



**NCSBN**  
Leading Regulatory Excellence

## **Rising to the Challenge Video Transcript**

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- [Kelly] Everything happened so fast when the pandemic hit. ♪ [music] ♪ - [Jacklyn] We started to get information from our Asia test centers that it was getting bad. ♪ [music] ♪ And that's when we knew, "Okay, we're into something."
- [Jen] that day, we were asked to go home at noon. And that was my first inkling that, you know, things were going to change. ♪ [music] ♪ - No one really knew anything about the virus and everything was shutting down. Travel was closing down between states. And so, people were really concerned.
- [Jason] On March 16th, I received an email that Pearson VUE needed to close all of its testing centers in the U.S. and some internationally.
- That's when we knew it was bad because that had never happened before.
- Now, understand, for us, the only way we can test NCLEX candidates is through those Pearson VUE testing centers, something that, in other words, would have an absolutely drastic impact on the influx of new nurses into the healthcare system. ♪ [music] ♪ As we were thinking about a worst-case scenario, that's really what it was, prolonged closure of the testing centers.
- We knew that that would have impacted 15,000 student nurses at a time when the country needed more nurses.
- We knew that our state boards were depending on us to find a solution.
- We got our hands dirty, rolled up our sleeves, put our heads down, and just started thinking of anything and everything we could do to get the test running again and to get nurses into the workforce. ♪ [music] ♪ - [Phil] So, in a crisis, you plan a plan and you work that plan. Focus on the signal, don't get distracted by the noise, right?
- [Joe] We've really got a culture of being able to solve problems. When something happens, we don't kind of stand back, we don't point fingers. We just say, "What's happening and how can we fix it?"
- The test centers needed to be open, the NCLEX had to be administered. And we needed to look at the NCLEX.
- Is there a way for us to amend the exam to keep all of the psychometric and statistical properties of the exam exactly the way they are today, but shorten the amount of time without jeopardizing any public safety?

- It will help if, instead of having a six-hour exam, we can get the same valid result in four hours. Let's do that. That way, if a testing center is open for 12 hours, we may be able to get three people through instead of two.
- We had 10 years of data that we could analyze and know that shortening an exam would have no impact on the measurement of safety and effectiveness of nurses passing the exam.
- So, we had thought about a number of different options of shortening the test, so we sort of knew where the right area was going to be to look. So, we basically spent every day and every night running numbers of different simulations under many different configurations. Not only were we doing the simulations, we were fine-tuning the discussion. So, there were lots of discussions going on late at night about, "What does this mean? How can we test this out? What are some opportunities to make it better?"
- We were the ones who essentially put together a test and now, we were being tested.
- It was a reminder of how important the work that we do is.
- It wasn't a question. It was, "We had to do it." Nobody complained. Nobody said, "This is... You know, I'm going to log off." It was, "Let's get this done. Get some rest and do it again the next day."
- Once we got those few areas that we really wanted to look at, we went all the way back and we took all of the test records for all of 2019 and we re-scored them under the new modified examples. And what we found, when we did that, was spot on with what we have been finding with our simulation. So, that's what gave us a lot of encouragement the results were going to be stable when we went out into the field with them.
- We knew we needed to explore other options to reopen those centers a lot faster.
- So, we worked collaboratively with our boards of nursing to get a request to each governor's office to allow us to go to full capacity at the test centers. And we were successful in doing that.
- Now, we've got to take the idea of how do we want to adapt the exam and now actually publish it. We took a publication cycle that normally runs a month and basically got it all done in one week. And when I say got it all done in one week, we did not skip one step. That was not acceptable. Any of the QAs that we go through, whether it's test publishing or software QA, everything that we normally do, content reviews, whatever it is, none of it was spared.

It was actually really amazing.

- After all the work we put in, it was really gratifying, on March 25th, to see that, in fact, candidates were in testing centers and they were taking the NCLEX.
- Customer Service and Exams Operations worked really well together. They took triple the amount of calls and emails than we would normally get in a peak testing season, so they just did a phenomenal job.
- A lot of candidates just wanted to know when they would be able to take the exam so that they can be licensed and get out there and assist with the pandemic response, to go to the places where they were the most needed.

- We created a process so that the candidates and the boards of nursing remain aware of any test center updates. This is actually a process that we're still using today. We also work closely with the boards of nursing to allow candidates to extend their authorization to test validity dates.
- Another thing that we were able to do working with Pearson VUE simply to expand hours at testing centers where there were testing centers that were open, if they had been open 12 hours a day, could they be open 16 or 18 hours a day? We had 10 different temporary testing sites opened that weren't part of the network before. And one of the nice things about the temporary sites was they tended to be higher capacity.
- We actually tested more nurses, got more nurses in the workforce during the pandemic than we did the previous year. It was just an amazing accomplishment.
- Every single thing we did was so critical because we just had to get everything right. It's like when you take a test and you have to get 100, a 99 would be disappointing, right? We couldn't do a 99, we need to do 100, but we did.
- I have never, in a crisis, seen a group coalesce that quickly, to focus on the mission that we needed to accomplish. It was just some brilliant work.
- I am just really impressed by the different departments and teams coming together and that sense of community you have.
- I'm extremely proud of the work that our teams did, for the amount of time, effort, work, and just dedication that they put into it.
- I feel like we're a really strong team, having had that experience, and I think we're just going to continue to really grow from it. Being a part of an organization like NCSBN made me feel like I was able to actively do something about the situation and be able to help people.
- All of the hard work, all the different interventions, all the different things that we did in conjunction with the state boards, it all added up to an incredible amount of success. I feel like we genuinely made a difference.
- That is exactly why we do what we do. 🎵 [music] 🎵