



1. Why include clinical judgment on the Next Generation NCLEX?

As indicated in previous NGN newsletters, NCSBN research, literature reviews and pilot studies identified the need for high-stakes nursing licensure exams to include a focus on clinical judgment. For example, the findings from the *NCSBN Strategic Practice Analysis* confirmed the importance of sound clinical judgment skills to a significant number of tasks performed by entry-level nurses. Specifically, clinical judgment was linked directly to more than 46 percent of tasks performed by entry-level nurses.



2. Can you develop items measuring clinical judgment?

The project began with developing an operational definition of nursing clinical judgment. NCSBN brought together experts from measurement, nursing content and technology fields to imagine item prototypes that could potentially measure various aspects of clinical judgment. With this knowledge, a team of dedicated nurses began writing item prototypes that mapped to the clinical judgment measurement model. For more information about the clinical judgment measurement model, see *Next Generation NCLEX News Fall 2017 issue*. Based on usability studies and focus group studies on the new items, nursing students, professional nurses and nursing educators indicated that the items were more realistic and a better fit to the type of work they encounter both in their internships/practicums and entry-level practice.



3. Do the Next Generation NCLEX items reflect clinical judgment skill?

Beginning in July 2017, NCSBN presented a special research section with the NCLEX-RN administration. The special research section is intended to collect data on new item types that could expand or enhance the measurement of entry-level nursing competence, including clinical judgment. Based on the data, the focus of the Next Generation NCLEX research will be developing scoring rules that are appropriate for providing evidence of nursing competence.



4. Is the Next Generation NCLEX exam reliable?

Reliability refers to the degree to which a candidate's test scores are stable if he/she took different versions of the test at different times (assuming their ability does not change). Reliability is a necessary condition for validity. The Next Generation NCLEX research will evaluate reliability using different methods that are appropriate for the test and the intended use of the results.

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5. Do only my nursing knowledge, skills and abilities contribute to my score and nothing else?

Usability studies showed that the new items were easily comprehended and simple to use by the candidate population. This is critical to the validity of new items in order to ensure that item difficulty is driven by the nature of the item content and required skills, and not by irrelevant features of the item presentation (e.g., poor design, ambiguous response methods). NCSBN will also conduct a cognitive lab study to ensure that the cognitive processes that a candidate engages in while responding to Next Generation NCLEX items align well with the clinical judgment measurement model.

In summary, test validity is the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores. It is an ongoing and multifaceted process. The Next Generation NCLEX project will continuously gather validity evidence to support the inference based on the data.

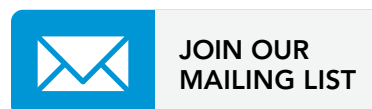
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