



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
BY
NATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF BREAST CENTERS
CERTIFICATION BOARD

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Breast Patient Navigator Certification Program is a certification that has been developed by a peer review team of the National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC). The Navigator program identifies the purpose of certification as a means to: [1] set standards of achievement and the navigator's role; [2] enhance patient safety, quality of care and delivery of services through recognition and resolution of barriers to care; and [3] recognize professionals who advance beyond basic knowledge in a specialty field.

DEFINITION OF A NAVIGATOR

A certified breast patient navigator is a dedicated person experienced in the flow of events in the screening, diagnostic breast care, treatment, and survivorship setting of breast cancer. The certified breast navigator uses specific navigation tools to assess barriers, educate, and support the patient throughout the continuum of breast care with a set of holistic standards. These standards include ongoing assessment and support of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, legal, educational, sexuality, and family needs. The certified breast health navigator effectively utilizes assistance from facility, community, and national sources to lessen the severity of impact on a diagnosis of breast cancer.

MISSION OF NCBC

The mission of the National Consortium of Breast Center's Navigator Certification program is to optimize care of patients affected by a diagnosis of breast cancer. Through standardized certification, we recognize highly skilled navigators who excel in communication, support, education, assessment and elimination of barriers to care from initial screening imaging to survivorship or end of life care, with a goal of continual support offered for every patient, every time.

VISION

To show recognition of certified breast navigators who are trained and knowledgeable in breast patient navigation.



NCBC CERTIFICATION BOARD

The governance of the Breast Patient Navigator (CN-B*) certification is a function of the NCBC Certification Board. It is the role and responsibility of the NCBC Certification Board to create, update and maintain the NCBC Certification Program, Exams, Policies and Procedures and Bylaws.

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ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Mary Frivogel MS, Genetic Counselor (SME), Immediate Past President of the National Society of Genetic Counselors' (NSGC) Board of Directors. Product Manager-Invitae, (NSGS)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NCBC CERTIFICATION BOARD

The NCBC Certification Board has autonomy in decision making for all certification policies and activities associated with our certifications. It is the role and responsibility of the NCBC Certification Board to create, update and maintain the NCBC Certification Program, Exams, Policies and Procedures and Bylaws.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Exam Review
- Research nationally recognized guidelines that pertain to each of the certification programs to make sure that our programs are aligned with those guidelines
- Set the cut score for each of the exams
- Schedule the job task analysis for each certification and set the guidelines for the length of time needed to review and decide when the job task analysis will be repeated
- Set guidelines for exam security and meet those guidelines
- Update policies and procedures
- Update bylaws
- Elect trustees
- Serve the appointed term of two (2) years



NAVIGATOR PROGRAM INFORMATION

EXAM PURPOSE

The purpose of this exam is to identify applicants that have met the standards of achievement and the navigator's role; enhance patient safety, quality of care and delivery of services through recognition and resolution of barriers to care; and recognize professionals who advance beyond basic knowledge in the specialty field of breast patient navigation.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Preferred candidates are physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, certified physician assistants, social workers, radiologic technologists, radiology practitioner assistants, advanced practice nurses, medical technicians, licensed practical/vocational nurses, volunteers or lay navigators seeking to demonstrate their skilled ability to optimize care of patients affected by diagnostics and cancer of the breast. Highly skilled navigators who excel in communication, support, education, assessment and elimination of barriers to care from outreach to survivorship or end of life care, with a goal of continual support offered for every patient, every time.

NAVIGATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Provide continual navigation support for breast care and cancer patient and their family – Assess for patient needs and barriers to compassionate and timely care.

Reduce or eliminate identified needs and barriers through available resources, programs and support systems. Identify areas of individual strengths for patients to use in empowering them to help themselves.

Assist patients with transition from diagnostics through treatment by coordinating appointments through advocacy, education, and continued assessment of needs and barriers. Address barriers to timely care.

EDUCATION

Navigators are expected to be trained and working in the field of Navigation prior to taking the test. The test is an expression of your current knowledge and experience base. However, NCBC recognizes that navigation is a wide spectrum of care and refresher courses and ongoing education is essential to the practice. Options include self-study or nationally available navigation programs.

EXAM DESCRIPTION

NCBC is currently undergoing a review of its standard setting, item analysis and equating plan with the assistance of Excelsior's CEM. All executive summaries provided by Excelsior CEM are available upon request except when proprietary material is a part of that summary.

The changes made to these tests, based on the 7 year review, have been implemented and have been rolled out as of March 2016.

Questions are reviewed by a minimum of two (2) Medical Advisors before being finalized as an accepted test question. Medical Advisors are medical doctors in the breast health and cancer field.

TEST COMPONENTS

All navigators, regardless of designation, are required to understand the full extent of patient movement through this documented system of care. Each CN-B* test has 150 questions and the questions are divided in this manner:

Navigation questions (common with all tests)	35
Diagram of breast (common with all tests)	5
<u>Questions/Answers based on National Standards</u>	<u>110</u>
TOTAL Questions	150

Examinations consist of a three-hour written test, formatted as multiple choice and true-false questions. It is important to note that while each test has similar national standards and common core knowledge test questions, the questions are written specific to the scope of practice as recognized by the individual designation, as specified in the executive summary of Excelsior College's CEM.

The Breast Patient Navigation Certification examination is based upon the role of a breast patient navigator. The examination reflects the knowledge and skills a breast patient navigator



should understand in order to successfully navigate a breast patient through the breast health/cancer continuum of care based on the survey and psychometric analysis done by CEM.

The assessment measures an individual's competency as a navigator through a series of 150 questions based on navigational skills by job specific scopes of practice. While it is important to note that the tests are not designed to assess licensure knowledge, licensure plays a role in specifying the areas needed to work effectively as a patient navigator.

Navigators have a specific function at any given space in time during patient care, but to be an effective navigator is to have knowledge of the full spectrum of care. The National Consortium of Breast Center's test bases questions then on these criteria:

- Scope of practice
- Facility and State regulations
- Nationally recognized guidelines

It is important to note that while navigators must understand the spectrum of care, proper use of this Navigational model includes the understanding that no one can work outside their specific parameters as defined by licensure, state and national regulations, or facility protocol. Anyone working outside these parameters is subject to inquiry and disciplinary action.

Tests are developed with the criteria by subject matter (peer) experts in breast patient navigation. Each subject matter expert (SME) represents a distinct designation and leads the designation task force for tests, test reviews, study guidelines, and annual test updates based on national guidelines. Task forces are comprised of primarily peers to the designation, but also selections from other designations to balance the product and support continued continuum of care between the respective navigators.

GUIDELINES

Guidelines are constantly monitored for changes or upgrades to patient care based on evidenced based practices in patient care. For any major changes or additions to the program, a presentation, review, and vote is requested of the NCBC Certification Board for final approval before use. Some facilities may deviate from national practice standards, but the test will remain fair and impartial based on following these guidelines at all times. Guidelines include:

1. NCCN: National Comprehensive Cancer Network
2. ASCO: American Society of Clinical Oncology
3. ACR: American College of Radiology
4. ACS: American Cancer Society
5. NIH: National Institute of Health
6. MQSA: Mammography Quality Standards Act
7. NCI: National Cancer Institute
8. CoC: Commission on Cancer navigator program requirements

Test validity is supported by continual test review and annual review for changes to nationally accepted practice and protocol.



CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To become a CN-B* through the NCBC Breast Patient Navigator Certification Program the Certification Eligibility Requirements are:

- Be a licensed medical professional and hold a valid medical license as a physician, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, certified physician assistant or social worker OR
- Be a certified medical professional and hold a valid certification as a radiologic technologist, radiology practitioner assistant, social worker, or advanced practice nurse OR
- Be a medical technician, licensed practical/vocational nurse, volunteer or lay navigator; AND
- Navigate breast patients for at least 25% of annual time worked; OR
- Work at least 500 hours per year in breast patient navigation; AND
- Provide proof of valid license or certification, where applicable; AND
- *Pay the certification fee of \$295 registration.

NOTE: an applicant without valid medical credentials at the time of testing will be offered the ADVOCATE test. Proof of licensure will be required as noted above.

*** No refunds will be given once the binder materials have been sent.**

CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATION; NOT A REQUIREMENT

- The applicant applying for certification should have a minimum of two years' experience of navigating breast patients, but no less than 6 months experience. The examinations cover knowledge the navigator has gained through licensures or certifications and career experience to efficiently and effectively navigate breast care/cancer patients. Reminder: this test is for currently practicing navigators.
- For applicants with 3-6 months of the required experience, an alternative is to obtain a certificate of attendance for a breast care/cancer navigation course. For further information on where to find navigation training please contact the NCBC Certification Manager.



CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Interested participants contact the National Consortium of Breast Centers office by phone, fax, or email. Once the participant is deemed eligible to test and has submitted the required application and fees, a policy guide and list of reference material is sent to their listed email address at least three weeks prior to the testing. Tests are held multiple times per year: in March at the annual NCBC conference and at varying regional sites spaced across the country.

Examinations consist of a three-hour written test, formatted as multiple choice and true-false questions. The tests are developed and updated on an annual basis by peer review and recognized changes in national standards. All navigators are expected to understand the full spectrum of breast diagnostics and cancer care that a patient may undergo. The test is designed to verify navigational knowledge from outreach through survivorship or end of life care. The examination does not contain questions that need to be scored by judgment nor are there sub-scores to be reported.

Testers can achieve a passing score by answering at least 81% score. This cut score was determined by the NCBC Certification Board upon completion of a standard setting study facilitated by Excelsior's CEM.

Any tester achieving 80% or less has failed the test and has the option of retaking the test within one year at no additional charge. If an applicant desires to sit for the examination again after 12 months of their first registration (or examination) they will need to pay the registration fee again to take the examination. If the tester fails a second time, they must wait 6 months to retest and must pay a retest fee of \$295.

Certification informational materials are provided via email, within seven (7) business from the time of your registration. We strongly recommend that you register no later than 30 days prior to the test date.



CERTIFICANTS

With a passing score of 81% or higher, you will receive the certification mark:

CERTIFIED NAVIGATOR – BREAST (CN-B*)

(I) = Imaging: including all technologists from mammography, breast ultrasound and MRI, and radiation therapy.

(M) = Management/Social Work: includes Social Workers and Managers of breast navigators

(A) = Advocate: includes all Lay/Volunteers, Community Health Workers (CHW), spiritual advisors/chaplains

(C) = Clinical: includes all certified Medical Assistants, technicians, Licensed Practical Nurses

(P) = Provider: includes all diagnosticians, such as Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Doctors, and PhD

QUALIFICATIONS OF CERTIFICANTS

Holders of an active NCBC certification CN-B* (“Certificants”) must have successfully completed a NCBC administered certification process and must be in good standing with NCBC. In connection with certification and any renewals of certification, NCBC shall promptly issue certificates to Certificants, setting forth the NCBC certification designating them as certified by NCBC-CB. Only individuals who have been granted the certification and appropriately maintained the certification may use the CN-B* certification mark. Use of the certification mark may only be used within the scope for which the certification was granted and not in a misleading or fraudulent manner. NCBC maintains the right to take all appropriate steps including legal or other action, such as requiring the discontinuation of the use of the designation, suspension during investigation, or revocation of the certification, to protect its rights from unauthorized use.

CERTIFICATION MARK

Any certification mark issued by NCBC-CB is the property of NCBC-CB and may be revoked by NCBC-CB as determined by NCBC-CB. In such event, any former certification holder shall no longer be deemed to be a Certificant and shall be required to return all certificates containing the CN-B* certification mark to NCBC.

POSTING OF TEST SCORES

Test Scores will be emailed within three weeks of the test date.



ANNUAL REPORT

All testing information including pass and fails rates can be found on the Breast Patient Navigator Certification website under the Certification Guide tab.



CERTIFICATION ANNUAL RENEWAL

The Breast Patient Navigator Certification requires annual renewals with eight (8) continuing education credits earned per year, a failure to renew will result in inactive certification after 60 days past expiration and decertification after 1 year past expiration.

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL INSTRUCTIONS

The online renewal form can be found at www2.bpnc.org/certified-navigators

Applicant Information: Complete this section with information about the applicant to maintain current certification records.

Active Certification

To maintain an active certification status, all certified individuals must annually submit the required data and documentation via the online system at: www2.bpnc.org/certified-navigators

Inactive Certification

Individuals will become inactive when they have not renewed their certification 60 days past their expiration date. Individuals holding Inactive Certification status will not be listed as Navigators on the NCBC directory. An individual who has but is not currently performing as a Breast Patient Navigator may choose to hold an Inactive Certification. Individuals holding an Inactive Certification may become active again, upon submission of required forms, payment and documentation for Active Certification without taking another examination. With Inactive Certification you are not required to pay the annual \$153 Navigator renewal fee. After 1 year past your expiration date you will become decertified.

Decertification

Should a Certified Breast Patient Navigator fail to complete the requirements for an Active or Inactive Certification, within 1 year of the date of expiration, he/she will be decertified. Once decertification occurs, the individual is required to reapply for the exam as a new candidate.



CERTIFICATION ANNUAL RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED FOR ACTIVE AND INACTIVE CERTIFICATION

Active or Inactive Certification requires an applicant to be in good standing with their medical licensure board. Documentation is not required at time of renewal but may be requested in an audit.

MEMBERSHIP

Active Certification does not require a current NCBC membership.

FOR ACTIVE CERTIFICATION ONLY

Performance/Data: Complete the online Performance/Data Survey if required (based on needs of NCBC).

COMPLETING THE CEU VALIDATION

Required information includes:

- Name of Conference: Identify the conference name, if the CEU was for a session which was part of a conference.
- Conference/Session Host: The name of the organization/business hosting the conference or if the session is not part of a conference, the entity hosting the session.
- Session/Course Title:
- Number of CEUs received:

The purpose of the continuing education credits requirement is to ensure the Certified Breast Patient Navigator continues to provide enhanced breast patient care, through the annual expansion his/her knowledge base of both general breast patient care and specifically in the care of patients they are/will be navigating.

The individual applying for Active Certification Renewal is required to have earned, between certification applications, 8 CEUs whose content reflects general breast patient information or whose content is specific to breast patient navigation.



General breast credits may include content that includes administration, personal growth or general medical information. This may cover content such as billing and coding of patient procedures/care, lymphedema treatment; complications of breast surgery, breast patient treatment planning, male breast cancer, etc. Options for credit may also include vendor sponsored training or online credit organizations like Medscape.com or rn.com.

Specific breast patient navigation credits reflect information that a breast patient navigator would use at some point when navigating a breast care/cancer patient. This might include: communicating and interacting with the patient, patient information flow, role of the navigator, fatigue and its management, cancer's impact on all family members, handling work related stress, anger/grief management, balancing work and personal time, goal setting etc. The best way to determine if the course content relates to the navigation of a patient is to ask yourself if the knowledge will be used during any of the stages in which you would be navigating a breast care/cancer patient. Referencing the care Matrix will acquaint individuals with the various stages of breast patient navigation.

Up to 4 hours of breast tumor board (conference) may be used to fulfill these requirements. Dates and times must be able to be verified by your supervisor or facility registrar.

RENEWAL FEE

Identify and complete the required method of renewal fee payment of \$153.

Submit using online link found at bpnc.org/certified-navigators

ONLINE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Based upon the type of certification being requested, submit the completed application accompanied by the required forms. Renewal information must be received within 60 days after certificate expiration of the year for which renewal is being requested.



DISCIPLINE, APPEALS, TEST INTEGRITY, AND PRIVACY

Equitable disciplinary policies to address complaints or ethics issues:

The individual scope of practice of navigators is emphasized as the primary job description based on facility, state regulations, and national standards. Navigators are instructed and expected to work within those parameters. Any complaints brought to the attention of NCBC of a certified patient navigator will be determined in the following manner:

1. Complaint received.
2. Letter to Navigator/Supervisor detailing the complaint received. Request rebuttal to complaint.
3. Complaint and rebuttal to be reviewed by NCBC Certification Board.
4. Findings and recommendations forwarded to Executive Director.

Possible recommendations:

1. No fault found. No further intervention required.
2. Fault found. (See discipline standard for possible action)

Discipline, non-discrimination, and accommodation following applicable laws and regulations:

If fault is found, disciplinary action will be applied as follows:

1. Minor offense: written warning given. Follow up in one month for resolution.
2. Major offense or two or more minor offenses: revocation of certification.
3. If certification is revoked:
 - a. No refund of fees,
 - b. Navigator may not apply for retesting for a period of 1 year.

Major offense is defined as an action or words that cause harm or undue stress on a patient based on state regulations. Example: [1] HIPPA violation; [2] Navigator working outside scope of practice; [3] Loss of primary licensure. Minor offense is defined as an action or words that have the potential of causing harm or undue stress on a patient based on state regulations. Appeals to fault/no-fault recommendations by the NCBC Certification Board will be sent to the Executive Director for review of appeal. All decisions made are final.

Appeals policies and procedures to question eligibility, exam results, certification status can be found here: <http://www2.bpnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/APPEALS-POLICY.pdf>



TESTING POLICIES AND EXAM SECURITY

All of our exams and score keys are password protected at the NCBC office. During the development and update of the exams, the NCBC Certification Manager, the NCBC Certification Board Item Writing Committee and the NCBC Certification Board Exam Review Committee have access to the full test during the meetings. They will have access through a paper copy that is given to them at the meeting. If the meeting is off-site and done by conference call, each exam question will be shown on the screen and no paper copies will be given. All of our committee members and certification board members sign a confidentiality agreement. The Navigation Core Committee gives updates and recommendations to the NCBC Certification Board, but they do not have access to the full test. Only the NCBC Certification Manager and the NCBC Certification Board may have hard copies of the exams. During the meetings, they have a paper copy given to them. After the updates, changes or revisions are made, the hard copies given to the NCBC Certification Board are shredded. The only other hard copies are stored at the NCBC office in a locked cabinet until the examinations take place.

We have a signed letter of agreement that requires confidentiality from our Certification Board members, item writers, item reviewers and exam reviewers.

Additionally, we have a NCBC Certification Test policies and Exam Security document for our candidates that they must agree to before taking the exam. Testing policies and exam security information for the exam candidates can be found here: <http://www2.bpnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/NCBC-Certification-Exam-Security-and-Test-Policies-.pdf>

INFORMATION AND DATA RETENTION

NCBC maintains copies of electronic files, including communications with participants, decisions made by the NCBC Certification Board regarding discipline, appeals, or other requests on a password required secure server protected by a firewall.

RESULT RETENTION

NCBC policy is to maintain physical records of examination results for 7 years after the last certification renewal of the Navigator. Electronic files will be retained permanently or until the Certification program is no longer administered by the NCBC. Physical and electronic files will only be accessed by paid NCBC staff. Requests for information regarding a certified navigator can be made from outside auditing organizations with written permission from the Navigator.