 8. What is the mission of the PSI organization?**
- A. To improve access to medications for mothers**
 - B. To provide monetary support for families**
 - C. To promote awareness, prevention, and treatment of parental mental health issues**
 - D. To establish maternity leave policies globally**
- 9. Which cognitive and mood trauma symptom may occur more than a month after a traumatic event?**
- A. Anhedonia**
 - B. Elation**
 - C. Self-empowerment**
 - D. Optimism about the future**
- 10. What proportion of men are offered paid paternity leave?**
- A. Less than 1 in 5**
 - B. More than half**
 - C. 1 in 10**
 - D. 3 out of 4**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following strategies is part of the ACOG racial bias policy?

- A. Encourage health disparities**
- B. Be aware of own biases**
- C. Promote homogeneity in healthcare practices**
- D. Ignore community feedback**

Being aware of one's own biases is a fundamental strategy in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) racial bias policy. This approach emphasizes self-reflection and acknowledgment of personal biases that can influence clinical decision-making and patient interactions. It encourages healthcare providers to examine their preconceptions and assumptions, which can contribute to disparities in care. Promoting awareness of biases helps clinicians to provide more equitable and sensitive care to patients from diverse backgrounds, fostering an environment where individual patient needs are recognized and addressed. This is essential in working towards reducing health disparities and improving outcomes for marginalized communities. Other strategies, such as encouraging health disparities, promoting homogeneity in healthcare practices, or ignoring community feedback, are contrary to ACOG's initiatives to promote inclusivity and equitable healthcare. Instead of fostering awareness and understanding, those approaches would likely perpetuate existing inequities and not address the underlying issues of bias in healthcare delivery.

2. What is a crucial recommendation for using herbal remedies such as St. John's Wort during the perinatal period?

- A. It can be safely used with any medication**
- B. It should not be taken with antidepressants**
- C. It is effective for all types of depression**
- D. It has no contraindications**

The use of herbal remedies, particularly St. John's Wort, during the perinatal period requires careful consideration due to its interaction with other medications, especially antidepressants. St. John's Wort is known to affect the metabolism of various drugs by inducing cytochrome P450 enzymes, which can significantly reduce the effectiveness of standard antidepressants. This can lead to treatment failure or a return of depressive symptoms, which is particularly concerning during a sensitive period like the perinatal phase. It's essential to prioritize safety for both the mother and the infant, and due to these potential interactions, it is recommended that St. John's Wort not be taken in conjunction with antidepressants. This recommendation helps ensure that the mother's mental health is effectively managed and that any risks to her health or the developing fetus are minimized. Understanding this interaction is vital for those in perinatal mental health, emphasizing the importance of discussing all forms of treatment, including herbal alternatives, with a healthcare provider.

3. What action should all postpartum women, men, and families be encouraged to take?

- A. Engage in competitive sports
- B. Maintain adequate nutrition**
- C. Isolate themselves to avoid stress
- D. Reduce contact with healthcare providers

Encouraging postpartum women, men, and families to maintain adequate nutrition is critical for both physical and mental health. Proper nutrition plays a fundamental role in recovery after childbirth, as it directly impacts energy levels, mood stability, and the overall well-being of both the new parents and the infant. A balanced diet rich in essential nutrients can help mitigate the risk of postpartum depression and support the healing process after childbirth. Additionally, good nutrition is vital for breastfeeding mothers, as it affects milk production and quality, benefitting the newborn's health as well. Engaging in healthy eating habits fosters a nurturing environment not only for the mother but also for the entire family, promoting shared meals and bonding. While competitive sports and isolation may seem beneficial in certain contexts, they are not universal recommendations for postpartum care. Competitive sports may not be suitable for everyone during recovery, and isolation can lead to increased feelings of loneliness and stress. Reducing contact with healthcare providers can also hinder access to valuable support and resources needed during the postpartum period. Thus, maintaining adequate nutrition stands out as a foundational recommendation for postpartum families.

4. Which mood disorders are included in PMADs?

- A. Only anxiety and depression
- B. Depression, bipolar, and psychosis**
- C. Only bipolar disorder
- D. Anxiety disorders only

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) encompass a range of mood disorders that can occur during pregnancy and the postpartum period. The inclusion of depression, bipolar disorder, and psychosis reflects the complexity and variability of mental health challenges women may face during this time. Depression is a well-recognized aspect of PMADs and can manifest as major depressive disorder or as a persistent depressive disorder. Bipolar disorder is characterized by mood swings that include depressive episodes as well as manic or hypomanic episodes, making it critically important to address in the context of perinatal mental health. Lastly, psychosis, which can occur postpartum, is a severe condition that requires immediate attention and intervention due to its potential risks to both the patient and the infant. The other options suggest a more limited view of PMADs. They either focus solely on anxiety or depression, thereby neglecting the significant risks associated with bipolar disorder and psychosis during the perinatal period. Understanding the full spectrum of PMADs is essential for effective screening, diagnosis, and treatment in perinatal care settings.

5. Which of the following is NOT a symptom of neonatal adaptation syndrome?

- A. Tremors**
- B. Cardiac arrhythmias**
- C. Severe jaundice**
- D. Irritability**

Severe jaundice is not classified as a symptom of neonatal adaptation syndrome. Neonatal adaptation syndrome refers to a variety of physical signs and behavioral symptoms that an infant may exhibit following birth, particularly after maternal drug exposure or when there is a withdrawal from substances. Symptoms such as tremors, cardiac arrhythmias, and irritability are indeed commonly observed in neonates who are experiencing adaptation challenges. Tremors and irritability can arise from the central nervous system's adjustment to life outside the womb, often related to withdrawal from drugs. Cardiac arrhythmias can occur as well due to the stress and physiological changes the infant undergoes in the neonatal period. In contrast, severe jaundice is typically linked to other causes, such as bilirubin levels becoming elevated, which is not directly related to neonatal adaptation syndrome symptoms. Understanding the distinct symptoms associated with neonatal adaptation syndrome helps clarify its diagnosis and guides the appropriate care and management of affected infants.

6. What symptom may indicate the presence of somatic issues in someone with perinatal distress?

- A. Faking wellness to please others**
- B. Heightened auditory perception**
- C. Increased laughter**
- D. Improved sleep quality**

The presence of somatic issues in someone experiencing perinatal distress can manifest in a variety of behaviors and symptoms. Faking wellness to please others is indicative of deeper psychological struggles, often associated with the desire to conform to societal expectations or to avoid burdening others with one's mental health challenges. This behavior can be a coping mechanism, where the individual feels compelled to present a façade of stability and well-being despite experiencing significant internal distress. This symptom may reflect a disconnect between the individual's internal emotional state and their external presentation. People dealing with perinatal mental health issues may prioritize others' perceptions over their own emotional needs, leading them to mask their true feelings. This behavior is frequently observed in individuals battling anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns during the perinatal period, where the pressure to appear "perfect" can be overwhelming. The other options do not accurately represent somatic issues. Heightened auditory perception may suggest heightened anxiety or hypervigilance, increased laughter could be a sign of emotional dissociation or an inappropriate response to stress, and improved sleep quality typically indicates a positive change rather than a symptom of somatic distress. Thus, faking wellness stands out as a significant indicator of underlying somatic and emotional troubles.

7. What indicates a significant source of distress for parents during NICU stays?

- A. Lack of understanding of medical interventions**
- B. Limited visitation hours**
- C. Not being able to touch or hold the baby**
- D. Access to unlimited information**

The correct answer highlights a significant emotional component of a parent's experience in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Not being able to touch or hold their baby is profoundly distressing because physical contact is a fundamental aspect of bonding and attachment that is crucial in the early stages of a child's life. This inability can lead to feelings of helplessness and anxiety, as parents often feel separated from their child during what should be a nurturing period. Research has shown that skin-to-skin contact, also known as kangaroo care, is beneficial for both the baby and the parents. It fosters emotional connection, promotes emotional well-being, and supports the baby's development. The absence of such an essential experience can exacerbate feelings of isolation and distress, making it a crucial factor in evaluating parents' mental health during NICU stays. In contrast, while lack of understanding of medical interventions, limited visitation hours, and access to unlimited information can certainly contribute to parental distress, they do not encapsulate the physical and emotional disconnection as directly as the inability to hold or touch the baby. These other factors can influence frustration or confusion, but the depth of bonding and attachment experienced through physical touch is a uniquely critical aspect of the parental experience in the NICU setting.

8. What is the mission of the PSI organization?

- A. To improve access to medications for mothers**
- B. To provide monetary support for families**
- C. To promote awareness, prevention, and treatment of parental mental health issues**
- D. To establish maternity leave policies globally**

The mission of the PSI (Postpartum Support International) organization focuses on promoting awareness, prevention, and treatment of parental mental health issues. This encompasses a broad range of activities, such as educating the public and professionals about the mental health challenges that can arise during the perinatal period, providing resources for support, and advocating for better access to care for parents experiencing mental health difficulties. Understanding parental mental health is crucial because it affects not only the well-being of the parents but also the development and health of their children. By raising awareness and providing evidence-based information, PSI seeks to break the stigma surrounding mental health issues related to pregnancy and postpartum experiences. This comprehensive approach helps in reducing the occurrence of these issues through prevention strategies and advocates for effective treatment options. The other choices, while important in different contexts, do not encapsulate the primary mission of PSI. Improving access to medications could be part of a broader healthcare discussion but does not represent the organization's holistic focus on mental health awareness and treatment. Monetary support for families might be needed, but it is not the specific mission of PSI. Lastly, establishing maternity leave policies is a critical issue, yet it falls outside the direct mission of the organization, which centers on mental health.

9. Which cognitive and mood trauma symptom may occur more than a month after a traumatic event?

A. Anhedonia

B. Elation

C. Self-empowerment

D. Optimism about the future

Anhedonia is the correct answer, as it refers to the loss of interest or pleasure in activities that were once enjoyable. This symptom can be a significant indicator of depression and may manifest in individuals who have experienced trauma, even well after the initial event has taken place. In the context of trauma, anhedonia indicates an emotional numbing or a withdrawal from previously pleasurable experiences, which can occur as a lingering effect of trauma on mental health. In contrast, elation, self-empowerment, and a sense of optimism about the future generally suggest positive emotional states or coping strategies, which are not typically linked to the negative aftermath of trauma as experienced through symptoms that persist beyond a month. These responses might indicate resilience or adjustment rather than the emotional distress and dysfunction characterized by anhedonia, making it distinct in the context of post-traumatic symptoms.

10. What proportion of men are offered paid paternity leave?

A. Less than 1 in 5

B. More than half

C. 1 in 10

D. 3 out of 4

The correct answer reflects the reality of paid paternity leave availability, highlighting a significant gap in support for new fathers compared to the provisions often available for mothers. Research and statistics indicate that in many countries, only a small proportion of men are offered paid paternity leave, often reported to be less than 20%. This underscores the ongoing societal and systemic challenges regarding parental leave policies that fail to accommodate the needs of fathers. In contrast, the other options suggest higher proportions of men receiving paid leave, which does not align with the data indicating that many men either do not have access to paid parental leave or may not take it even when it's offered, due to workplace culture or economic concerns. This situation calls for increased awareness and advocacy for more equitable family leave policies that better support both parents.

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://perinatalmentalhealthpmhc.examzify.com>

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

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