Self-Assessment CME

Self-Assessment Presentation, Questions, and Rationale: Due March 15, 2020

Please email your self-assessment PowerPoint presentation, questions, and rationale to conferencecme@aapa.org by the deadline.

Guidelines for Writing Self-Assessment Questions

The purpose of self-assessment is to allow learners to systematically review their knowledge and skill in a given area of practice, identify gaps, and to remediate the identified gaps through the use of a rationale or other materials provided as part of the learning activity. Although self-assessment can take a number of forms, the most common format involves a series of multiple-choice questions supported by a rationale for the correct answer and other supporting information. Learners generally engage in self-assessment in an "open book" format.

Self-assessment activities usually focus on assessing a particular area of medicine or practice and cover knowledge and skills that are considered foundational to successful practice. Developers of self-assessment activities should be guided by the Competencies for the PA Profession in selecting material for assessment to ensure that self-assessment is relevant to PA practice and the regulatory and requirements for Certification Maintenance, state licensing, and institutional privileging. More information on competencies and competency assessment may be found here: https://www.aapa.org/career-central/employer-tools/employing-a-pa/competencies-physician-assistant-profession/

Self-assessment is NOT intended to be a test of the ability to recall trivial information, nor should it focus on the recall of factual information alone. At its best, self-assessment should help a PA to assess his or her ability to apply basic concepts from a particular area of medicine or surgery in a realistic clinical context. While a good fund of knowledge is foundational, it is the ability to use what one knows productively that matters most. Self-assessment test developers may feel the need to test for the most important foundational knowledge. However, they are urged to assess the application of knowledge whenever possible.

A self-assessment question generally consists of the following parts:
- Stem (the question)
- Correct answer
- Alternative answers
- Detailed rationale
- References to other supporting literature

Most self-assessment questions are preceded by a clinical vignette or case. The vignette helps to place the issue into a meaningful clinical context. The added clinical context also aids the question writer in ensuring that the question involves the use of knowledge rather than simple recall of facts.

Copyright

When preparing self-assessment questions it is important to avoid plagiarism and other practices that might infringe on the rights of others. When developing self-assessment questions, be sure that the end

product is clearly your work rather than a lightly edited "borrowing" of the work belonging to someone else.

Below is an example of what is considered plagiarism and copyright infringement. The following vignette was submitted by a test committee member:

A 58 year old smoker is found to have malignant squamous cells in a sputum cytology specimen. Chest x-ray (CXR), computer tomography (CT) scans and bronchoscopy are all normal. Random biopsies of all segmental orifices reveal squamous cell carcinoma at the origin of the anterior segment of the right upper lobe. A right thoracotomy is performed, but no palpable tumor can be found. What is the next most appropriate course of action?

A very similar question was found in The Annals of Thoracic Surgery, the official journal of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons and the Southern Thoracic Surgical Association:

A 55-year-old smoker is found to have malignant squamous cells in a sputum cytology specimen. Chest roentgenogram, tomograms of both lungs, and bronchoscopy are all normal. Random biopsies of all segmental orifices reveal squamous cell carcinoma at the origin of the anterior segment of the right upper lobe. A right thoracotomy is done, but no palpable tumor can be found. The appropriate treatment would be:

(Thoracic Surgery Quiz. Ann Thorac Surg. 1982;33:414. http://ats.ctsnetjournals.org/cgi/reprint/33/4/414.pdf. Published April 1982. Accessed February 5, 2012.)

In short, changing the words of someone else's work does not make it your own and is against the law.

Some resources for writing multiple choice questions:
- Page 5 of **Self-Assessment Design Guide for Live CME Activities**
  - https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Self-Assessment_Design_Guide_for_Live_CME_Activities.pdf
- https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/writing-good-multiple-choice-test-questions/
- https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/teaching/check-learning/question-types/multiple-choice
- http://theelearningcoach.com/elearning_design/rules-for-multiple-choice-questions/
- https://testing.byu.edu/handbooks/14%20Rules%20for%20Writing%20Multiple-Choice%20Questions.pdf