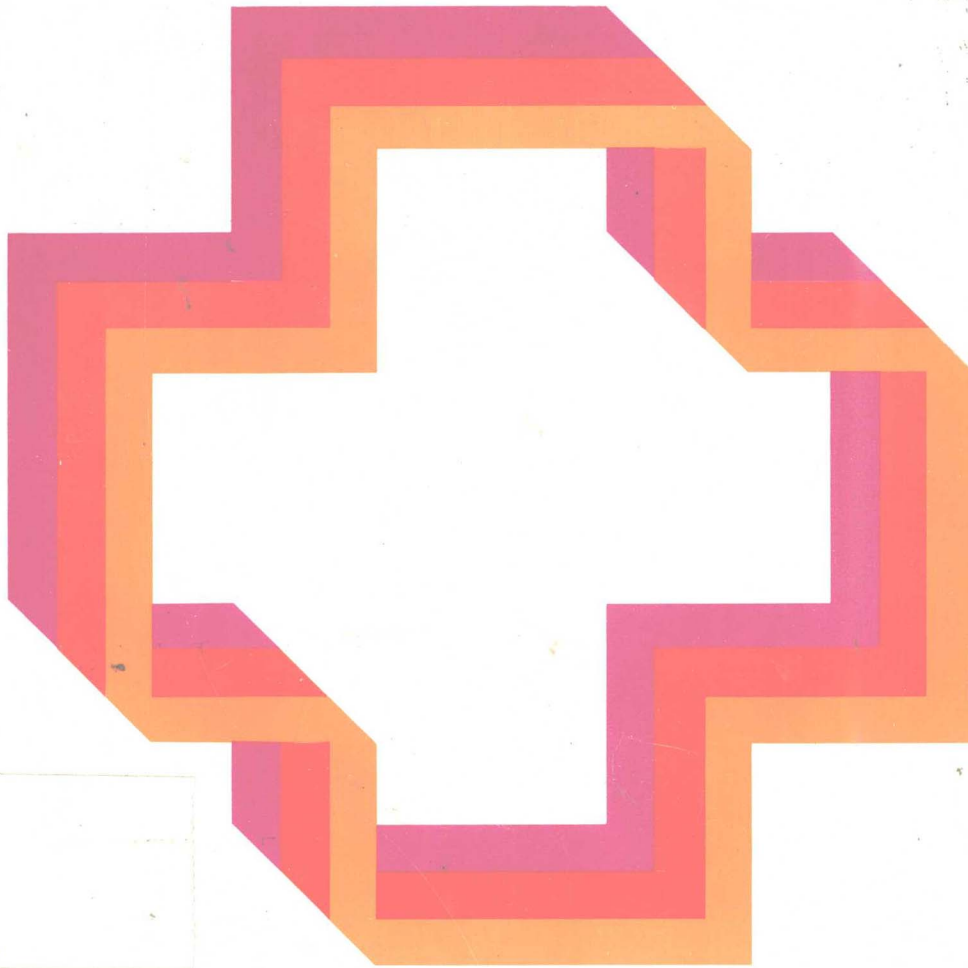


# Sandra Smith's Review for **NCLEX-RN**

Seventh Edition



- Review of Nursing Content
- Current NCLEX Test Plan
- NCLEX Tests with Rationale

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# **Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX-RN**

Seventh Edition

Sandra F. Smith, RN, MS



Los Altos, California

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## PREFACE

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Passing the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX) is a milestone in your nursing career. You have entered a profession that requires years of preparation. This education culminates with passing the licensing examination which will enable you to begin practicing as a professional nurse. NCLEX, while only a test, actually determines whether or not you will be allowed to function in a professional role. This book, *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX*, was written with the explicit purpose of assisting you to pass NCLEX. Years of education, experience and teaching have enabled me to identify the essential nursing content that you must know to successfully pass NCLEX. Adequate preparation, using this book as a guide, will increase your confidence and enable you to review essential nursing concepts.

The best way to prepare for NCLEX is to thoroughly review the material most likely to be covered on the exam and to take practice tests that simulate NCLEX. With this objective in mind, *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX-RN* is organized into nine chapters. To keep pace with nursing education and State Boards, we have presented each chapter's content in terms of the Nursing Process. The outline format is designed to help you review quickly, as well as to emphasize significant content. The selection and presentation of content in this review text are directed toward minimizing your review time and maximizing your test results.

The comprehensive tests serve a dual purpose—to acquaint you with the type and format of questions to expect on the examination and to give you an opportunity to test and improve your knowledge of concepts and expertise in realistic nurse-patient situations. The answers and rationale sections are intended to discourage rote memorization and to reinforce learning by describing the underlying principles which tell you why the answers are right or wrong.

### Acknowledgments

I wish to extend my thanks to all of the contributing authors and to the many other people who helped with the development and production of this book. Because of their valuable assistance, this review book is available to help nursing students prepare for the current R.N. Licensure Examination.

*Sandra L. Smith*

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# INTRODUCTION

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The present edition of *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX* provides you with a thorough review of nursing content on which candidates will be tested for RN licensure. This edition has been designed to be compatible with the latest National Council Licensure Examination-RN (NCLEX). Special emphasis has been placed on presenting the content within the framework of the Nursing Process: Assessment, Planning and Analysis, Implementation, and Evaluation. New clinical situations and multiple choice questions in a comprehensive format simulate the current licensure examination.

The content and format of the book are planned to help you review efficiently and effectively. Nursing curriculum varies from school to school, and students may find that they are more knowledgeable in one content area than another. *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX* will enable you to quickly recognize your areas of expertise and concentrate on less familiar content. The review questions at the end of the text will also assist you to test your mastery of basic nursing principles and their application to clinical situations.

The RN licensure exam tests the candidate's knowledge of nursing rather than physiology, chemistry, medicine, etc. Test questions focus on nursing knowledge, nursing techniques, and nursing interventions in varied clinical situations. *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX* includes the subjects of anatomy and physiology as a general review for students unsure of basic principles. This book concentrates on pathophysiology, clinical manifestations and treatment of diseases and, most important, nursing management. The content was selected especially for student nurses to utilize in reviewing for both nursing tests at school and the licensure exam.

The introduction to this book presents general background information on RN licensure, previews the contents of *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX*, and provides helpful techniques for studying and achieving positive test results. The

introduction also provides guidelines for the most effective methods of using this review book.

## RN Licensure Procedures

The main purpose of the RN licensure examination is to help ensure that only those candidates who have demonstrated a minimum level of competence to provide safe and appropriate care in an entry-level nursing position are granted a license. Throughout the United States and in the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, candidates are required to pass a licensing examination as one of the prerequisites to licensure as a Registered Nurse. Today's emphasis on consumer protection affects the entire medical field and its related professions, including nursing and the Allied Health Professions. This system of licensure protects the general public and, at the same time, confirms for the registered nurse that he or she can embark on a career with professional confidence.

Each state is responsible for issuing the license to practice as a Registered Nurse in the state. Presently, all of the state Boards of Registered Nursing contract with an independent organization—the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)—for the licensure examination and its processing and scoring. The NCSBN, in turn, selects the questions for each examination from a reservoir, or pool, of questions submitted by various professional nurses who represent all of the major clinical specialties and geographical regions of the United States. The examination is in effect a national test administered and ultimately controlled by each individual state. NCLEX consisted of 480 test questions from 1982 through 1984. This number was reduced to 373 items commencing with the February 1985 exam.

The NCLEX-RN is the means by which each state can measure and evaluate applicants' qualifications to practice nursing safely and effectively. Both United States and foreign-trained nurses must achieve passing scores before becoming licensed RNs. The candidate will receive a single score (unlike the prior system of five tests with a score for each). The NCSBN has established a criterion-referenced scoring

system which is based upon a review of each question by a panel of judges. The recommended passing score is 1600, and the passage rate for first-time candidates is expected to be approximately 85 percent.

The NCLEX-RN is given over a two-day period each February and July throughout the United States. A candidate for the examination should contact the licensure authority in the state in which the candidate plans to practice nursing. Each state selects its own minimal passing score and decides whether to accept test results from another state. Since most jurisdictions require that the candidate's application be filed one to two months prior to examination, applicants should plan sufficiently ahead to assure that key dates are not missed.

### **New NCLEX-RN Test Plan**

According to the National Council, "The purpose of the test plan is to guide the selection of content and behaviors to be tested" on NCLEX-RN. To accomplish this, the new test plan requires knowledge of:

- The Nursing Process
- Management and coordination of safe, effective care
- Client's physiological needs
- Client's psychosocial needs
- Maintenance and promotion of health

The above five categories of nursing knowledge integrate the following elements in the NCLEX.

- Accountability
- Mental health concepts
- Pharmacology
- Nutrition
- Body structure and function
- Pathophysiology
- Principles of asepsis
- Growth and development
- Documentation
- Communication and teaching

Additional areas of content you can expect to be included on NCLEX that will test your knowledge, skills and abilities are basic principles of management; continuity of care; psychodynamics of behavior; treatment modalities including

group dynamics; response to therapies; environmental and personal safety measures; client's rights; confidentiality; infectious agents; immunity; routine nursing measures; ADLs; managing emergencies; comfort measures; reproduction and human sexuality; birthing and parenting; effects of immobility; use of special equipment; and cultural and religious influences.

### **Test Plan Framework**

Levels of cognitive ability (based on Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, Handbook 1*, 1956), are included in the examination. The four levels that are specified are knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis. The questions are not weighted according to these levels, but the National Council points out that most test items will be at the application and analysis levels. Locus of Decision is not specified according to weighting of the test items in the new test plan.

The framework of the new test plan, based on a major study that reflected entry-level nursing practice activities (identified in an extensive job analysis), is based on two major components:

- Phases of the Nursing Process
- Client Needs

### **Phases of the Nursing Process**

The phases of the Nursing Process that are measured in NCLEX include Assessment, Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation. Nursing Diagnosis is included as an essential step in the Analysis phase. The candidate for licensure can expect approximately equal emphasis to be placed upon each of these categories of nursing behaviors. While NCLEX questions are unlikely to test knowledge of nursing process definitions, the questions will be phrased in terminology reflecting the five phases. For example, a multiple-choice question will ask which assessment is the most important for particular circumstances (the specific clinical situation that is presented), then the four answer options will be phrased as assessment (observation) parameters. If a question asks for nursing implementation, the four alternatives will be phrased as nursing actions or interventions.



## Client Needs

The basic health needs of clients are grouped under four broad categories which are weighted according to the results of a job analysis study completed in 1986. The weighting assigned to each category is reflected in the percentage of questions you will find in the current NCLEX.

Safe, effective care environment	25–31 percent
Physiological integrity	42–48 percent
Psychosocial integrity	9–15 percent
Health promotion and maintenance	12–18 percent

### Safe, Effective Care Environment: Category I

In order to meet the client's needs in this area, the nurse must be able to provide and direct nursing care in the following areas:

- Coordinate care
- Quality assurance
- Goal-oriented care
- Environmental safety
- Preparation for treatments and procedures
- Safe and effective treatments and procedures

### Physiological Integrity: Category II

To meet the client's needs for physiological integrity—which includes potentially life-threatening conditions and/or chronically recurring physiological conditions, and potential complications or untoward effects of treatments of management modalities—the nurse must be able to provide and direct nursing care in the following areas:

- Physiological adaptation
- Reduction of risk potential
- Mobility
- Comfort
- Provision of basic care

### Psychosocial Integrity: Category III

To meet the client's needs for psychosocial integrity during periods of stress or crisis-related situations, the nurse must be able to provide and direct nursing care in the following areas:

- Psychosocial adaptation
- Coping/adaptation

## Health Promotion and Maintenance: Category IV

To meet the client's needs of health promotion and maintenance throughout the life cycle, the nurse must be able to provide and direct nursing care for clients and their significant others in the following areas:

- Continued growth and development
- Self-care
- Integrity of support systems
- Prevention and early treatment of disease

\*Adapted from the NCLEX-RN Test Plan National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses, 1988.

## Organization and Presentation of Review Material

The NCLEX comprehensive examination will draw from the candidate's entire spectrum of nursing knowledge and may appear formidable. Furthermore, actual clinical situations require that you apply your knowledge base to problem solving, decision making, and delivery of quality client care. To provide you with an efficient and effective review aid, the subject matter of *Sandra Smith's Review for NCLEX* is presented in the following categories:

- Nursing Through the Life Cycle
- Nutrition and Pharmacology
- AIDS: Theory and Nursing Care
- Medical-Surgical Nursing
- Maternity Nursing
- Pediatric Nursing
- Psychiatric Nursing
- Gerontological Nursing
- Legal Aspects of Nursing

Each chapter, or subject area, contains material on both nursing theory and its practical application. The nursing theory includes pathophysiology, clinical manifestations of diseases, diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions, and nursing management. As appropriate, this material is organized within the key steps of the Nursing Process: Assessment, Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation.