

# Nursing

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an Nurses Credentialing Center: Adult Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner-Board Certification

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## Question: 1

A PMHNP assesses a 40-year-old man with personality and behavioral changes. The presence of tau protein tangles was noted in brain imagery. Based on the presenting symptoms and brain imaging, the patient was diagnosed with which of the following diagnoses?

- A. Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease
- B. Huntington's disease
- C. Dementia due to HIV disease
- D. Frontotemporal dementia

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Frontotemporal dementia

Frontotemporal dementia is also called Pick's disease due to the presence of tau protein tangles in the brain. It affects males more often, and personality and behavior changes occur before cognitive decline. Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease's early signs are flu-like with fatigue and cognitive impairment. HIV dementia manifests as cognitive decline. Huntington's disease first causes motor abnormalities with cognitive decline later in disease progression.

Reference:

Kaplan & Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry, 12th Edition. Pg 243.

## Question: 2

A 53-year-old menopausal woman presents to your clinic with complaints of anhedonia, depressed mood, and vasomotor symptoms. What medication effectively treats both depression and vasomotor symptoms?

- A. Paroxetine
- B. Bupropion
- C. Geodon
- D. Amitriptyline

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Paroxetine

Paroxetine is a Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI) and in studies has demonstrated efficacy in treating depression and vasomotor symptoms in menopausal women.

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Bupropion, a Norepinephrine Dopamine Reuptake Inhibitor (NDRI), Amitriptyline a Tricyclic antidepressant (TCA), and Geodon an antipsychotic have not been studied and found effective in the treatment of vasomotor symptoms.

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Review Manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 159.

### Question: 3

In 2001, the Institute of Medicine published Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century. This report identified six goals for quality improvement in health care: safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable. Which goal can be described as providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who could benefit?

- A. Effective
- B. Timely
- C. Efficient
- D. Equitable

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Effective

In 2001, the Institute of Medicine published Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century. This report identified six goals for quality improvement in health care:

- Safe: Avoiding injuries to patients from the care intended to help them
- Effective: Providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who could benefit, and refraining from providing services to those not likely to benefit
- Patient-centered: Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values, and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions
- Timely: Reducing waits and sometimes harmful delays for both those who receive and those who provide care
- Efficient: Avoiding the waste of equipment, supplies, ideas, and energy
- Equitable: Providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socioeconomic status

Reference:

Zaccagnini, M. E., & White, K. W. (2017). The doctor of nursing practice essentials: A new model for advanced practice nursing. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning. Pg 119, 123, 237, 323, 378, 444.

### Question: 4

What factor can hinder or constrain growth for the nurse practitioner?

- A. Growing competition in the job market for nurse practitioners

- B. When the industry puts an emphasis on integrating services of the nurse practitioner  
C. The emergence of the nurse practitioner role in health care  
D. Decreasing stigmatization

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Growing competition in the job market for nurse practitioners

Other factors that hinder and constrict growth are as follows:

- Reimbursement struggles with Medicare and private insurance companies
- Overlapping scope of practice with other NPs
- Increased concerns over reimbursement fraud and abuse
- Scope of practice and the need for formal supervision by or collaboration with a physician

Factors that foster or facilitate growth are as follows:

- Consumer demand for services
- Acceptance of the advanced practice nursing role
- Emergence of the PMHNP role
- Decreasing stigmatization
- Emphasis on integrated health care services

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Review Manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 14.

## Question: 5

Based on Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, what indicates a successful resolution of the Industry vs. Inferiority stage?

- A. Development of a sense of competence  
B. Feelings of trust in environmental support  
C. Awareness of uniqueness of self  
D. Development of loving relationships

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Development of a sense of competence

Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development:

- Trust vs. Mistrust: birth to 12-18 months
- Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt: 12-18 months to 3 years
- Initiative vs. Guilt: 3 to 5-6 years
- Industry vs. Inferiority: 5-6 years to adolescence
- Identity vs. Role Confusion: adolescence to adulthood
- Intimacy vs. Isolation: adulthood
- Generativity vs. Stagnation: middle adulthood

- Ego Integrity vs. Despair: late adulthood

A successful resolution of the Industry vs. Inferiority stage includes the development of a sense of competence.

Awareness of the uniqueness of self indicates a successful resolution of the Identity vs. Role Confusion stage. The Trust vs. Mistrust stage is successfully resolved by developing feelings of trust in one's environmental support. The Intimacy vs. Isolation stage is successfully resolved by the development of loving relationships.

Reference:

Sadock, Sadock, & Ruiz. Kaplan and Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry: Behavioral Sciences/Clinical Psychiatry, 11th Edition. Pg 169.

## Question: 6

A decrease in serotonin is related to all of the following psychiatric disorders except:

- A. Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- B. Major depressive disorder
- C. Schizophrenia
- D. Alzheimer's disease

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Alzheimer's disease

A decrease in serotonin is related to major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and schizophrenia. Alzheimer's disease is related to a decreased in acetylcholine, not serotonin.

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 70.

## Question: 7

All of the following words describe a Cluster A personality disorder except:

- A. Cold
- B. Withdrawn
- C. Suspicious
- D. Theatrical

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Theatrical

Theatrical more accurately describes Cluster B personality disorders.

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Personality disorders are chronically maladaptive patterns of behavior that result in functional impairment in work, school, or relationships. The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition defines 10 specific personality disorders divided into three clusters: Cluster A, Cluster B, and Cluster C.

Cluster A patients are characterized as withdrawn, cold, suspicious, and irrational. Cluster A includes paranoid, schizoid, and schizotypal personality disorders.

Cluster B patients are characterized as theatrical, emotional, and attention-seeking. They often experience intense interpersonal conflicts and exhibit an extremely labile mood. Cluster B includes antisocial, borderline, histrionic, and narcissistic personality disorders.

Cluster C patients tend to be anxious, fearful, tense, and overcontrolled. Cluster C includes avoidant, dependent, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders.

Reference:

Sadock, Sadock, & Ruiz. Kaplan and Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry: Behavioral Sciences/Clinical Psychiatry, 11th Edition. Pg 742.

### Question: 8

For a community health clinic, which of the following depression screenings would be best to implement during wellness visits?

- A. QIDS
- B. PHQ-2/9
- C. HAM-D
- D. GDS

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: PHQ-2/9

The Patient Health Questionnaire is a self-administered screening tool commonly used in primary care settings for reliable measurement of symptoms of depression.

The Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression or HAM-D is more commonly used to establish a baseline and then measure the progression of treatment. The Geriatric Depression Scale is age-specific. The Quick Inventory of Depressive Symptomatology or QIDS is primarily used with individuals who already have a diagnosis of depression.

Reference:

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse (PMH-BC™) Certification Review 1st Edition. Pg 82.

### Question: 9

Dopamine is a major neurotransmitter that can affect psychiatric disorders when imbalanced. Which of the following psychiatric findings is suspected when dopamine deficit is suspected as a contributor?

- A. Endocrine alterations and movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease

- B. Stereotypical behaviors
- C. Disordered thinking and improved spatiality
- D. Decreased prolactin levels

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Endocrine alterations and movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease

Dopamine's general functions impact thinking, decision-making, reward-seeking, fine muscle action, and integrated cognition. Increases in dopamine would produce an increase in fine movement disorders such as tics, stereotypical behaviors, and disordered thinking, including loose associations.

A drop in dopamine can impact and dull thinking processes and contribute to endocrine abnormalities and movement disorders. Dopamine is instrumental in curbing prolactin, so a decrease in dopamine levels can impact prolactin. Some patients are monitored for breast development when prescribed antipsychotic medication, as it can impact dopamine levels in the body.

Reference:

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Review and Resource Manual, 4th Edition. Pg 70.

### Question: 10

Which of the following alpha-agonists is used to treat anxiety in children?

- A. Buspar
- B. Guanfacine
- C. Propranolol
- D. Gabapentin

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Guanfacine

The FDA has approved certain medications for children for the treatment of anxiety. Due to the safe nature of these pharmaceuticals, they are appropriate for using off-label for anxiety. Clonidine and guanfacine are alpha-agonists prescribed for anxiety in children. Non-benzodiazepine anxiolytics include beta-blockers, gabapentin, and buspirone.

Reference:

Johnson, K., Vanderhoef, D. (2016). Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, 4th edition. Pg 205.

### Question: 11

Nonpharmacological management of ADHD includes all of the following except:

- A. Behavior therapy
- B. Diet modifications

- C. Treatment for learning disorders
- D. Family therapy and education

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Diet modifications

Nonpharmacological management of ADHD includes all of the following:

- Behavior therapy
- Treatment for learning disorders
- Family therapy and education
- Psychoeducation
- Patient and parent cognitive behavioral training

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 339.

## Question: 12

Which term best describes the use of a software application for placing medical orders in both inpatient and outpatient settings?

- A. Nursing informatics
- B. Health information technology
- C. Barcoding medication administration (BCMA)
- D. Computerized provider order entry (CPOE)

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Computerized provider order entry (CPOE)

Computerized provider order entry (CPOE) is the use of a software application for the ordering of medications, laboratory and radiology testing, consultation, and referral requests. The CPOE is a replacement for written orders in both inpatient and outpatient settings. It is cited as an important tool in avoiding medical errors and improving patient safety.

Barcoding medication administration (BCMA) is the use of a scanner to identify medication ordered in an electronic medical record and administered to a patient.

Nursing informatics is the specialty that integrates nursing science with multiple information management and analytical sciences to identify, define, manage, and communicate data, information, knowledge, and wisdom in nursing practice.

Health information technology is a broad concept that encompasses an array of technologies to store, share, and analyze health information.

Reference:

Zaccagnini, M. E., & White, K. W. (2017). The doctor of nursing practice essentials: A new model for advanced practice nursing. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning. Pg 184-185.

### Question: 13

Tanner Stages define physical measurement in the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics in both females and males. What is stage 2 of a female's breast development?

- A. Prepubertal
- B. Breast bud stage with elevation of breast and papilla
- C. Projection of papilla and recession of areola
- D. Areola and papilla form secondary mound above the level of the breast

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Breast bud stage with elevation of breast and papilla

Tanner Stages define physical measurement in the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics in both females and males.

Tanner Stages of a girl's breast development are as follows:

- Stage 1: Prepubertal
- Stage 2: Breast bud stage with elevation of breast and papilla
- Stage 3: Further enlargement of breast and areola
- Stage 4: Areola and papilla form a secondary mound above the level of the breast
- Stage 5: Projection of papilla related to recession of areola

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 99.

### Question: 14

What term describes a system where the insurer is not only the payer but also the provider of health care?

- A. Preferred provider organization
- B. Accountable care
- C. Managed care
- D. Affordable care

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Managed care

Managed care is a system where the insurer is not only the payer but also the provider of health care. Prior to managed care, insurance companies paid bills submitted by health care providers, and the insurer had no control over the quality or quantity of care being given. In a managed care system, the

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insurer monitors how the health care services are utilized and the cost of those services. The insurer agrees to pay only a flat fee for each patient regardless of what services are required, and thus the provider shares in the financial risk. This system incentivizes insurers and clinicians to provide the highest quality care.

Reference:

Buppert, Carolyn. Nurse Practitioner's Business Practice and Legal Guide, 5th Edition. Pg 426.

### Question: 15

How do managed care organizations control health care costs?

- A. Enroll only those aged 18 and older
- B. Bargain with medical practices for reduced rates on visits
- C. Exclude preexisting conditions
- D. Charge higher premiums than traditional insurers

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Bargain with medical practices for reduced rates on visits

To control costs, managed care organizations attempt to do the following:

- Enroll employees by offering premiums that cost less than those of traditional insurers
- Decrease the number of emergency room visits
- Decrease the number of hospital stays
- Decrease a patient's length of stay in a hospital
- Bargain with medical practices for reduced rates on visits

Reference:

Buppert, Carolyn. Nurse Practitioner's Business Practice and Legal Guide, 5th Edition. Pg 427.

### Question: 16

The Institutional Review Board ensures all of the following except:

- A. That a study demonstrates strong external validity
- B. That risks to study participants are minimized
- C. That informed consent is documented and obtained
- D. That participant selection is equitable

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: That a study demonstrates strong external validity

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The Institutional Review Board protects the rights and welfare of human research participants. They have the authority to approve, require modifications, or disapprove of any research activities. They ensure that:

- Risks to participants are minimized
- Participant selection is equitable
- Adverse events are reported
- Risks and benefits are evaluated
- Informed consent is obtained and documented
- Data safety monitoring plans are implemented when indicated

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Review Manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 54-55.

### Question: 17

A PMHNP who is working at a community mental health clinic is assigned to collaborate with school leaders on developing primary prevention strategies to promote mental health for teenagers with histories of truancy. Which of the following is an example of a primary prevention strategy?

- A. Mandated treatment
- B. Drop-in center for teenagers with substance abuse issues
- C. Hotline
- D. An emotional intelligence skills class for at-risk adolescents

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: An emotional intelligence skills class for at-risk adolescents.

Primary prevention strategies target the general population rather than a specific risk group. Mandated treatment, hotlines, and a drop-in center for teenagers with mental health needs are targeting specific groups.

Reference:

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse (PMH-BC™) Certification Review 1st Edition. Pg 25.

### Question: 18

What is the basic cellular unit of the nervous system?

- A. Axon
- B. Neuron
- C. Dendrite
- D. White matter

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Neuron

The neuron is the basic cellular unit of the nervous system. It has been called the "microprocessor" of the brain responsible for conducting impulses from one part of the body to another.

Dendrites collect incoming signals from other neurons and send the signals toward the neuron's cell body. The axon transmits signals away from the neuron's cell body to connect with other cells. White matter is a type of brain tissue that contains myelinated axons of neurons.

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 63-64.

### Question: 19

A 16-year-old male with a diagnosis of ASD is brought to the ER with his care staff from the treatment residence. The patient has a history of severe head trauma from self-injury to his anterior frontal lobe. The patient appears uninhibited and cheerful. The staff describes him as hypersexual with food-seeking behaviors, especially carbohydrates. The patient is non-verbal. Staff members describe him as highly distractible and unable to recognize things that are common to him.

What rare condition should be ruled out based on his symptoms and history of head trauma?

- A. Pick's disease
- B. Kluver-Bucy syndrome
- C. Concussion
- D. Huntington's disease

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Kluver-Bucy syndrome

Kluver-Bucy syndrome is a rare behavioral disorder caused by damage to both sides of the anterior temporal lobe by head trauma or encephalitis. It is characterized by hypersexuality, putting things in the mouth, distractibility, visual agnosia, and possibly seizures.

Reference:

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse (PMH-BC™) Certification Review 1st Edition. Pg 132.

### Question: 20

A new patient is referred to your office. Upon reviewing their chart, you note a history of confabulation. What does this mean?

- A. Echoing words or phrases just spoken by another
- B. Word inventions or unusual application of current words
- C. Sudden stoppage of speech attributed to losing thought

D. Fabrication of facts and details to fill gaps in memory

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Fabrication of facts and details to fill gaps in memory

Confabulation is seen in some thought disorders, and it is defined as the fabrication of facts and details to fill gaps in memory.

Other common findings in thought disorders include blocking, echolalia, and neologisms.

- Blocking is the sudden stoppage of speech attributed to losing thought
- Echolalia is the echoing of words or phrases just spoken by another
- Neologisms are word inventions or unusual application of current words

Reference:

Sadock, Sadock, & Ruiz. Kaplan and Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry: Behavioral Sciences/Clinical Psychiatry, 11th Edition. Pg 720.

## Question: 21

Which of the following questions is an example of clarification?

- A. "What do you mean when you say...?"
- B. "What surprised you today?"
- C. "What would your life be like if you woke up tomorrow and the problem was gone?"
- D. "Why do you think that you do...?"

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: "What do you mean when you say...?"

Clarification questions are asked to help the patient examine their beliefs at a deeper level.

It is not appropriate to ask a "why" question in therapy. Asking a person what their life would look like if the problem miraculously disappeared is an example of a miracle question. Questions such as "What surprised you today?" are often used in humanistic therapy to elicit positive emotions.

Reference:

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse (PMH-BC™) Certification Review 1st Edition. Pg 54.

## Question: 22

To improve the quality of health care for all Americans, the Institute of Medicine asserted all of the following except:

- A. Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education
- B. Nurses should be full and equal partners with physicians
- C. Nurses should remain virtuous, modest, and ethical

D. Nurses should seek higher levels of education through seamless academic progression

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Nurses should remain virtuous, modest, and ethical

In 2010, the Institute of Medicine published a groundbreaking report titled *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. This report considered the obstacles that all nurses encounter as they provide quality health care in the United States. They developed four key messages:

1. Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education.
2. Nurses should seek higher levels of education through seamless academic progression.
3. Nurses should be full and equal partners with physicians.
4. To improve the quality of health care, nurses need an improved information infrastructure.

Reference:

Zaccagnini, M. E., & White, K. W. (2017). *The doctor of nursing practice essentials: A new model for advanced practice nursing*. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning. Pg 119-123.

### Question: 23

As a nurse practitioner, you will assess and diagnose various disease processes. One of the modalities you will use in supporting your diagnosis is the ordering of laboratory tests and interpreting the results. Which of the following examples is a reason to assess diagnostic and laboratory testing in psychiatry?

- A. Lab results help rule out other potential disorders unrelated to psychiatry
- B. Lab results must be drawn every 90 days in order to establish a psychiatric diagnosis
- C. Lab results are within the scope and practice of the PCP and not the PMHNP—PMHNPs cannot order labs; they can only use the results ordered by the PCP
- D. Lab results only provide the nurse with a baseline and are not a predictor of other potential disorders

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Lab results help rule out other potential disorders unrelated to psychiatry

Reasons to assess diagnostic and laboratory testing in psychiatry include the following:

- To assist in the establishment of a diagnosis; as knowledge of underlying pathophysiology grows, diagnostic and laboratory testing use will grow as well
- Used to rule out other disorders such as medical causes of psychiatric symptoms; helpful in differential diagnostic assessment
- Used to determine whether a client's symptoms are better explained by a nonpsychiatric disorder or by factors such as drug use or abuse
- For routine ongoing monitoring such as general health screening, monitoring drug levels of certain psychiatric meds, and assessment and monitoring of complications of psychiatric disorders due to adverse effects of drugs

The other options are not accurate because lab results do provide the nurse practitioner with necessary information physiologically in order to understand the potential correlation of a disease process. There

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is no predetermined time frame for drawing labs when establishing a psychiatric diagnosis. The nurse has full practice authority with regard to ordering and interpreting lab results and values.

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 86.

### Question: 24

Calcium is a major cation in the body. Which of the following is not a function of calcium in the body?

- A. Helps regulate acid-base balance
- B. Is essential for hormone secretion
- C. Acts as an enzymatic cofactor for blood clotting
- D. Allows contraction of muscles

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Helps regulate acid-base balance

Not only is calcium a major cation for the structure of bones and teeth, but it is also an enzymatic cofactor for blood clotting. It is required for hormone secretion, the function of cell receptors, plasma membrane stability and permeability, the transmission of nerve impulses, and the contraction of muscles. Sodium helps regulate acid-base balance.

Reference:

Johnson, K., Vanderhoef, D. (2016). Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, 4th edition. Pg 89.

### Question: 25

A 53-year-old female arrives at your clinic for a psychiatric evaluation. You determine that she meets the diagnostic criteria for major depressive disorder. She is already taking multiple medications, so you want to prescribe an agent that does not induce or inhibit the cytochrome p450 enzymes. Which medication would you choose?

- A. Citalopram
- B. Mirtazapine
- C. Fluvoxamine
- D. Fluoxetine

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Correct answer: Mirtazapine

Mirtazapine does not induce or inhibit any cytochrome p450 enzymes.

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Citalopram is a weak inhibitor of cytochrome p450 2D6. Fluoxetine inhibits 2D6 and 3A4. Fluvoxamine is an inhibitor of 1A2, 3A4, and 2C9/2C19.

Reference:

Johnson, K., & Vanderhoef, D. Psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner review and resource manual, Fourth Edition. Pg 111-119.

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