



THE COLLEGE OF
REGISTERED PSYCHIATRIC NURSES of MANITOBA

Orientation to the
Registration Examination
for
Psychiatric Nurses

Introduction

This information is prepared for psychiatric nurses and new graduates of psychiatric nursing education programs who are preparing to write the CRPNM Registration Examination. This document is provided as a general orientation to the exam.

In Manitoba, the *Registered Psychiatric Nurses Act* and its attendant regulations set out the legal parameters for the regulation of the psychiatric nursing profession. The legislation identifies the criteria for registration as a Registered Psychiatric Nurse in Manitoba. Among the criteria is the successful completion of a registration examination approved by the CRPNM Board of Directors.

The Registration Examination has been designed to assess the candidate's safety to practice. In other words, the examination has been designed to provide the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba with a degree of assurance that those applying for registration will have the ability to make knowledgeable, appropriate, safe psychiatric nursing decisions in a variety of situations.

Examination Content and Format

The examination is designed to assess the candidate's knowledge base and their ability to apply that knowledge to diverse clinical situations. The situations presented in the examination are those commonly found in psychiatric nursing practice. In addition to demonstrating a sufficient knowledge base candidates demonstrate their ability to make sound clinical decisions and judgments. Candidates should expect that these clinical situations may deal with the common biological, psychological, psycho- social, cultural and spiritual experiences of people across the lifespan. The psychiatric nursing situations presented in the examination may be grouped as medical, psychiatric or related to developmental disabilities. Approximately 40% of the examination deals with the physiological/medical issues commonly found in psychiatric nursing practice.

The exam is presented as a mixture of case scenarios and independent questions. All questions are multiple-choice. There are no essay type questions. The examination is divided into four sections or booklets. Each booklet contains approximately 105 questions. Candidates are given 2.5 hours to complete each exam booklet. This is ample time. You should, however, read carefully and work at a steady pace.

As you write the examination, keep in mind that all the questions are directed at you, the psychiatric nurse. YOU are the psychiatric nurse in each situation.

DON'T PANIC!! Approach the questions systematically. Read the directions and the situations carefully. Don't look for tricks or read too much into a question. Do not assume anything.

There are two main types of multiple choice questions in this examination. The following provide a sample:

Single Answer Type Questions:

You are responsible to administer a variety of medications to clients on your unit. The client who should be most carefully assessed for fluid and electrolyte imbalance is the one receiving:

- A. Lithium
- B. Clozapine
- C. Diazepam
- D. Amitriptyline

Multi-Multi Type Questions:

A client with depression has not responded to antidepressant therapy. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is being recommended. You are aware that many people respond negatively to the thought of ECT. Therefore, when discussing ECT with the patient, you should:

- 1) Use the term “shock” therapy to describe what will happen
- 2) Refer to the procedure as a “treatment” instead of “shock therapy”
- 3) Speak in a neutral, calm manner when discussing the treatment with the client
- 4) Encourage the client to accept ECT as the solution to his/her depression

A. 1 & 2

B. 1 & 4

C. 2 & 3

D. 2 & 4

Writing the Registration Examination

New graduates of the psychiatric nursing education program must write the exam within one year of having completed the program.

The dates, locations and fee for the writing of the registration examination are determined by the CRPNM. The exam is conducted on two consecutive weekdays, from 9:30 am-noon and 1-3:30 pm. Please plan on arriving at least 15 minutes early in order to proceed through a sign in process.

The CRPNM sends an application package to all eligible candidates about six (6) weeks prior to the exam date. The package will identify all of the requirements. An application deadline will also be identified.

Once the CRPNM has processed your exam application you will receive a Candidate Identification Form by regular mail. This form will tell you the location and the dates and times of the exam.

Candidate Identification

You will need to present the Candidate Identification Form and picture identification to the exam invigilator for each portion of the exam sitting.

Exam Results

You will receive the examination results by regular mail within 2-3 weeks following the exam. No marks will be given in person or over the phone. There will be no exceptions.

Passing Score

To successfully pass the examination, you must achieve at least 60% correct responses overall.

If you are not successful at the first sitting of the examination you will be allowed two (2) more attempts. The CRPNM Practice Consultant/Deputy Registrar will discuss the available options with you.

If a candidate is unsuccessful after three (3) sittings of the registration examination an approved psychiatric nursing education program will be required.

Rewriting of the Exam

Rewriting of the examination may be contingent upon the candidate being able to demonstrate to the CRPNM that s/he has sought additional resources to prepare for the rewrite. The candidate must apply to rewrite the exam. Current exam fees apply to all rewrites of the exam.

Resources

Preparing for a “comprehensive” examination can be somewhat overwhelming but resources are available to you. Please contact the CRPNM office if you require tutoring and/or exam preparation courses. The CRPNM will refer you to the available resources. There is a fee for exam preparation courses.

Self Study

You may chose to prepare for the exam by using some or all of the following books:

- Mosby’s Canadian Comprehensive Review of Nursing (latest edition) Toronto: Mosby
- Psychotropic Agents (latest edition) Ralph, Irene Grand Forks, B.C.: IGR Publications; www.igrpublications.com
- Addictions and Mental Health (latest edition) Ralph, Irene Grand Forks, B.C.: IGR Publications www.igrpublications.com
- Foundations of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, Varcarolis E.M. 2002 Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company
- Review Series Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing and Medical Surgical Nursing Lippincott’s or Mosby’s (both companies produce “rapid” and “comprehensive” review texts)
- Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing (latest edition) Springhouse Notes Pennsylvania: Springhouse Company
- Adult Health Nursing (latest edition) Beare P.G., Myers J.L. Toronto: Mosby