The Nuts & Bolts of Certification: A CCN Perspective
May 11, 2017
Certification Commission of NAMSS
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A word, or two, about NCCA:

- National Commission for Certifying Agencies
- Accreditation of the certification exams
- Credibility of the certifications
- Industry recognition
- Benchmark
- Declaration of competence
Disclaimer

- The CCN serves as an autonomous certifying arm of NAMSS and is solely responsible for the voluntary certification program.
- CCN does not sponsor, promote or endorse any educational product, publication or preparation courses or materials.
- This presentation will not provide information regarding specific exam content or items.
- This presentation does not provide any information not otherwise publicly available to all candidates.
Where do I start?

- Candidate Handbook
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Test Development Definitions

- **Psychometrician**: A psychologist that deals with the design, administration, and interpretation of quantitative tests.

- **Item**: The multiple choice question on the certification exam – includes stem, key, and distracters.
  - **Stem**: The question being asked in the item.
  - **Key**: The correct answer in the multiple choice item.
  - **Distracters**: Plausible but incorrect multiple choice options.
Definitions Continued...

- **Exam content outline** also known as the “blue print” – the document developed during the job task analysis (JTA) that outlines the content that will be tested on the exam.

- **Domain** – the broad category area on the exam content outline, e.g., CPCS “Credentialing and Privileging (55-63%)”

- **Task Statements** – The specific tasks that the subject matter experts during the JTA determined were important to be tested.
Test Development

- Job Task Analysis
- Item Writing
- Exam Assembly
- Cut Score/Standard Settings
- Exam Administration
- Evaluation
Job Task Analysis

- JTA conducted every 5 to 7 years or sooner if needed to remain current with industry changes.
- Defines the “Performance Domains”
- Domains – tasks, knowledge, skills
- Job Responsibilities Ranked
  - Importance
  - Criticality
  - Frequency
- Results are translated to percentage of items
- CPMSM 2015
- CPCS 2013
Item Writing

- A reference source for every item
- One correct answer
- Plausible, but incorrect distracters
- Reviewed by at least three subject matter experts
- Classified by content
- Within the scope/blueprint
Exam Assembly

- Appropriate number of items from each domain
- Balance across the standards
- Duplicates
- Review performance data of items
- Current
Cut Score

- Each candidate judged against a predetermined standard, not against other candidates.

- Cut Score set by a committee of SMEs working with testing experts to evaluate each question based on its level of difficulty.

- Passing score may vary depending on the difficulty.

- The CCN and testing experts work very hard to ensure that exams are similar in overall difficulty.
Traditional Exam Scoring

Exam Form A

- 100 questions
- 33 easy questions
- 33 moderately challenging questions
- 34 challenging questions

Passing Score 70%

Exam Form B

- 100 questions
- 25 easy questions
- 34 moderately challenging questions
- 41 challenging questions

Passing Score 70%
Exam Results and Scoring

- Cut Score
- Auto Scoring
- Official Results
- Scaled Scoring
Exam Results - Update

- Due to recent NCCA accreditation requirement changes, beginning with the Fall 2017 testing period, autoscoring will no longer be available for either the CPCS or CPMSM exam.
- This change benefits the candidates.
- Cut scores will still be performed after JTA’s.
Administration & Evaluation

- Exit survey
- The “Well-Prepared and Qualified Candidate is most likely to pass the certification exam.”
- Psychometric Analysis
CPCS Exam Content Outline

- Three domains
  - Credentialing and Privileging (55 – 63%)
  - Ongoing monitoring (19-27%)
  - Supporting departmental operations (13-24%)
CPMSM Exam Content Outline

- Four Domains
  - Credentialing and Privileging (38%)
  - Ongoing Monitoring And Compliance (27%)
  - Department Operations Management (20%)
  - System Management (15%)
Test Development Volunteers

- Job task analysis
- Item writing
- Exam assembly
- Cut Score
Volunteer Selection

- Each test development process has a specific volunteer application – JTA, Item Writing, Exam Assembly, Cut Score

- Criteria:
  - Certification
  - Teaching
  - Education Committee
  - Mentoring
How to volunteer

- Let anyone on the CCN know that you are interested:
  - Ropizah Ervin, CPCS, CPMSM, Test Development Chair
  - Erica Klein, NAMSS Executive Office
  - Jason Burden CPCS, CPMSM, Chair

Check NAMSS website under volunteer leaders, CCN for contact information
2017 Test Development Activities

- Exam Assembly – Spring (April)
- Cut Score – Summer (July)
- Item Writing – Pre-Conference (October) Colorado Springs, CO
Questions

Thank you so much for your time!