Exam Objective: To measure the overall clinical knowledge of the Registered Nurse in the PACU setting.

Knowledge Domains - PACU RN

- Cardiac, Pulmonary, & Vascular Systems (25%)
- Intraabdominal & Retroperitoneal Observations (7%)
- Maxillofacial, Nasopharyngeal, Ophthalmic (12%)
- Neurologic, Neurovascular, & Musculoskeletal (16%)
- PACU Clinical Practice (9%)
- PACU Pharmacology (7%)
- Physiologic Balance (9%)
- Professional Issues (9%)
I. Cardiac, Pulmonary, & Vascular Systems
   A. Knowledge of oxygen delivery and different types of devices used to administer supplemental O2.
      1. Ventilator
      2. Nasal Cannula
      3. Mask
      4. Non-rebreather
      5. CPAP
      6. BIPAP
   B. Knowledge of troubleshooting and management of different oxygen delivery systems.
   C. Knowledge of diagnostic laboratory values and interpretation for appropriate nursing intervention related to cardiac, pulmonary, and vascular surgeries.
   D. Knowledge of assessment and management of various tubes/drains related to cardiac, pulmonary and vascular surgeries.
   E. Knowledge of age specific considerations related to patient assessment and monitoring.
   F. Knowledge of potential complications related to airway management.

II. Intraabdominal & Retroperitoneal Observations
    A. Knowledge of post-op assessment and recognizing complications related to intraabdominal and retroperitoneal surgeries.
    B. Knowledge of appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment), standard precautions and performing universal protocol.
    C. Knowledge of body systems related to intraabdominal and retroperitoneal surgeries.
III. Maxillofacial, Nasopharyngeal & Ophthalmic
   A. Knowledge of special considerations in airway management related to maxillofacial and nasopharyngeal surgeries particularly with fractures.
   B. Knowledge of potential post-op complications related to head and neck surgeries.
      1. Hemorrhage
      2. Dressing/Packing
      3. Electrolyte Imbalances
   C. Knowledge of post-op patient positioning related to head and neck surgeries.
   D. Knowledge of common surgeries performed on the head and neck.

IV. Neurologic, Neurovascular, & Musculoskeletal
   A. Knowledge of dermatome scale used for assessing spinal anesthesia.
   B. Knowledge of post-op airway management following neurologic, neurovascular, & musculoskeletal surgeries.
   C. Knowledge of post-op assessment and recognizing complications related to neurologic, neurovascular, & musculoskeletal systems.

V. PACU Clinical Practice
   A. Knowledge of normal/abnormal values and waveforms of invasive hemodynamic monitoring catheters and capnography.
   B. Knowledge of nursing interventions necessary for adequate airway management including discontinuation/insertion of airway device.
   C. Knowledge of comprehensive priority physical assessment of all body systems for the post-op patient.
   D. Knowledge of Aldrete scale used for assessment.
E. Knowledge of potential complications as a result of the operative experience:
   1. Tissue perfusion
   2. Thermal regulation
   3. Hemodynamic status
   4. Hemorrhage
   5. Shock
   6. Atelectasis
   7. Laryngospasm
   8. Aspiration

VI. PACU Pharmacology
   A. Knowledge of commonly used medications as part of the peri-operative care management.
      1. Anesthetics
      2. Narcotic analgesics
      3. Paralytics
      4. Anesthetic reversal agents
      5. Sedatives
      6. Antihypertensives
      7. Antiemetics
   B. Knowledge anesthesia techniques used for the surgical patient - general, regional, spinal, moderate sedation, conscious sedation - including phases of anesthesia.
   C. Knowledge of dosage calculations for medications given via different routes - IV drip, IM, Subcutaneous, PO, SL.
   D. Knowledge of risk assessment and appropriate nursing interventions related to patient’s allergies, latex allergy, and malignant hyperthermia.
VII. Physiologic Balance

A. Knowledge of arterial blood gas interpretation and appropriate nursing interventions.

B. Knowledge of nursing interventions for undesired physiological responses.

C. Knowledge of assessment and nursing interventions for:
   1. Hypovolemia
   2. Electrolyte imbalances
   3. Rhabdomyolysis
   4. Nausea/Vomiting
   5. Malignant hyperthermia

VIII. Professional Issues

A. Knowledge of advance directives and Do Not Resuscitate orders, particularly how they are identified and carried out in the PACU setting.

B. Knowledge of principles to delegate, educate, and mentor other healthcare team members.

C. Knowledge of professional entities requirements and guidelines:
   1. HIPAA Guidelines
   2. ASPAN Standards of Practice

D. Knowledge of professional scope of practice in relation to PACU, including legal and ethical standards.

E. Knowledge of principles in reporting potential situations, such as possible drug diversion/impairment, medication errors, sentinel events, etc.