

How to Become a Certified Assisted Living Nurse

To prepare for the exam, you will want to think about your knowledge base, skills and experience. The four areas that are tested in the certification exam are recognizing the content outline shown at the American Nurses Credentialing Center website for their certification exams.

The four areas and the approximate percent of questions/items in each area of the AALNA Certification Exam for Assisted Living Nurses are:

- The Aging Population (approx 20% of items): includes demographics, social and health issues; theories of aging; communication; and end-of-life care issues.
- Review of Systems, Assessment, and Care Planning (approx 50%): common health problems of the older adult; interventions; pharmacotherapeutics.
- The Organization of Health Care delivery (approx 15%): regulations, reimbursement (Medicare/Medicaid), federal regulations (e.g., ADA), retention and discharge issues in AL.
- Professional Practice (approx 15%): includes management theory and style, staff development and performance evaluation; research and informed consent; negligence; ethical issues in practice; delegation and decision making; budget issues.

If you go to the Hartford Institute website (www.hartfordign.org) and follow the links to the Gerontological Nursing exam, you will find not only the free review course offered by the Hartford Institute in preparation for the ANCC gerontological nursing exam, you will also find a link to the ANCC website where additional test questions can be seen. [Please know that the Hartford Institute review course was targeted for acute care nurses. While the ANCC gerontological nursing exam and the AALNA exam have many similarities, the AALNA exam is assisted living nursing-specific.]

See also our Recommended Reading/Booklist, which can be found at alnursing.org . For study and refresher purposes, select a book specific to gerontological nursing practice and care of the older adult. There is no text or book for assisted living nursing *management* practice. However, some nursing administration books will provide information about management theory and practices, budget preparation, staff development, etc.

In preparation for the certification exam you will also want to become familiar with the Scope and Standards of practice of Assisted Living Nursing. These are available at the AALNA website (www.alnursing.org)

Steps for Certification

1. Apply for the exam.

You may apply for the exam by going to www.alnursing.org . Click on Application for Examination for Certified Assisted Living Nurse. You may submit the completed application, appropriate fees and affidavit by regular mail, or submit on line.

Note: Member fee: \$150 Non-member fee: \$250

2. Wait for your password validation.

After submitting your application, affidavit and fees, you will receive a password and instructions on how to take the exam within 10 working days. (Except in the case of those applying before April 1, 2007. Your password will be sent after April 1, 2007) You will then have up to 120 days to complete the exam. If you exceed 120 days to complete the exam, you will then have to re-apply, with another application and fee.

3. Complete the exam online.

Once you begin the exam, you must complete the exam. You may not go back to the exam, once you have exited the exam. Complete instructions will be sent to you. There are 100 questions on the exam.

4. Wait for results.

Within 5 working days, you will receive your test results. You must have a passing score of 75% or better. If you do not pass the exam, you may pay a \$15.00 processing fee each time and retake the exam.

5. Receive Certification.

Upon meeting the prerequisite requirements, and successfully passing the exam, the RN or LPN who will receive a certificate that the practitioner is a "Certified Assisted Living Nurse." We suggest that you present this certificate to your employer as evidence of your commitment to assisted living and to your professional advancement.