

Study Tips

Gather Support

Identify a study buddy or form a study group. One of the benefits of a study group is the psychological support that members receive from each other throughout the study process. If no one is available contact SGNA's Mentor program. There may be nurses in your area that will be able to get together. Sometimes, just talking to a mentor will give you insight into how to organize your study schedule.

Study groups are most effective if 3-6 people are able to participate. If a study group is not possible, you can be a study group of one!

Once the group is formed it is important to set the ground rules. Identify a time, place, and responsibilities that are agreeable to the group.

First Step in Organizing a Study Group Activity

Whether you study alone or you study in a group you need to develop a "study plan". Develop an outline of study topics from this plan. If you are in a group, identify one person to put together the study topics. If you are in the group to choose topics that you are weak in.

Determine a study schedule. If the group wants to study a topic in depth because of lack of exposure at your facility, you may devote more time in these areas. A study schedule should take from six to twelve weeks, depending on the group or individual needs.

Study Tips

- Try to study every day
- Avoid cramming
- Spend more time on your weak areas
- Pick a time to study when you are most alert. Research shows that the morning and early evening are best.
- Stick to the study schedule
- Keep breaks short 3-5 minutes is adequate
- Study one topic at a time
- The next day review what you learned the day before
- Make outlines and map out what you learned and develop questions from your outline
- Reading out loud helps reinforce the material
- Tape record important items you want to remember or have difficulty in remembering and listen to them to and from work
- Flash cards or index card may be helpful
- Post a topic or drug of the week by the phone

The certification exam questions are written so the candidate uses critical thinking skills. There are certainly many recall or memory items, but the majority has you reflect on your practice and come to a conclusion with the right answer. Many of the questions will ask you to prioritize, or answer what is BEST, or MOST LIKELY. If you are a person who likes to memorize data, try to not only memorize the data but think of an example, so you really know it. If you don't understand it search it out.