



Multiple Sclerosis Nurses International Certification Board

# MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSING INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

*HANDBOOK FOR CANDIDATES*

## **2019 TESTING PERIODS**

### **Conference Testing – CMSC Annual Meeting *in Seattle, WA***

Application Deadline: April 29, 2019

Examination Date: May 29, 2019

### **Spring 2019 Testing Period**

Application Deadline: May 1, 2019

Testing Begins: Saturday, June 1, 2019

Testing Ends: Saturday, June 15, 2019

### **Fall 2019 Testing Period**

Application Deadline: October 9, 2019

Testing Begins: Saturday, November 9, 2019

Testing Ends: Saturday, November 23, 2019



**PROFESSIONAL TESTING CORPORATION**® 1350 BROADWAY • SUITE 800 • NEW YORK, NY 10018

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This handbook contains necessary information about the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This handbook is subject to change.

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## **CERTIFICATION**

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The Multiple Sclerosis Nurses International Certification Board (MSNICB) endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification by examination for all nurses involved in multiple sclerosis care. Certification is one part of a process called credentialing. It focuses specifically on the individual nurse and reflects knowledge in a specialized area of practice. Board certification in multiple sclerosis nursing is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic multiple sclerosis nursing knowledge.

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## **PURPOSES OF CERTIFICATION**

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TO PROMOTE DELIVERY OF QUALITY CARE IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSING PRACTICE THROUGH THE CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFIED MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSES BY:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Multiple Sclerosis Nurses International Certification Board and pass the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination.
2. Encouraging continued personal and professional growth in the practice of multiple sclerosis nursing.
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification in multiple sclerosis nursing.
4. Providing a standard of knowledge requisite for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the health professions in the assessment of nurses involved in multiple sclerosis care.

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## **DEFINITION OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSING**

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Multiple sclerosis nursing may cover clinical practice concepts underlying clinical practice, assessment and interventions in clinical practice, advocacy, education, and research. This may include but is not limited to nurses who practice in the following settings:

1. Hospitals
2. Multiple Sclerosis Centers or Clinics
3. Home or Community Care
4. Rehabilitation Centers
5. Nursing Homes
6. Pharmaceutical or other Commercial Organizations
7. Educational and Research Facilities
8. Academic Institutions

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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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It is recommended that candidates have at least two years of experience in multiple sclerosis nursing. Candidates must meet the following requirements:

1. Currently registered as a Registered Nurse, or the equivalent in other countries.
2. Completion and filing of an Application for the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination.
3. Payment of required fee.

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## ADMINISTRATION

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The Certification Program is sponsored by the Multiple Sclerosis Nurses International Certification Board (MSNICB). The Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination is administered for the MSNICB by the Professional Testing Corporation (PTC), 1350 Broadway, Suite 800, New York, New York 10018, (212) 356-0660, [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com). Questions concerning the examination should be referred to PTC.

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## ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

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Eligible candidates who pass the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination are eligible to use the registered designation MSCN after their names and will receive certificates from the MSNICB. A registry of Multiple Sclerosis Certified Nurses will be maintained by the MSNICB and may be reported in its publications.

Certification in multiple sclerosis nursing is recognized for a period of five years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the current Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination or meet such alternative requirements as are in effect at that time in order to retain certification.

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## EMERITUS STATUS

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MS nursing professionals who currently hold the MSCN credential but who retire from active practice may apply for Emeritus Status, which will be conferred on a one-time basis and will not require renewal, as it will be valid indefinitely. Those who are granted Emeritus Status will be able to use the designation of MSCN-e but will no longer be able to use the original MSCN designation.

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## REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

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Certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an Application.
2. Revocation of current registration/license.
3. Misrepresentation of certification status.

The Appeals Committee of the MSNICB provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of Board Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

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1. Read and follow the directions on the application and in this handbook. All applications must be completed online. The application can be found on Professional Testing Corporation's website at <https://secure.ptcny.com/apply/>.
2. The online application and appropriate fees for the examination must be received on or before the appropriate deadline listed in this handbook.

## COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

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Candidates must complete the examination application in full, using your name exactly as it appears on your current government issued photo ID, such as your driver's license, passport or US military ID. The completed application, with all documentation (if required), must be submitted online with the examination fee. If payment is being made by check or money order, complete the online application and mail payment to:

MSNICB EXAMINATION  
Professional Testing Corporation  
1350 Broadway, Suite 800  
New York, NY 10018

NOTE: Be certain payment clearly indicates candidate name and appropriate examination and testing period.

## FEES

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Application fee for the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination ..... \$320.00 USD

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE IN US DOLLARS OR INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDER TO:

### PROFESSIONAL TESTING CORPORATION

Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are also accepted. Please complete the credit card payment form on the Application.

## REFUNDS

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Following receipt of Application and fee, a candidate who does not take the examination may receive a partial refund of \$50.00 if a request is received in writing up to 30 days after the testing date. Requests for refunds will NOT be honored after the 30 days. Written requests should be mailed to:

**MSNICB Examination**  
**Professional Testing Corporation**  
**1350 Broadway, Suite 800**  
**New York, New York 10018**

Special Testing Center Fees will NOT be refunded. **Fees will NOT be transferred to another testing period.**

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination is administered during an established two-week testing period on a daily basis, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by PSI. PSI has several hundred testing sites in the United States, as well as Canada. Scheduling is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. To find a testing center near you, visit <http://www.ptcny.com/cbt/sites.htm> or call PSI at (833) 207-1288. Please note: Hours and days of availability vary at different centers. **You will not be able to schedule your examination appointment until you have received a Scheduling Authorization from PTC.**

### TESTING SOFTWARE TUTORIAL

A testing tutorial document can be viewed, free of charge, online. Please visit <http://www.ptcny.com/cbt/demo.htm>. This online document can give you an idea about the features of online testing.

### ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

A Practice Test can be taken online. Go to <https://secure.ptcny.com/webtest/>

The Online Practice Test will allow you to experience taking a computerized exam, to review an example of the type of content included in the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification, and to learn more about question format, style, and level of difficulty.

## SCHEDULING YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

Once your application has been received and processed and your eligibility verified, you will be sent a notice from PTC confirming receipt of payment and acceptance of application. Within six weeks prior to the first day of the testing period, you will be sent a Scheduling Authorization via email from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com). Please ensure you enter your correct email address on the application and add the 'ptcny.com' domain to your email safe list. If you do not receive a Scheduling Authorization at least three weeks before the beginning of the testing period, contact the Professional Testing Corporation at (212) 356-0660.

The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-serve, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date.

**You MUST present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Temporary, paper driver's licenses are not accepted. The name on your Scheduling Authorization must exactly match the name on your photo I.D. Call PTC at 212-356-0660 if you need a duplicate Scheduling Authorization or if your name is not correct.**

After you make your test appointment, PSI will send you a confirmation email with the date, time and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time and location. Contact PSI at (833) 207-1288 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

- **It is your responsibility as the candidate to call PSI to schedule the examination appointment.**
- **It is highly recommended that you become familiar with the testing site.**
- **Arrival at the testing site at the appointed time is the responsibility of the candidate. Please plan for weather, traffic, parking, and any security requirements that are specific to the testing location. Late arrival may prevent you from testing.**

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## INTERNATIONAL TESTING

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Candidates outside of the United States and Canada must complete and submit the Request for Special Testing Center Form found on the [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) homepage. This form must be uploaded to your application no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of the chosen testing period. Fees for testing at an international computer test center (outside of the United States and Canada) are \$100.00 in addition to the examination fee. PTC will arrange a computer based examination at an international test center for you.

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## SPECIAL NEEDS

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MSNICB and PTC supports the intent of and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered by the ADA. Special testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form, available from [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660. This form must be uploaded with the online application at least EIGHT weeks before the testing period begins. Please use this form if you need to bring a service dog, medicine, food or beverages needed for a medical condition with you to the testing center.

**Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form (found at [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com)) will be reviewed. Letters from doctors and other healthcare professionals must be accompanied by the official Form and will not be accepted without the Form.**

Information supplied on the Request for Special Accommodations form will only be used to determine the need for special accommodations and will be kept confidential.

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## CHANGING YOUR APPOINTMENT

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If you need to cancel your examination appointment or reschedule to a different date within the two-week testing period, you must contact PSI at (833) 207-1288 no later than noon, Eastern Standard Time, of the second business day PRIOR to your scheduled appointment. Fees will not be transferred to another testing period. PSI does not have the authority to authorize refunds or transfers to another testing period.

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## RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

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1. All electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices; all wearable smart gear such as smart watches; MP3 players such as iPods, pagers, cameras and voice recorders are not permitted to be used and cannot be taken into the examination room.
2. No books, papers, or reference materials may be taken into the examination room or removed from the examination room.
3. No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the testing period. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
4. Latecomers may not be permitted to take the examination so plan to arrive at your scheduled time.
5. Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.
6. Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats and hats, except hats worn for religious reasons, may not be worn while taking the examination.
7. All watches and “Fitbit” type devices cannot be worn during the examination. It is suggested that these items not be brought to the testing center.

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## REPORT OF RESULTS

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Candidates will be notified in writing approximately four weeks after the testing period ends whether they have passed or failed the examination. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported. Successful candidates will also receive certificates from the MSNICB.

Candidates may request a handscoring of their examination once results are received. A handscore may be performed to verify the accuracy of the computerized grading of the examination as well as confirming that any questions marked as incorrect were not the correct answer. A fee is required by PTC to handscore an exam, this fee is not refundable regardless of the results of the handscoring. All requests for a handscore of the examination should be submitted directly to PTC with the required fee for handscore. The request for handscore can be found on the PTC website [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) in the “For Candidates” section.

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## REEXAMINATION

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The Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new Application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

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1. The MSNICB will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate.
2. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the Professional Testing Corporation.



## CONTENT OF EXAMINATION

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1. The Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination is a written examination composed of a maximum of 150 multiple choice, objective questions with a total testing time of two and half (2 1/2) hours.
2. The content for the examination is described in the Content Outline starting on page 8.
3. The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in Multiple Sclerosis Nursing and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the MSNICB.
4. The MSNICB, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.
5. The Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

I.	CONCEPTS UNDERLYING CLINICAL PRACTICE .....	23%
II.	ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE .....	42%
III.	ADVOCACY.....	10%
IV.	EDUCATION.....	17%
V.	RESEARCH .....	8%

## CONTENT OUTLINE

### I. CONCEPTS UNDERLYING CLINICAL PRACTICE

- A. Definition of Multiple Sclerosis
  - 1. Disease Course and Classifications
  - 2. Epidemiology and Etiology
  - 3. Disease Trajectory
- B. Pathophysiology of Multiple Sclerosis
  - 1. Disruption of Blood/ Brain Barrier
  - 2. Immune Dysfunction/Inflammatory Process
  - 3. Destruction of Myelin
  - 4. Role of Oligodendrocytes
  - 5. Axonal Damage
  - 6. Nerve Conduction/Neurophysiology
  - 7. Neuropathology
  - 8. Neuroanatomy
- C. Diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis/Diagnostic Criteria
  - 1. Presenting Symptoms/Clinical Findings
  - 2. Prognostic Indicators
  - 3. Diagnostic Tests
    - a. MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)
    - b. Evoked Potential Testing
    - c. Lumbar Puncture
    - d. Laboratory Studies
    - e. Other
- D. Diagnosis of Relapse
- E. Clinically Isolated Syndrome (CIS)
- F. Phenotypes of MS

### II. ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

- A. Pharmacologic Therapies
  - 1. Relapse Management
    - a. Corticosteroids/Other
    - b. Supportive Care
  - 2. Disease Modifying Agents
    - a. Immunomodulating/Immunosuppressive Agents
      - 1. Dosage/Administration
      - 2. Side Effects
      - 3. Efficacy
      - 4. Actions
    - b. Emerging Agents
    - c. Other
  - 3. Risk Benefit Profiles
  - 4. Safety/Monitoring Activities
  - 5. Patient Education

**B. Symptoms and Symptom Management**

1. Fatigue
2. Pain
3. Spasticity
4. Tremor
5. Weakness
6. Altered Mobility and Balance Problems
7. Visual Impairment
8. Cognition Changes
9. Elimination Dysfunction
10. Altered Speech and Swallowing
11. Sexual Dysfunction
12. Altered Sensation
13. Other

**C. Psychosocial Issues**

1. Response to Chronic Illness
2. Emotional Status
3. Support Network
4. Ethnocultural Issues
5. Family and Relationships
6. Vocational
7. Financial
8. Recreational
9. Potential for Abuse and Neglect
10. Depression
11. End of Life Planning

**D. Assessment Tools****E. Alternative Therapies****F. Pediatric Concerns****III. ADVOCACY****A. Patient Rights****B. Ethical Practice****C. Negotiating Health Care Systems****D. Empowerment****E. Community Resources****F. Organizations**

1. World Health Organization
2. MS Coalition and its Organizations
3. International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses
4. CMSC
5. AANN
6. AAN
7. ECTRIMS/ACTRIMS
8. ARN

## **IV. EDUCATION**

- A. Patient Education
  - 1. Disease Specific
  - 2. Principles of Teaching and Learning
  - 3. Health Promotion and Change Theory
  - 4. Special Populations
    - a. Developmental Issues
    - b. Comorbidities
    - c. Other
  - 5. Cultural Sensitivity
  - 6. Gender Differences
    - a. Reproductive Issues
    - b. Hormonal Changes
    - c. Aging
  - 7. Resources and Referrals
  - 8. Adherence
- B. Professional Development

## **V. RESEARCH**

- A. Research Terminology and Process
- B. Protection of Human Subjects
- C. Evidence Based Practice
- D. Translational Research
- E. Data Collection

## SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

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In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

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1. A patient with multiple sclerosis requires an electric scooter for mobility. Her daughter caregiver is moving away. The patient begins to cry and say she does not know what she will do when her daughter moves. Which of the following is the most appropriate action?

1. Contact the medical social worker for alternative plans
  2. Ask the daughter how she will continue helping her mother
  3. Have the patient describe what she has considered in planning for this move
  4. Explore care concerns of both mother and daughter
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2. When teaching patients about relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis, a nurse should describe

1. a remission as a time of no neurologic activity.
  2. the condition as indicative of a "mild disease".
  3. the condition as steadily progressive.
  4. a relapse as new onset of neurologic symptoms lasting greater than 24 to 48 hours.
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3. Which of the following best describes cognitive dysfunction?

1. Is typically accompanied by aphasia
  2. Is strongly linked to level of disability
  3. May be present early in disease course
  4. Can be successfully treated with antidepressants
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4. Before a person can be enrolled in a clinical trial, it is essential that the person

1. seek a second opinion.
  2. undergo counseling.
  3. receive financial incentive.
  4. sign a written informed consent.
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5. Multiple sclerosis is best described as which of the following?

1. Demyelination in the central nervous system
2. Lesions in the peripheral nervous system
3. Alteration in neuromuscular function
4. Reduction in brain volume

<p><b>CORRECT ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS</b></p>
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<p>1. 4; 2. 4; 3. 3; 4. 4; 5. 1</p>
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## REFERENCES

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The International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses has prepared a suggested reference list to assist in preparing for the Multiple Sclerosis Nursing International Certification Examination. These references contain journals and textbooks which include information of significance to multiple sclerosis nursing practice. Inclusion of certain journals and textbooks on this list does not constitute an endorsement by the IOMSN of specific professional literature which, if used, would guarantee candidates successful passing of the certification examination.

Halper, J. & Harris, C. (2018). *Nursing Practice in Multiple Sclerosis: A Core Curriculum*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Demos.

Halper, J. and Holland, N. (eds.). (2011). *Comprehensive Nursing Care in Multiple Sclerosis*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: Springer.

Halper, J. (ed.). (2008). *Advanced Concepts in Multiple Sclerosis Nursing Care*. New York: Demos.

Kalb, R. (2011). *Multiple Sclerosis. The questions you have, the answers you need*. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Demos.

Schapiro, R.T. (2014). *Managing the Symptoms of Multiple Sclerosis*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Demos.