



# **Candidate Handbook for the Continuing Certification Program (CCP)**

**2023 Application Cycle**





# Continuing Certification Program Candidate Handbook

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All questions and requests for information about the **Hospice Medical Director certification program** should be directed to:

Hospice Medical Director Certification Board  
8735 W. Higgins Road, Suite 300  
Chicago, IL 60631  
Phone: 847-375-6740  
Fax: 847-375-6739  
Email: [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org)  
Website: [www.hmdcb.org](http://www.hmdcb.org)

All questions and requests for information about **examination scheduling** should be directed to:

PSI Candidate Services  
18000 W. 105th St.  
Olathe, KS 66061-7543  
Phone: 855-579-4641  
Fax: 913-895-4650  
Website: <http://schedule.psiexams.com>

# GENERAL INFORMATION

**Due to the changes being made to the CCP, the information in this handbook only applies to the 2023 Continuing Certification Cycle. To learn more about the new CCP, visit [www.HMDCB.org/ccp](http://www.HMDCB.org/ccp).**

## About This Handbook

The purpose of this candidate handbook is to provide information and requirements for active candidates who endeavor to renew their certification through the Hospice Medical Director Certification Board® (HMDCB).

Candidates are responsible for reading this guide in its entirety and understanding its contents. This candidate guide is only a guide. All information in this document may be revised, updated and amended at any time without notice. This most recent CCP candidate guide, found on the HMDCB website, supersedes all previous versions.

## Hospice Medical Director Certification Board

HMDCB serves as an independent, not-for-profit corporation to administer a certification program for hospice medical directors and other hospice physicians. HMDCB is led by individuals with years of experience in the field of hospice and palliative medicine who are dedicated to improving the quality and consistency of care provided by local hospices.

The HMDC® credential promotes the professional competence, established standards and ethical practice of hospice physicians. The role of hospice physicians in the United States requires a special subset of knowledge, with complicated regulatory, administrative and ethical aspects in addition to expertise in clinical care.

HMDCB is governed by an eight-member board of directors representing diverse backgrounds, practice settings and training pathways in the field of hospice and palliative medicine and includes one non-physician member representing the public. HMDCB's mission is to relieve suffering and improve quality of life by promoting the excellence and professional competency of hospice physicians.

HMDCB receives no public funds and has no licensing function. Its business plan is to be self-funded by the fees paid by candidates. Any income that exceeds expenses will be invested in the continued improvement and advancement of the certification and continuing certification process.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

HMDCB and PSI do not discriminate against candidates for examination, certification, or recertification on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status or any other protected classification under state or federal law.

## About Continuing Certification

The goal of HMDCB's CCP is to encourage and reward certified hospice physicians for ongoing learning and development of knowledge in the practice of hospice medicine amidst ever-changing regulatory and administrative conditions. HMDCB's program is both flexible and relevant to guide physicians in this ongoing education to help certificants keep pace with this rapidly evolving profession.

It is the intent of HMDCB's Board of Directors that the CCP serve the following purposes:

- assess competency, skill and judgement;
- maintain the knowledge of the certificant during the certification period;
- be flexible by offering various options to satisfy Continuing Certification requirements;
- accurately reflect what occurs in practice.

## Name/Address Change

It is the candidate's responsibility to update their online profile or notify HMDCB's national office of any changes in contact information. HMDCB will correspond with candidates through email. Candidates should ensure that HMDCB has a current email address on file. Email information may be updated through the Physician profile by logging into "My HMDCB". Candidates also may indicate address and name changes when completing the recertification application. Notification of admission to the examination, communication of test results and delivery of information regarding the next renewal cycle depend on HMDCB having current information.

# CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

**Due to the changes being made to the CCP, the below requirements only apply to the 2023 Continuing Certification Cycle.**

## 2023 Continuing Certification Pathways

Starting in 2024, HMDCB will transition from a high-stakes recertification exam to a longitudinal assessment model. Due to these changes, certificants eligible for renewal in 2023 have two recertification pathways to choose from.

**Certificants who originally certified in 2017 (Current Expiration Date: 11/30/2023)**

**Pathway 1:** Meet the current CCP requirements and take the recertification exam in 2023. If you pass, your credential will be valid through December 31, 2029 and you will not have to participate in the new CCP until January 1, 2030.

**Pathway 2:** Be grandfathered into the new CCP by completing the online application, submitting the required continuous learning points, and paying the CCP fee in 2023. You will not be required to take the recertification exam this year. If you choose this pathway, you will be required to participate in the new CCP once it launches in 2024.

**All candidates who originally certified in 2017 and plan to recertify in 2023 must submit a CCP application no matter which pathway they select. You can notify HMDCB about your pathway selection at the time of application.**

**Pathway 1:** Recertify in 2023 - meet the current CCP requirements and take the recertification exam in 2023. If you pass, your credential will be valid through December 31, 2030 and you will not have to participate in the new CCP until January 1, 2031.

**Pathway 2:** Recertify in 2024 – wait until next year to recertify. This means you do not have to apply, submit CME, pay a fee, or take the recertification exam in 2023. If you select this option, you will be required to start participating in the new CCP once it launches in 2024.

Candidates can inform HMDCB about their recertification pathway selection during the application process. To learn more about these changes, visit [www.HMDCB.org/ccp](http://www.HMDCB.org/ccp) or contact HMDCB staff at [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org) or call 847-375-6740.

## Implications for Not Completing Continuing Certification before Certificate Expiration Date

It is the certified hospice physician's responsibility to renew their certification in a timely manner prior to expiration. If the Continuing Certification process is not completed by the time of the certificate expiration, HMDCB will no longer recognize the individual as an HMDC, will remove the individual's name from the Directory of Certified Hospice Physicians, and will advise the individual that it would be unethical and a misrepresentation to publicly display the certification in any way or to use the certifying initials after his or her name. Candidates found ineligible to renew their certification will need to apply for and meet current eligibility requirements as an Initial Applicant.

# CONTINUING CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Renewal Eligibility

At the time of application, all candidates eligible for renewal must hold a current, active, and unrestricted **license** to practice medicine in the United States, its territories or any province of Canada and conform to HMDCCB's **Code of Professional Conduct**.

In addition to these general requirements, candidates must obtain **150 points** of continuous learning during the CCP cycle. Points may be earned exclusively through Continuing Medical Education (CME) or a combination of CME and Professional Activities. If using a combination, you must obtain a minimum of **108 points** through CME and up to **42 points** through Professional Activities.

Candidates who select the pathway to take the recertification exam this year, must pass a computer-based, 100 multiple-choice question recertification examination at a secured test center.

### My HMDCCB for Logging Activities

Candidates must log all continuing learning activities such as CME or Professional Activities in the "MY HMDCCB" online portal. To access this portal, visit [www.HMDCCB.org/myhmdccb](http://www.HMDCCB.org/myhmdccb).

### Continuous Learning (CME/ Professional Activities)

Candidates eligible for renewal must obtain **150 points** of continuous learning during the CCP cycle. Points may be earned exclusively through Continuing Medical Education (CME) or a combination of CME and Professional Activities. If using a combination, you must obtain a minimum of **108 points** through CME and up to **42 points** through Professional Activities.

### CME Categories Eligible for Continuing Certification Credit

Candidates may obtain all 150 points exclusively through Continuing Medical Education (CME) or if choosing a combination of CME and Professional Activities must obtain a minimum of 108 points through CME.

There are five categories of CME eligible for continuing certification credit:

- attending college/university courses,
- attending professional workshops or conferences,
- completing online courses specifically designed to enhance competence,
- independent study\*, or
- non-clinical fellowship hours (1 point per course hour)

***All CME activities must be documented as including content related to the HMDCB Blueprint and relevant to practice in a hospice setting.***

CME credits must be obtained from an accredited provider of medical education evidenced by reference to one or more of the following:

- AMA PRA Category 1™ credits
- Prescribed credit(s) by the American Academy of Family Physicians
- AOA Category 1-A or 2-A CME Credit

*\*Independent study allows certificants to learn in their own environment. Approved study materials must be based on content related to the HMDCB Blueprint (e.g., completion of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine's self-study materials or the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's E-OL Courses and webcasts).*

If a candidate has attended a course that was only partially or not clearly hospice-related, or the title of the course does not explicitly indicate hospice content, submission of a course outline may be required during audit to enable the determination of the appropriate amount of credit. For example, a course titled "Supportive Care in Oncology" may contain some relevant content but based on the title alone the content is not clear to the reviewer unless a course syllabus or outline is submitted. Please see the HMDCB Content Blueprint for clarity.

To review the HMDCB Continuous Learning Guide, visit [https://www.hmdcb.org/images/pdf/Continuous\\_Learning\\_Guide\\_2022.pdf](https://www.hmdcb.org/images/pdf/Continuous_Learning_Guide_2022.pdf)



## Professional Activities Eligible for Continuous Learning Credit

Professional Activities may only account for 42 of the 150 points of Continuous Learning Activities required **every six (6) years**. Professional Activities are not required.

There are nine categories of professional activities eligible for continuous learning credit. A summary of acceptable professional activities are found in the corresponding categories below.

### Obtain/Maintain HPM Certification

Credit will be given if you maintain subspecialty certification in Hospice and Palliative Medicine. Five points per year for every year you are certified throughout the Continuing Certification cycle.

**5 points maximum per year**

### Obtain/Maintain a Certification in a Related Field

Credit will be given if you maintain subspecialty certification in: Pain Management, Geriatrics, or AMDA's medical director certification.

**1 point per year, per certification held**

### Special Project Performed in Work Setting

Special projects include performance measurement and improvement. Performance improvement (PI) activities describe structured, long-term processes by which a physician or group of physicians can learn about specific performance measures, retrospectively assess their practice, apply these measures prospectively over a useful interval, and re-evaluate their performance.

**2 points per project**

### Volunteer Service

Volunteer participation in leadership responsibilities or committee involvement in a state or national professional organization, a hospice-provider or other organization directly related to the field of hospice and palliative medicine.

**1 point per year/per service**

### Preceptorship and Mentoring

Hospice physicians serving as supervisor or preceptor may apply hours spent supervising those practicing professionals of the interdisciplinary team in a structured program within the hospice setting. One point will be awarded per 10 hours of preceptorship maintained.

**3 points maximum per year**

### Teaching, Lecturing, Presenting

Encompasses the candidate's participation as an instructor delivering content related to the HMDCB Blueprint. The presentation must be delivered within a structured framework of teaching/learning. A presentation includes a seminar, in-service, clinical conference, consumer education program, and/or presenting an original paper or poster. The participation may be as the primary instructor, lecturer or panelist. No credit is given for repeat presentations of the same content. One point will be awarded per lecture hour.

**4 points maximum per year**

### Publishing

Encompasses publications delivering content related to the HMDCB Blueprint. Responsibility in the publication may be authorship, co-authorship or editorial. The item to be published may be a book, chapter in a book, paper, article, abstract, book review, etc. One point will be awarded per publication.

**4 points maximum per year**

### Journal Club Participation

Candidates participating in a structured journal club who meet regularly to critically evaluate articles related to content outlined in the HMDCB Blueprint may earn credit through their membership. Two points will be awarded for quarterly participation; three points for monthly participation.

**3 points maximum per year**

### HMDCB Coffee Chats & Webinars

Certificants can earn professional activity points for attending or reviewing HMDCB webinars and Coffee Chats. One point will be awarded for each event a certificant attends or reviews. **20 points maximum over the 6-year certification period**





# APPLYING FOR RENEWAL

<b>June 6, 2023</b>	Renewal application cycle opens
<b>August 15, 2023</b>	Last day to submit application without late fee assessment of \$200
<b>October 14, 2023</b>	Last date to withdraw from 2023 recertification examination without penalty of full cancellation fee (a \$250 admin fee will be withheld)
<b>November 1, 2023</b>	Final deadline to apply for 2023 recertification examination and submit your pathway choice to HMDCB
<b>November 10, 2023</b>	Last date to schedule examination appointment with PSI
<b>July 6 - November 14, 2023</b>	Recertification examination testing window
<b>Results available immediately after completing the exam at the test center.</b>	

Candidates eligible to apply for renewal must submit applications via “My HMDCB” (the online portal), on or before November 1, 2023, to be considered for recertification in 2023. Candidates may log continuous learning activities such as CME or Professional Activities in the “My HMDCB” online portal anytime during the renewal cycle.

Candidates must submit their applications with payment to HMDCB during the application cycle. No application will be considered without complete information and full payment. **To access “My HMDCB” and apply, visit [www.HMDCB.org/myhmdcb](http://www.HMDCB.org/myhmdcb).**

It is the sole responsibility of HMDCB candidates eligible for renewal to be aware of and comply with registration deadlines. In fairness to all candidates, the HMDCB Board of Directors will strictly adhere to its published registration deadlines for all examinations. Candidates are encouraged to apply early in the registration period to avoid problems. Issues arising from one’s inability to log on to the HMDCB application system (e.g., forgotten user name or password, technical difficulties, operator error) must be resolved, and all components of the application, including payment, completed prior to published deadlines. The HMDCB staff will make every effort to promptly assist with all issues as they arise; however, candidates are responsible for contacting HMDCB for assistance well in advance of deadlines. If a physician applies for the recertification examination and is deemed ineligible, the examination fee will be retained by HMDCB.

## Medical License

It is the responsibility of the candidate to inform HMDCB immediately upon any changes to their license status following submission of their application or renewing their certification.

## Code of Professional Conduct

Certification by the HMDCB carries an obligation for ethical behavior and professionalism in all conduct. The ethical behavior and professionalism expected of all candidates includes:

- submitting accurate, valid application information
- respecting the confidentiality of examination questions and content
- maintaining an unrestricted medical license in the United States, its territories, or Canada
- accurately representing certification status at all times
- maintaining ethical and professional behavior in all conduct.

HMDCB candidates will be required to sign a statement affirming adherence to the code when submitting their application.

## CCP Fees

Recertification examination fees are set by the HMDCB Board of Directors. The 2023 recertification Early Bird examination fee is \$850. The regular application fee is \$1,050; this fee must accompany the application.

The examination fee covers application review, administrative costs, and testing company fees. Payment of the examination fee may be made by credit card or check made payable to the Hospice Medical Director Certification Board. If paying by check, candidates will be required to print the application and mail it with full payment to HMDCB, PO Box 3781, Oak Brook, IL 60522. Until full payment has been received by HMDCB, the application will not be processed, and the examination cannot be scheduled. An additional \$25 will be charged for any returned checks or rejected credit cards to cover additional handling fees and service charges imposed by the bank or credit card company. A candidate's cancelled check or credit card receipt serves to document payment for the examination.

### Confirmation of Application Submission

Upon submitting the application and payment, candidates will automatically receive an email from HMDCB informing them that the application and payment have been received. If eligibility is denied, the candidate will be contacted by HMDCB. Within 15 business days of receipt of the application and payment, candidates will receive email instructions and a postcard from the testing company, PSI, on how to schedule the examination. The notices will include a web address and toll-free telephone number (US) for PSI along with detailed instructions for scheduling the examination. If the notices from PSI are not received within three weeks of submission, please contact HMDCB at 847-375-6740 or [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org).

### Audit

To maintain the integrity of the program and to verify the accuracy of the information submitted by candidates for continuing certification, HMDCB will audit a percentage of randomly selected applications each year. Other applications may be audited at the discretion of HMDCB. Candidates whose applications are selected for audit will be notified and required to provide the documentation requested. During the audit process, candidates are encouraged to proceed with scheduling their examination. By submitting your application, candidates duly authorize the HMDCB to conduct such independent verification. Candidates who fail the audit, fail to respond satisfactorily to the receipt of an audit notification, or refuse to submit to an audit will forfeit all fees and exam results and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the revocation and misconduct

policy. *This applies to all candidates, even those who complete and pass the CCP exam.*

### Accommodation of Candidates with Disabilities

HMDCB and PSI comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act in providing reasonable accommodations to eligible candidates. Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential functions being measured by the examination. Reasonable accommodations are approved or denied based upon the individual's specific request, disability, documentation submitted and appropriateness of the request. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the examination, influence the examination results or result in an undue burden.

Verification of the disability and a statement of the specific type of assistance needed **must be submitted online at least 4 weeks prior** to a candidate's desired examination date by completing PSI's online form: [https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket\\_form\\_id=360000991112](https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360000991112). Attach the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs form (which must be completed by an appropriate licensed professional) with your online request. PSI will review the request and contact the candidate regarding the decision for accommodations.

For Exam Accommodations questions/concerns, please call 1-800-367-1565 x6750 Monday through Friday, 8 AM – 5 PM CST. Wheelchair access is available at all established Test Centers. Candidates must advise PSI at the time of scheduling that wheelchair access is necessary. Candidates with visual, sensory, physical or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions may request special accommodations and arrangements.

## SCHEDULING THE EXAMINATION

### Testing Partner

PSI is the professional testing agency contracted by HMDCB to assist in the development, administration, scoring and analysis of the HMDCB examination. PSI is engaged in educational and occupational measurement and provides examination development and administration to a variety of credentialing programs.

### Examination Administration

Examinations are delivered by computer in approximately 300 PSI Test Centers located throughout the United States. Computer examinations are administered by appointment only Monday through Friday. Saturday appointments may be scheduled based on availability. Available dates will be indicated when scheduling the examination. Appointment starting times may vary by location. Appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Test Center Locations

PSI Test Centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the most candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. A current listing of PSI Test Centers, including addresses and driving directions, may be viewed at <http://schedule.psiexams.com>. Specific address information will be provided when examination appointments are scheduled.

### Scheduling an Examination

There are three ways to schedule the examination after receiving your scheduling notice from PSI:

1. **Online Scheduling:** Go to <http://schedule.psiexams.com> at any time and select "Begin Scheduling." Follow the simple, step-by-step instructions to choose the HMDCB CCP examination and register.

OR

2. **Telephone Scheduling:** Call PSI at 855-579-4641 to schedule an examination appointment. This toll-free number is answered from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Central Time) Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Those who have requested special accommodations must schedule their examination by telephone.

OR

3. **Email Scheduling:** For assistance with scheduling, you can email PSI at [examschedule@psionline.com](mailto:examschedule@psionline.com). Please include the following in your email: name, candidate ID#, client name (HMDCB), exam name (CCP), and your telephone number. If you know when and where you want to test, include a list of three (3) sites, dates, and times in order of preference. A PSI representative will contact you directly via phone to complete your registration.

When scheduling an examination appointment, be prepared to confirm a location and a preferred date and time for testing. Candidates will be asked to provide their unique identification number. Candidates will be notified of the time to report to the Test Center, and, if an email address is provided, an email confirmation notice will be sent.

### Rescheduling an Examination

Candidates who wish to change test center locations or reschedule their appointment for a different date or time within the testing window may do so at <http://schedule.psiexams.com> or by calling PSI at 855-579-4641 at least two business days prior to the scheduled appointment. The following schedule applies.

If the Examination is scheduled on...	PSI must be contacted by 3:00 p.m. Central Time to reschedule the Examination by the previous...
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday

### Transfers

Examination fees may not be transferred to a future testing window.

### Withdrawal (cancellation)

Candidates who wish to withdraw from the examination must contact the HMDCB office in writing, either by regular mail or email sent to [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org). Telephone requests will not be honored. Examination withdrawals received by



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the HMDCB office by October 14, 2023 will receive a refund of their application fee minus a \$250 administrative fee. Examination withdrawals received by the office after the withdrawal date of October 14, 2023 will receive no refund. Refunds will be issued directly to the party who paid the fee.

### Missed Appointments/No Shows

Candidates who miss their HMDCB examination may reschedule up to one time per the exam cycle, accompanying a \$75 fee to cover scheduling costs accrued by our testing partner, PSI. Upon submission of the \$75 fee, candidates will be eligible to reschedule. Candidates who fail to appear for the rescheduled appointment or who arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time will be denied entrance to the examination, and all fees will be forfeited.

This policy does not apply to candidates who miss their exam due to extenuating circumstances.

### Inclement Weather, Power Failure or Emergency

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, PSI will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination. The examination will usually not be rescheduled if the Test Center personnel are able to open the Test Center.

Candidates may visit [www.psonline.com/openings](http://www.psonline.com/openings) prior to the examination to determine if PSI has been advised that any Test Centers are closed. Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be canceled at a Test Center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification following the examination regarding rescheduling procedures.

If power to a Test Center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, the examination will be restarted. The responses provided up to the point of interruption will be intact, but for security reasons the questions will be scrambled.

### Extenuating Circumstances

Should you experience an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from completing your exam, please contact HMDCB staff at [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org) or call 847-375-6740 for information on the extenuating circumstance policy.

# PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

## Professional Development Tool

The board publishes a content blueprint (see below or visit [www.hmdcb.org](http://www.hmdcb.org)), providing detailed information on the content areas to expect on a typical examination. Candidates are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the content blueprint in preparation for the examination and use it to provide guidance on areas where they may need further study.

## HMDCB Study Guide

The HMDCB Study Guide is an expansion of HMDCB's Content Blueprint, which is the form used to develop all exam questions.

The guide provides a detailed outline of the blueprint's five content domains, additional preparatory resources, and three sample questions for each domain. The guide can be purchased for \$149 on the My HMDCB Certification Center or at the time of application. The guide is only available digitally, but can be downloaded/printed.

## Additional Resources

Other options for preparation might include:

- examination preparation or continuing education programs and courses
- journal articles, textbooks, federal regulations or other publications related to the content blueprint.

Other federal agencies and related organizations in the field of hospice and palliative medicine may offer materials or review/preparatory courses relevant to the examination for HMDCB candidates. HMDCB neither sponsors nor endorses training, educational opportunities or preparatory courses for the HMDCB examination.

The list below is for informational purposes only. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of sources.

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM)  
847-375-4712  
[www.aahpm.org](http://www.aahpm.org)

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services/Conditions of Participation for Hospices (CoPs)  
[www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov)

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)  
703-837-1500  
[www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org)

Weatherbee Resources  
866-969-7124  
[www.weatherbeeresources.com](http://www.weatherbeeresources.com)

Or contact your state hospice organization.



## Detailed Content Blueprint

Approximate  
Percent of  
Examination

### 1. Patient and Family Care

20%

- A. Provide medical direction and support for:
  - 1. family meetings
  - 2. goals of care
  - 3. advance care planning (e.g., DNR, Medical Power of Attorney, Surrogate Decision-Maker)
  - 4. medication selection and deprescribing
- B. Assess and support cultural and personal diversities (e.g., age, race, gender identity)
- C. Assess and support emotional, spiritual, and psychosocial characteristics and needs
- D. Educate about disease trajectory (e.g., prognosis, symptom management, potential complications, and impending death)
- E. Assess and document the patient's decision-making capacity
- F. Facilitate surrogate's role in decision making
- G. Recognize social determinants of health and collaborate with the interdisciplinary group to assess and manage them
- H. Understand issues with family dynamics (e.g., coping styles, psychological defenses, and developmental stages)

### 2. Medical Knowledge

30%

- A. Assess and differentiate types of pain including total pain
- B. Assess and manage acute and chronic pain:
  - 1. opioids
  - 2. non-opioids
  - 3. non-pharmacologic measures (including complementary and alternative therapies)
- C. Assess and manage non-pain symptoms:
  - 1. opioids
  - 2. non-opioids
  - 3. non-pharmacologic measures (including complementary and alternative therapies)
- D. Assess and manage side effects and complications of commonly used medications (e.g., opioids, benzos, anti-psychotics, and steroids)
- E. Assess and manage diagnoses (e.g., delirium, dementia, depression, and anxiety)
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of:
  - 1. settings where hospice and palliative care are provided
  - 2. patient assessment and management across hospice care settings
  - 3. substance use disorder and dependence/tolerance
  - 4. brain death, persistent vegetative state, and minimal conscious state
  - 5. normal and complex grief
  - 6. pediatric life-threatening conditions
  - 7. signs and symptoms of impending death
  - 8. alternative routes of medication delivery
  - 9. palliative sedation
  - 10. prognostic assessment tools (e.g. FAST, PPS, BMI, KPS, ECOG, NYHA)
  - 11. artificial nutrition (i.e., benefits and burden)
- G. Manage medication selection and deprescribing based on disease trajectory
- H. Assess the risk and manage substance use disorder or diversion
  - I. Identify indications for interventional symptom management (e.g., nerve blocks, radiation therapy)
- J. Determine prognosis (e.g., comorbid and secondary conditions, medical findings, disease progression, medications and treatment)
- K. Manage withdrawal of life-sustaining therapies



## Detailed Content Blueprint

Approximate  
Percent of  
Examination

### 3. Medical Leadership and Communication

14%

- A. Facilitate empathic communication (e.g., acknowledge what another person is experiencing)
- B. Facilitate conflict resolution and 'service recovery'
- C. Facilitate effective communication between hospice staff and community providers
- D. Provide ongoing education for hospice staff:
  - 1. certification and recertification
  - 2. development of a plan of care
  - 3. symptom management
  - 4. clinical assessments and face-to-face encounters
  - 5. pharmacy and formulary management
  - 6. documentation of care
- E. Support staff around difficult decisions and care scenarios
- F. Support the interdisciplinary group process

### 4. Professionalism

10%

- A. Recognize and manage fatigue and burnout
- B. Knowledge of strategies of self-care
- C. Understand and promote healthy boundaries with colleagues, patients, and families
- D. Disclose medical errors in accord with institutional policies and professional ethics
- E. Collaborate with physicians and other health professionals to coordinate the plan of care
- F. Promote patient privacy and confidentiality
- G. Apply the five principles of medical ethics to:
  - 1. informed consent
  - 2. truth-telling
  - 3. withholding/withdrawing life-sustaining therapies
  - 4. medical futility
  - 5. voluntary stopping of eating and drinking (VSED)
  - 6. request for medical aid in dying
  - 7. euthanasia
  - 8. principle of double effect
  - 9. conflicts of interest

### 5. Regulatory Compliance and Quality Improvement

26%

- A. Understand hospice services as outlined in the Conditions of Participation (CoPs):
  - 1. access to core services
  - 2. access to allied health professionals (e.g., speech therapist, nutritionist)
  - 3. levels of care
  - 4. responsibility for medical care when the attending is not available
  - 5. continuous quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI)
  - 6. patient safety
  - 7. emergency preparedness
  - 8. community providers (e.g., GV and GW modifiers)
  - 9. hospice providers (e.g., medical visits, FTF encounters, pre-hospice consult, NP billing)
- B. Comply with regulations regarding certification of terminal illness (CTI):
  - 1. local coverage determinations including their limitations
  - 2. determination of relatedness of comorbidities
  - 3. physician narratives (e.g., timing, content)
  - 4. face-to-face encounters
  - 5. documentation of noncoverage of medications and treatments



# Continuing Certification Program Candidate Handbook

## Detailed Content Blueprint

Approximate  
Percent of  
Examination

- C. Understand the process of:
  - 1. audits (e.g., additional development requests (ADR), Targeted Probe and Education (TPE))
  - 2. redetermination, appeals, and testifying to the Administrative Law Judge
  - 3. technical and medical denials
  - 4. survey process (e.g., CMS, State Department of Health, other accrediting organizations)

Each test form will include 100 scored items.

Cognitive Levels: Approximately 17 to 23 percent of items will require Recall on the part of the candidate; approximately 49 to 55 percent of items will require Application of knowledge, and 25 to 31 percent will require Analysis.

# EXAMINATION DAY

The HMDCB CCP examination consists of 100 multiple-choice questions and will be given via computer at a PSI Test Center. Candidates will have two hours to complete the examination. Candidates do not need any computer experience or typing skills to take the computer examination. On the day of the examination appointment, a candidate should plan to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the appointment. However, IF A CANDIDATE ARRIVES MORE THAN 15 MINUTES AFTER THE SCHEDULED TESTING TIME, THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED.

## Identification

To gain admission to the Test Center, candidates must present two forms of identification. The primary form must be government issued, current and include a name, signature and photograph. No form of temporary identification will be accepted. Candidates will also be required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

- Examples of valid primary forms of identification are: driver's license with photograph; state identification card with photograph; passport; military identification card with photograph.
- The secondary form of identification must display the candidate's name and signature for signature verification (e.g., credit card with signature, social security card with signature, employment/student ID card with signature).
- If a candidate's name on their registration is different than it appears on the identification, candidates must bring proof of their name change (e.g., marriage license, divorce decree or court order).

Without acceptable forms of identification, candidates will not be allowed to test and will forfeit the examination fee. PSI reserves the right to deny a candidate from taking the examination if there is a question in regards to the validity of the ID(s).

## Security

PSI administration and security standards are designed to ensure all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The Test Center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers or cellular/smart phones are allowed in the testing room. Possession of a cellular/smart phone or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination.
- No calculators are allowed.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

## Personal Belongings

No personal items, valuables or weapons should be brought to the Test Center. Only wallets and keys are permitted. Large coats and jackets must be left outside the testing room. Candidates will be provided a soft locker (a small backpack) to store wallet and/or keys in the testing room. The proctor will lock the soft locker prior to the candidate entering the testing room. Candidates will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed. Please note that wallets, watches, keys and hats will not be allowed in the testing room except securely locked in the soft locker.

Once personal belongings have been placed in the soft locker, candidates will be asked to pull out their pockets to ensure they are empty. If candidates bring personal items that will not fit in the soft locker, they will not be able to test. The site will not store or be responsible for personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed or heard (e.g., cellular/smart phones, alarms) in the testing room after the examination is started, the candidate will be dismissed and the administration will be forfeited.

## Examination Restrictions

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- Candidates will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination, unless noted on the sign-in roster for a particular candidate. Candidates must return the scratch paper to the proctor at the completion of testing.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the Test Center.

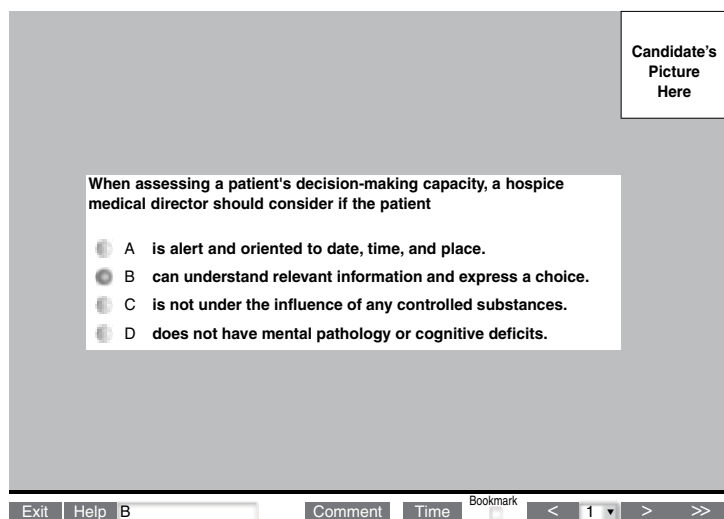
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking is not permitted in the Test Center.
- Candidates may take a break whenever they wish, but will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

## Practice Examination

After the candidate's identification has been confirmed, they will be directed to a testing carrel and instructed on-screen to enter their unique identification number. A photograph of the candidate, taken before beginning the examination, will remain on-screen throughout the examination session. Prior to attempting the examination, candidates will be given the opportunity to practice taking an examination on the computer. The time taken for this practice examination is NOT counted as part of the examination time or score. Once comfortable with the computer testing process, candidates may quit the practice session and begin the timed examination.

## Timed Examination

Following the practice examination, candidates will be allowed up to 180 minutes to answer 150 multiple choice questions for the examination. Before beginning, instructions for taking the examination are provided on-screen.



The screenshot shows a computer screen with a question box and a list of four multiple-choice options. In the top right corner, there is a box labeled 'Candidate's Picture Here'. At the bottom of the screen, there is a navigation bar with buttons for 'Exit', 'Help', 'Comment', 'Time', and 'Bookmark', along with a question number indicator showing '1' and navigation arrows.

**When assessing a patient's decision-making capacity, a hospice medical director should consider if the patient**

- ☐ A is alert and oriented to date, time, and place.
- ☐ B can understand relevant information and express a choice.
- ☐ C is not under the influence of any controlled substances.
- ☐ D does not have mental pathology or cognitive deficits.

Exit Help B Comment Time Bookmark < 1 > >>

The computer monitors the time spent on the examination. The examination will terminate if the time allowed is exceeded. Candidates may click on the "Time" box in the lower menu bar on the screen to monitor time. A digital clock indicates the time remaining to complete the examination. The Time feature may be turned off during the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the lower right of the screen. Choices of answers to the examination question are identified as A, B, C or D. Candidates must indicate their choice by either typing the letter in the response box in the lower left portion of the computer screen or clicking on the option using the mouse. To change an answer, enter a different option typing in the letter in the response box or by clicking on the option using the mouse. Candidates may change their answer as many times as they desire during the examination time limit.

To move to the next question, click on the forward arrow (>) in the lower right portion of the screen. This action will move a candidate forward through the examination question by question. To review any question(s), click the backward arrow (<) or use the left arrow key to move backward through the examination.

An examination question may be left unanswered for return later in the examination session. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by clicking in the blank square to the right of the Time button.

To identify all unanswered and/or bookmarked questions, click on the double arrows (>>). When the examination is completed, the number of examination questions answered is reported. If not all questions have been answered and there is time remaining, candidates may return to the examination and answer those questions. Be sure to provide an answer for each examination question before exiting the examination. **There is no penalty for guessing.**

### Candidate Comments

During the examination, candidates may make comments for any question by clicking on the Comment button to the left of the Time button. This opens a dialogue box where comments may be entered. Comments will be reviewed, but individual responses will not be provided. Candidates may also leave comments regarding the testing facility with the proctor after completing their examination.

### Misconduct

Candidates will be observed at all times while taking the examination. This includes direct observation by test center proctors as well as video and audio monitoring of computer-based testing sessions. Test proctors are required to report to HMDCB any irregular or improper behavior by a candidate. Irregular behavior may include but is not limited to the following

- creating a disturbance or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative;
- talking;
- giving or obtaining information or aid;

- looking at the test materials of others;
- making notes, except on the paper provided by and returned to the proctor;
- displaying or using electronic devices (e.g., pagers, cell phones);
- attempting to take the examination for someone else;
- failing to comply with time limits or instructions.

HMDCB and PSI will work together to thoroughly investigate any reports of irregularities at a test center, and HMDCB holds the authority to cancel any score resulting from an irregularity.

### Copyrighted Examination Questions

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of HMDCB. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject candidates to severe civil and criminal penalties.

# POST EXAMINATION

After completing the examination, candidates will be asked to answer a short evaluation of their experience then report to the examination proctor to receive an examination completion report.

## Examination Results and Notification

Immediately after completing the examination, candidates will receive a score report at the test center detailing their examination results and feedback on their performance in the major competency areas tested. HMDCB will not report scores by phone, email or fax.

## Test Scoring

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score was the Angoff method, applied during a passing point study conducted by a panel of experts in the field. The experts evaluated each question on the examination to determine how many correct answers would be necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to pass. A candidate's ability to pass the examination depends on the knowledge and skills demonstrated, not on the performance of other candidates. Passing points for subsequent forms of the examination should be based on statistical equating to maintain a comparable standard of competence.

## Certificates and Designation

The HMDC credential mark and logo are the property of HMDCB. The designation, "HMDC" signifies that an individual has completed the requirements for the certification or renewal of certification. The HMDCB grants limited permission to individuals who have met all of the certification or renewal of certification requirements and received such notification from the HMDCB to use the HMDC designation. Use of the HMDC credential by individuals who have not been granted certification or renewal of certification, or who have failed to properly maintain certification in good standing is prohibited. Improper use of the credential may result in disciplinary action. Certificates will be mailed to candidates who pass the exam 2-3 weeks after the exam window closes.

## Reexamination

Candidates can test once per calendar year. If the Continu-

ing Certification process is not completed by the time of the certificate expiration, HMDCB will no longer recognize the individual as an HMDC.

## Scores Cancelled by HMDCB or PSI

HMDCB and PSI are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores they report. On occasion, occurrences such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate may cause a score to be suspect. PSI reserves the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, any violation of its regulations is discovered.

## Verification of Scores

In computer-delivered testing, the computer accepts responses from a keyboard or mouse in digitized form. As a result, computer-administered testing eliminates problems that may have previously arisen with scanning paper-and-pencil answer sheets, since all responses are recorded by candidates during their examination. However, verification of examination scores from electronic responses can be requested in writing for a fee of \$25. Requests must be submitted to PSI, in writing, no later than 12 months after the examination administration date, and must include the candidate's name, unique identification number, mailing address, and examination date. Please allow at least 10 business days for processing requests after receipt by PSI. Requests should be mailed to PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061.

## Duplicate Score Report

To request a duplicate score report, contact PSI at 855-579-4641 or contact HMDCB at [info@hmdcb.org](mailto:info@hmdcb.org).

## Reinstatement

If certification is revoked due to failure to recertify, the individual must submit a new application and pass the initial examination to earn the certification.



# POLICIES

## Confidentiality

Information about candidates and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no information that identifies any candidate, unless authorized by that individual.

## Revocation and Misconduct Policy

In the interest of protecting the integrity of HMDCB and its certification credential, HMDCB may investigate any allegation of one or more of the following and may take whatever action is appropriate, including, but not limited to, denial of eligibility to take the certification examination or renew certification or revocation of certification:

- a. Revocation, suspension, probation, voluntary surrender or any other limitation imposed on the individual's medical license by the jurisdiction's licensing authority
- b. Misrepresentation of HMDCB certification or other unauthorized use of the HMDC credential. Unauthorized use is defined as the use of the HMDC credential by a noncertified individual in a way that would lead a third party to believe the individual is certified
- c. Failure to satisfactorily respond to an audit or falsification of an application for the examination or for renewal of certification or of any other material information requested by the HMDCB
- d. Failure to fulfill the requirements for renewal of certification before the specified deadline
- e. The giving or receiving of assistance in the examination, as evidenced by observation and/or statistical analysis of an applicant's answers, or any irregular behavior during the examination process or violation of testing procedures

- f. The unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any HMDCB examination-related materials before, during, or after the examination
- g. Any violation of the Code of Professional Conduct by an HMDC applicant or certificant.

Reconsideration and appeal procedures are available to individuals who wish to contest an adverse decision on the part of HMDCB as outlined in the Reconsideration and Appeals Policy.

The procedures for revocation and misconduct are available at [www.hmdcb.org](http://www.hmdcb.org) or upon request from HMDCB.

## Reconsideration and Appeals

Any aggrieved individual may appeal a decision by the HMDCB to deny eligibility to take the certification examination or renew certification or to revoke certification but may not challenge the requirements themselves. Failure of an examination is not grounds for appeal. HMDCB reconsideration and appeal procedures are not available for challenges to the content specifications of the examination, the methodology used to establish the scores reported to the candidate, or the methodology used to establish or apply the minimum passing standard for the examination.

A request for reconsideration may be filed by an aggrieved individual within 30 days of the HMDCB's decision by submitting a written request to HMDCB's executive director by a traceable mailing service. The process and procedures for reconsideration and appeal are available at [www.hmdcb.org](http://www.hmdcb.org), or upon request from HMDCB.



## Documentation of Disability-Related Needs

Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that PSI is able to provide the required accommodations.

### Professional Documentation

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ in my capacity as a

Candidate Name

Date

My Professional Title

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form.

Description of Disability: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ License # (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit this form with your online request at:**

**[https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket\\_form\\_id=360000991112](https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360000991112)**

**If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 1-800-367-1565 Ext 6750.**

