Review of NCLEX Modifications Effective Oct. 1, 2020 Video Transcript
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In this presentation, I'll review these new modifications, comparing and contrasting them with prior instances of the exam. The exam changes fall into six categories, each of which will be explained through its own slide. The return of pretest items, an increased number of items on each exam, the return of the NGN Special Research Section to the RN exam, the introduction of the NGN Special Research Section to the PN exam, the removal of the NCLEX tutorial from the exams, and increased testing time made available to candidates.

We'll begin with the return of pretest items. Prior to COVID, the RN exam included 15 unscored or pretest items while the PN exam included 25. As mentioned, these items were removed entirely beginning on March 25th. They will be reintroduced on October 1st, though the number for PN will be 15 rather than 25.

Why do this? In order to maintain a healthy item bank that allows for frequent exam republication and strong test security, NCSBN relies on pretest items to continually refresh our pools of available items. While we could suspend these items for six months, we're not able to suspend them indefinitely without introducing quality or security risk to future exam publications.

In truth, the number of scored or operational items on the exam will not change October 1st. For example, today, an RN candidate will see between 60 and 130 items, all of which count toward the pass-fail result.

Beginning October 1st, RN candidates will see between 75 and 145 items, with 15 of them unscored pretest items. Next, we'll look at the NGN Special Research Section, which supports so much of the work you spent the morning learning about from our presenters. Prior to March, the SRS was optional for RN candidates but did not appear at all for PN candidates.

Since March, the SRS did not appear on either of the two exams. However, beginning October 1st, the SRS will be an optional section on both the RN and PN exam. This will allow NCSBN to continue our research on Next Generation NCLEX items and create the best exam we can for our upcoming NGN launch. Now, we'll look at the NCLEX tutorial, which is presented to NCLEX-RN and PN candidates prior to the start of the exam.

While this tutorial has long been available on the web, we have also provided it on the exam and have in fact required that candidates complete every question prior to beginning their tests in earnest. Effective October 1st, the tutorial will remain available 24/7 online but no longer be included with the exam. Its removal means the candidates will have more of their testing time to dedicate to the actual items on the test.

Finally, we'll look at the increase in testing time that is the result of the various modifications I've presented. Prior to March, a standard RN exam with no accommodations lasted up to six hours and a PN exam lasted up to five. For the past six months, the allocated time was four hours for each exam. Because we were adding back pretest items and the NGN Special Research Section, we will be increasing the time available for each exam to five hours beginning October 1st.

Now that we've looked at so many things that are changing, it's helpful to keep in mind what is staying the same. The NCLEX-RN and PN exams will continue to use computerized adaptive testing or CAT. Importantly, the difficulty of the exams will remain the same. Further good news is we do not expect the exams to change again until the launch of NGN, which is still at least two and a half years away.

Finally, as always, we will keep you informed through our website, our FAQs, and educator webinars to ensure that you always have the best available information about the exams. Thank you very much.