

Physician Assistant (PA) School Interview Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. What action should the applicant take if their supervising MD gives a harmful directive?**
 - A. Ignore it completely**
 - B. Document it and follow orders**
 - C. Discuss concerns and if unresolved, document in the patient chart**
 - D. Immediately escalate to higher authorities**

- 2. What's an advantage of being a PA over a doctor in terms of training?**
 - A. Less time in training**
 - B. Higher pay**
 - C. Specialized education**
 - D. More flexible work schedule**

- 3. What does the statement "there are no laser police" imply in the context of following medical regulations?**
 - A. That regulations can be ignored**
 - B. It promotes accountability among healthcare providers**
 - C. That compliance with laws is unnecessary**
 - D. It reflects a misunderstanding of professional responsibilities**

- 4. What did the candidate gain from their experiences as a PCA?**
 - A. Insight into healthcare technology**
 - B. Experience in research methodologies**
 - C. Firsthand knowledge of daily PA responsibilities**
 - D. Skills in administrative tasks**

- 5. What significant event regarding PA training occurred in 1971?**
 - A. Establishment of the first PA program**
 - B. Congress authorized the training of 400 Army PAs**
 - C. Introduction of PA certification exams**
 - D. Inclusion of PAs in the Medicare system**

6. Which of the following is a question a candidate might ask during a PA interview to demonstrate interest?

- A. What is the school's tuition?**
- B. How do students engage with community clinics?**
- C. Are there any prerequisites still required?**
- D. Is there a hospital affiliated with the school?**

7. What significant aspect helps define the PA's relationship with physicians?

- A. Independent practice at all times**
- B. Collaboration with medical doctors**
- C. Supervision in all tasks**
- D. Strict adherence to nursing practices**

8. Which aspect of working as a PA is emphasized by the need to remain current with healthcare issues?

- A. The profession is still evolving and requires vigilance**
- B. PAs are responsible for law enforcement in healthcare**
- C. Networking is the only way to succeed**
- D. Confidentiality is paramount, minimizing public knowledge**

9. What do candidates commonly use as a method for managing stress?

- A. Ignoring all responsibilities**
- B. Going on long vacations**
- C. Exercise and meditation**
- D. Venturing into new hobbies**

10. Which of the following is NOT a typical responsibility of a Physician Assistant?

- A. Conducting physical exams**
- B. Writing prescriptions**
- C. Performing surgery**
- D. Choosing medical school courses**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What action should the applicant take if their supervising MD gives a harmful directive?

- A. Ignore it completely
- B. Document it and follow orders
- C. Discuss concerns and if unresolved, document in the patient chart**
- D. Immediately escalate to higher authorities

The selected action of discussing concerns with the supervising physician and documenting any unresolved issues in the patient chart reflects a thoughtful approach to patient safety and professional ethics. Engaging in dialogue allows the PA to express concerns directly, facilitating communication and potentially leading to a more constructive resolution. If the directive from the supervising physician poses a risk to patient safety, addressing it directly with them first is crucial for transparency. This conversation also provides the MD an opportunity to explain their rationale, which might help alleviate concerns or clarify any misunderstandings. If discussions do not resolve the matter satisfactorily, documenting the issue in the patient chart serves as an important measure for accountability, ensuring that there is a written record of concerns raised and actions taken, which is essential for both patient safety and legal protection. Other options, such as ignoring the directive or documenting it and following orders without further discussion, do not adequately prioritize the safety of the patient or the ethical responsibilities of the healthcare provider. Immediately escalating to higher authorities might be necessary in extreme situations, but it is typically more prudent to attempt resolution at the level of direct supervision first when possible. This approach fosters a collaborative environment while still ensuring that patient safety remains the priority.

2. What's an advantage of being a PA over a doctor in terms of training?

- A. Less time in training**
- B. Higher pay
- C. Specialized education
- D. More flexible work schedule

The advantage of being a PA over a doctor in terms of training is that it typically requires less time in training. Becoming a doctor generally involves a longer educational path, which includes a bachelor's degree, medical school (usually four years), and then residency training that can last anywhere from three to seven years or more, depending on the specialty. In contrast, physician assistants usually complete a master's degree program that can be finished in about two to three years following an undergraduate degree. This shorter training period allows PAs to enter the workforce more quickly while still being well-prepared to provide high-quality patient care. The other options involve aspects that may not inherently relate to training duration or requirements. For instance, specialized education might be perceived as an advantage for certain doctors, who often undergo extensive training in specific areas. Higher pay is typically associated with the longer training time and responsibilities of physicians, while a more flexible work schedule can vary by individual job circumstance rather than being a fixed advantage of one role over the other.

3. What does the statement "there are no laser police" imply in the context of following medical regulations?

- A. That regulations can be ignored**
- B. It promotes accountability among healthcare providers**
- C. That compliance with laws is unnecessary**
- D. It reflects a misunderstanding of professional responsibilities**

The statement "there are no laser police" implies that while there may not be a specific enforcement body focusing solely on certain medical regulations, it does not mean that healthcare providers are absolved of their professional responsibilities. The phrase suggests that the responsibility for adhering to regulations lies within the healthcare community itself, rather than relying on external oversight to enforce compliance. This perspective emphasizes that healthcare providers should be self-regulating, understanding and upholding the standards and regulations that govern their practice, rather than assuming that the absence of strict enforcement means that regulations can be overlooked. It underscores the importance of professional integrity and accountability, highlighting the necessity for all practitioners to be proactive in maintaining high standards of care and ethical practice. In this context, the other options misinterpret the essence of accountability. Regulations are in place for the safety and well-being of patients, and dismissing them as unnecessary or ignoring them would undermine the trust and efficacy of the healthcare system.

4. What did the candidate gain from their experiences as a PCA?

- A. Insight into healthcare technology**
- B. Experience in research methodologies**
- C. Firsthand knowledge of daily PA responsibilities**
- D. Skills in administrative tasks**

The correct answer highlights the candidate's firsthand knowledge of daily PA responsibilities gained through their experiences as a Patient Care Assistant (PCA). Working as a PCA typically involves direct patient interactions, assisting with daily activities, and supporting the healthcare team in a clinical setting. This role provides invaluable insight into the day-to-day operations of patient care, allowing the candidate to understand the workflow, the importance of multidisciplinary teamwork, and the patient-provider relationship. This experience is fundamental for anyone pursuing a career as a PA, as it equips the candidate with a practical understanding of how to manage patient care in real-time, including the nuances and demands that PAs face in a clinical environment. Such experience can help the candidate articulate how they would approach patient care and work collaboratively within a healthcare team during the interview process. Other options, while potentially beneficial skills or insights, do not specifically focus on the direct responsibilities and experiences related to the PA role. Insight into healthcare technology or skills in administrative tasks, for example, are important but may not provide the same level of exposure to patient interaction and the responsibilities of a PA compared to the hands-on experience of working directly with patients. Similarly, experience in research methodologies, while useful, does not reflect the practical patient care experience that is fundamental for

5. What significant event regarding PA training occurred in 1971?

- A. Establishment of the first PA program
- B. Congress authorized the training of 400 Army PAs**
- C. Introduction of PA certification exams
- D. Inclusion of PAs in the Medicare system

The significant event regarding PA training that occurred in 1971 was the authorization by Congress for the training of 400 Army PAs. This early initiative represented a pivotal moment in the development of the Physician Assistant profession, as it not only recognized the need for PAs in the military healthcare system but also contributed to the growth and legitimacy of the PA role within the broader medical community. By providing formal training for Army PAs, this event laid the groundwork for the establishment of the PA profession, highlighting the evolving healthcare needs of the military at that time and influencing the ongoing development of civilian PA programs. This action showcased the increasing recognition of the value that trained PAs could bring to healthcare delivery, specifically in situations where there was a shortage of physicians. The other options refer to milestones that either happened before or after this critical event. Prior to 1971, the first PA program began in 1965, and while PA certification exams and inclusion in the Medicare system are significant, they were established in subsequent years, following the groundwork laid by initiatives like the training of Army PAs.

6. Which of the following is a question a candidate might ask during a PA interview to demonstrate interest?

- A. What is the school's tuition?
- B. How do students engage with community clinics?**
- C. Are there any prerequisites still required?
- D. Is there a hospital affiliated with the school?

Asking how students engage with community clinics is an insightful question that reflects the candidate's interest in practical experience and real-world applications of their education. This type of inquiry suggests that the candidate understands the importance of hands-on learning and community involvement, which are critical components of a successful physician assistant program. Engaging with community clinics not only enhances students' clinical skills but also exposes them to diverse patient populations and health disparities, which are essential elements of a well-rounded PA education. This question also allows the candidate to gain insights into the school's commitment to service and public health, and how that aligns with their own professional values and goals. Additionally, it opens the door for a conversation about any specific programs, partnerships, or unique opportunities that the school might offer, further demonstrating the candidate's proactive approach to their education and career in healthcare. In this way, asking about community clinic engagement showcases not just curiosity, but also a forward-thinking attitude towards integrating theory with practice, which is highly valued in the PA profession.

7. What significant aspect helps define the PA's relationship with physicians?

- A. Independent practice at all times**
- B. Collaboration with medical doctors**
- C. Supervision in all tasks**
- D. Strict adherence to nursing practices**

The relationship between physician assistants and physicians is fundamentally built on a model of collaboration. This partnership is rooted in the understanding that physician assistants work as part of a healthcare team, often alongside doctors, to provide comprehensive patient care. Collaboration allows for a shared responsibility in treatment planning, decision-making, and managing patient care, utilizing the skills and knowledge of both PAs and MDs effectively. In practice, this collaborative approach enhances communication and patient outcomes. It recognizes the complementary roles both healthcare providers play, with PAs often performing examinations, diagnosing conditions, and prescribing treatments under the guidance and supervision of physicians, but in a manner that underscores teamwork and mutual respect. This teamwork ultimately helps to optimize patient care and streamline healthcare delivery. Other choices suggest either independence or a strict supervisory model, which does not accurately reflect the collaborative nature of the PA-physician relationship. Strict adherence to nursing practices also misses the unique role PAs play in the medical field, which is distinct from nursing in terms of training and scope of practice.

8. Which aspect of working as a PA is emphasized by the need to remain current with healthcare issues?

- A. The profession is still evolving and requires vigilance**
- B. PAs are responsible for law enforcement in healthcare**
- C. Networking is the only way to succeed**
- D. Confidentiality is paramount, minimizing public knowledge**

The need to remain current with healthcare issues underscores the evolving nature of the PA profession. Medicine is continuously advancing with new research, treatment protocols, technologies, and best practices emerging regularly. This dynamic environment necessitates that PAs engage in lifelong learning to effectively provide high-quality care and adapt to new challenges, ensuring that their knowledge and skills remain relevant. By staying informed about current healthcare trends and issues, PAs can respond appropriately to the changing needs of patients and healthcare systems. In contrast, the other choices do not capture the essence of the ongoing educational demands and responsibilities inherent to the PA role. While networking can play a role in professional success, it is not the sole determinant, nor does it address the necessity for current medical knowledge. Legal responsibilities exist within healthcare, but PAs are not tasked with law enforcement duties. Finally, while confidentiality is crucial in healthcare, it does not relate directly to the need for ongoing education and awareness of healthcare issues. Thus, the emphasis on remaining current directly ties to the evolving nature of the profession.

9. What do candidates commonly use as a method for managing stress?

- A. Ignoring all responsibilities**
- B. Going on long vacations**
- C. Exercise and meditation**
- D. Venturing into new hobbies**

Managing stress is crucial, especially for candidates preparing for intense programs like PA school. Exercise and meditation are widely recognized methods for stress management because both practices have been shown to reduce anxiety, enhance mood, and improve overall mental health. Exercise is beneficial as it releases endorphins, which are chemicals in the brain that act as natural painkillers and mood elevators. Physical activity can also serve as a distraction, helping individuals to take their minds off stressors. Meditation, on the other hand, promotes relaxation and mindfulness, allowing individuals to refocus and gain a clearer perspective on their challenges. Together, these practices create a comprehensive approach to managing stress effectively. While going on long vacations can provide temporary relief, it may not always be a feasible or practical solution for ongoing stress management. Ignoring responsibilities can lead to increased anxiety when those responsibilities eventually catch up, and venturing into new hobbies may help some people relax, but it is not universally effective for stress reduction. Thus, exercise and meditation stand out as reliable and widely applicable strategies for managing stress.

10. Which of the following is NOT a typical responsibility of a Physician Assistant?

- A. Conducting physical exams**
- B. Writing prescriptions**
- C. Performing surgery**
- D. Choosing medical school courses**

Choosing medical school courses is not a typical responsibility of a Physician Assistant because PAs are professionals who have completed a specific educational and training pathway designed for their role in healthcare. Unlike medical students or physicians, PAs do not choose their courses or educational curriculum; instead, they follow a structured program that prepares them to provide patient care. In contrast, conducting physical exams, writing prescriptions, and performing surgery, while they may vary based on state laws and individual specialties, are all within the scope of practice for PAs. They are trained to assess patient health, manage treatment plans, and perform certain medical procedures, making these tasks integral to their responsibilities in the healthcare team.

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://paschoolinterview.examzify.com>

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

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