



What You Need to Know Now That the Next Generation NCLEX® Is Official

NCSBN has decided to officially launch the Next Generation NCLEX (NGN). Here are key facts to answer your most-asked questions.

Note: The NGN will not launch before 2023.

WHAT IS NEXT GENERATION NCLEX?

A project in which the National Council of the State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) is assessing new item types to better measure a candidate's clinical judgment ability.

WHY DOES NCSBN THINK WE NEED A NEW VERSION OF NCLEX?

Research has proven that entry-level nurses require clinical judgment to perform many tasks. In NCSBN's recent RN Task Analysis, clinical judgment was linked directly to more than 46% of tasks performed by entry-level nurses. With clinical judgment skills, nurses can prevent a substantial number of adverse events that clients endure.

CAN YOU DEFINE CLINICAL JUDGMENT?

Per NCSBN, it's the observed outcome of critical thinking and decision-making — an iterative process that uses nursing knowledge to observe and assess presenting situations, identify a prioritized client concern, and generate the best possible, evidence-based solutions for safe client care.

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL RESEARCH SECTION OF THE NCLEX?

It's a set of extra questions at the end of the NCLEX-RN. (Soon, NCSBN will add extra

questions to the NCLEX-PN, too.) Candidates taking the NCLEX are invited to participate in the Special Research Section. Their answers provide data to NCSBN for use in testing and analyzing new item types that evaluate the candidate's clinical judgment skills.

WHAT ITEM TYPES WILL NGN INCLUDE?

NCSBN has identified 5 specific formats as viable measures of clinical judgment: multiple selection, highlight, cloze, drag and drop, and matrix.

WILL SCORING CHANGE?

Yes. NCSBN is exploring multiple scoring methods. It prefers a polytomous scoring method that allows candidates to receive full credit, partial credit, or no credit based on the responses selected. Polytomous scoring is similar to partial-credit scoring with levels of rightness and wrongness that depict different candidate abilities.



3 Need-to-Know Insights on Next Gen NCLEX

The authority on NGN — Dr. Phil Dickison of NCSBN — wants you to have a clear understanding about what the new exam means for educators.

1: DON'T FEAR THE NEW TEST

Phil Dickison emphasized this fact multiple times in a recent interview with ATI's Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President, Sheryl Sommer, PhD, RN, CNE. Dickison, PhD, RN, NCSBN's Chief Officer, Operations & Examinations, said the organization is not creating a test to trick students. Instead, he explained, the new test will provide greater fidelity of a student's skill in providing safe care vs. memorizing long lists of facts.

2: CONTINUE USING THE NURSING PROCESS TO GUIDE YOUR TEACHING

Dr. Dickison said you should use whatever "mental clinical judgment model" you prefer. NCSBN is only trying to find a better way to measure that nursing process, Dr. Dickison said, not dictate which is used. "Start impressing upon students that the nursing process — and how you implement clinical judgment within that process — should be iterative," he advised. Rather than linear thinking that concludes and starts over if the evaluation is faulty, evaluate each step.



Dr. Phil Dickison, NCSBN

3: LOOK FOR NEW ITEMS ON THE NGN

"The number of new items depends on how many vignettes (case studies) are needed to actually stabilize the measurement of any individual," Dr. Dickison explained. Each vignette will measure the six parts of NCSBN's measurement model, so multiply each (likely two to five) by six, and he expects the total might be around 12-30 new items.

What You Can Do to Start Preparing Now

USE ACTIVE-LEARNING STRATEGIES

Clinical judgment is best learned experientially, and the use of a variety of active-learning strategies will promote the necessary deep-thinking skills required. Incorporate case studies, video scenarios, and simulation to help students better grasp the concepts being addressed, particularly when they have not had similar experiences in clinical.

THOROUGHLY ASSESS ALL ASSIGNMENTS

Make sure all assignments are relevant and challenging yet realistic for the level of your learners. Your goal should be to increase their curiosity and motivation, so they thoughtfully complete the work.

QUESTION USING THE SOCRATIC METHOD

This technique is recognized for promoting deep thinking. Require students to examine collected data, compare and contrast findings, provide rationales for their responses, and explain interrelationships.