

APRIL 26-28, 2026

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2026

AAOHN NATIONAL CONFERENCE



ORLANDO, FLORIDA

ROSEN SHINGLE CREEK

2026

AAOHN NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Disclosures

Accreditation statement: The **American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. (AAOHN)** is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the **American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.**

Contact hours: 1.0

Successful completion: complete the evaluation form for this session.

Disclosures: None of the planners or presenters for this activity have a relevant financial relationship to disclose with ineligible companies.



Strengthening Our Profession:

A Panel on OHN Certification and Review Course Success

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Session Goals

- **Describe** the professional and organizational benefits of national board certification for occupational health nurses.
- **Identify** key components and expectations of a board certification review course offered through ABOHN.
- **Explain** the practice gap in OHN certification rates and discuss barriers and facilitators to certification.
- **Outline** strategies to prepare for and successfully complete the board certification exam.
- **Recognize** how board certification contributes to professional identity, leadership development, and quality improvement in occupational health nursing.

**Dr. Kathleen Golden, DNP, MSN, ANP-BS, COHN-S,
CCM, FAAOHN, FAANP**

Catherine Pepler, RN, MBA, COHN-S/CM, FAAOHN

**Dr. Betty Sanisidro, DNP, MSN, COHN-S, APHN-BC,
FAAOHN**

Michele Willis, BSN, RN, COHN-S, FAAOHN

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Why SPECIALTY Board Certification Matters

Advancing Excellence in Occupational Health Nursing

Validates Specialized Knowledge

- Demonstrates advanced expertise in occupational and environmental health nursing
- Confirms your ability to apply specialized knowledge in workplace health and safety
- Elevates your professional standing in the occupational and environmental health community

Commitment to Excellence

- Reflects dedication to professional development in our specialty
- Signals a lifelong learning mindset
- Enhances clinical and leadership capabilities

Strengthens your Professional Impact

- Builds credibility with colleagues, employers, and clients
- Elevates your reputation in the field
- Positions you as a trusted leader in occupational and environmental health

Aligns with Standards and Best Practices

- Demonstrates adherence to evidence-based guidelines
- Reinforces quality assurance and compliance
- Aligns your practice with national industry benchmarks

Additional Professional Benefits

- Enhances/expands job opportunities and career mobility
- Improves performance within the role, potentially expanding opportunities for advancement
- May lead to higher compensation or bonuses
- Boosts eligibility for leadership roles and special projects
- Offers a network of certified professionals for support and collaboration

Sense of Belonging and Networking

- Connects you with a community of professionals committed to excellence
- Fosters mentoring and professional development relationships
- Promotes collaboration and idea-sharing across diverse work settings
- Builds a sense of belonging, confidence, and identity within the occupational health specialty, lending credibility to the specialty

Impact on Patient Care Outcomes

- Improves consistency and quality of clinical decision-making
- Enhances early identification and intervention in workplace injuries and illnesses
- Board certified nurses are more likely to follow evidence-based protocols
- Promotes better return-to-work outcomes and employee satisfaction
- Supports comprehensive health surveillance and risk reduction strategies

Board Certification and Ambulatory Care Outcomes

- Promotes standardized, evidence-based care in outpatient settings
- Enhances triage, injury prevention, and chronic disease follow-up
- Leads to improved patient satisfaction and safety outcomes
- Supports rapid response and continuity of care across visits
- Certified nurses are more likely to participate in quality improvement initiatives

Summary: Certification as a Strategic Investment

- Validates expertise and builds professional credibility
- Improves patient and workplace health outcomes
- Promotes leadership, career advancement, and job satisfaction
- Supports excellence in both clinical and administrative roles
- Enhances networking, collaboration, and sense of belonging

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- **AAOHN Foundation Scholarships & Grants**

AAOHN Foundation - 501c(3) Charitable Organization

- The AAOHN Foundation exists as a non-profit organization to provide grants and scholarships that support OHN leadership and professional development, academic advancement, and advancement of research within the field of Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing, all in an effort to improve worker health and safety
- We rely on charitable contributions from individuals and sponsorship from organizations to fund these grants and scholarships

Foundation Certification Scholarship

Support or advance:

- training
- education
- professional development
- leadership development
- career advancement

Specifically, supports Occupational Health Nurse or Occupational Health Nurse-Specialist Certification (ABOHN).

Typically, open year-round.

-Specialist Certification (ABOHN).

Typically, open year-round.

SCHOLARSHIP Application

AAOHN Foundation webpage

- <https://www.aaohn.org/AAOHN-Foundation/Grants-Scholarship>

What Do Review Committees Look For?

- Application should be complete, professional, & adhere to requirements (be sure you meet eligibility criteria)
- If letters of recommendation are requested, submit them
- Use your narrative/essay to address the areas being reviewed or judged; look at the selection criteria and write to that first, using specific examples
- Demonstrate why you should receive this over another (financial need, applicability to your career, how this will support you to help others/advance the profession)
- Demonstrate how you will give back or pay it forward

Practical Tips

- Take your time, plan-ahead, and submit everything that is requested in a manner in which it is requested; communicate if you cannot
- Use step-by-step approach, stay focused and remain positive
- Remain professional throughout, including using a naming convention for submission of documents and using an email address that is clear and legible
- Tailor the submission to the organization, ensuring that you meet requirements, demonstrate financial need, and the impact certification will make on your career – how it will support you in your role
- Aim to demonstrate the organizational return on investment – how you will share what you learned with the organization, your employer, and within the specialty

Submitting the Application

- Review the specific instructions before you begin and again before you submit; this is critical-adhere to page length, font type and spacing, and other specifications to ensure your submission is reviewed
- Approach the application in a step-by-step manner, stay positive, and remain focused; this will ensure it is not as difficult as you imagined
- Invest your time to adequately prepare and pay attention to detail; this will increase your likelihood of success
- Ensure that you meet the minimum requirements, whether that be education, licensing, membership, experience within the specialty, etc. and clearly demonstrate this with proof in your documentation and submission

Congratulations! Now What?

- Awardee must apply to test **within 3 months** of notification of receiving scholarship award
- Notify the Foundation when exam application is submitted and approved by ABOHN, the date planned to sit for exam, and upon notification of results to ensure payment is submitted. Recipient is responsible for notifying Foundation staff/trustees with this information by email to aaohnfoundationhq@gmail.com
- Must sit for the certification exam within **6 months** of exam application approval
- **Funds not utilized within 12 months of award will be forfeited** so it is important to plan-ahead from the beginning, allow ample time for exam application, exam preparation, and exam completion within the calendar year; it is recommended that exam preparation begin in advance of scholarship application to ensure all requirements for ABOHN Certification are met and that you will be able to complete this process within the calendar year of scholarship application .

Award Specifics

Funding details for 2026 Scholarship:

- \$500(max) to fund the AAOHN COHN/COHN-S Certification Review Course
- **OR** cost of purchasing the AAOHN Core Curriculum textbook
- **PLUS** \$150 to fund the ABOHN Certification Exam (COHN or COHN-S) application fee
- **AND** \$350 awarded upon successfully passing ABOHN COHN or COHN-S Certification Exam
- **Reimbursement** - *up to \$1000 reimbursed directly to recipient upon completion & successfully passing and submitting proof of certification, and associated receipts for course or book, test application, and testing fees

Review classes

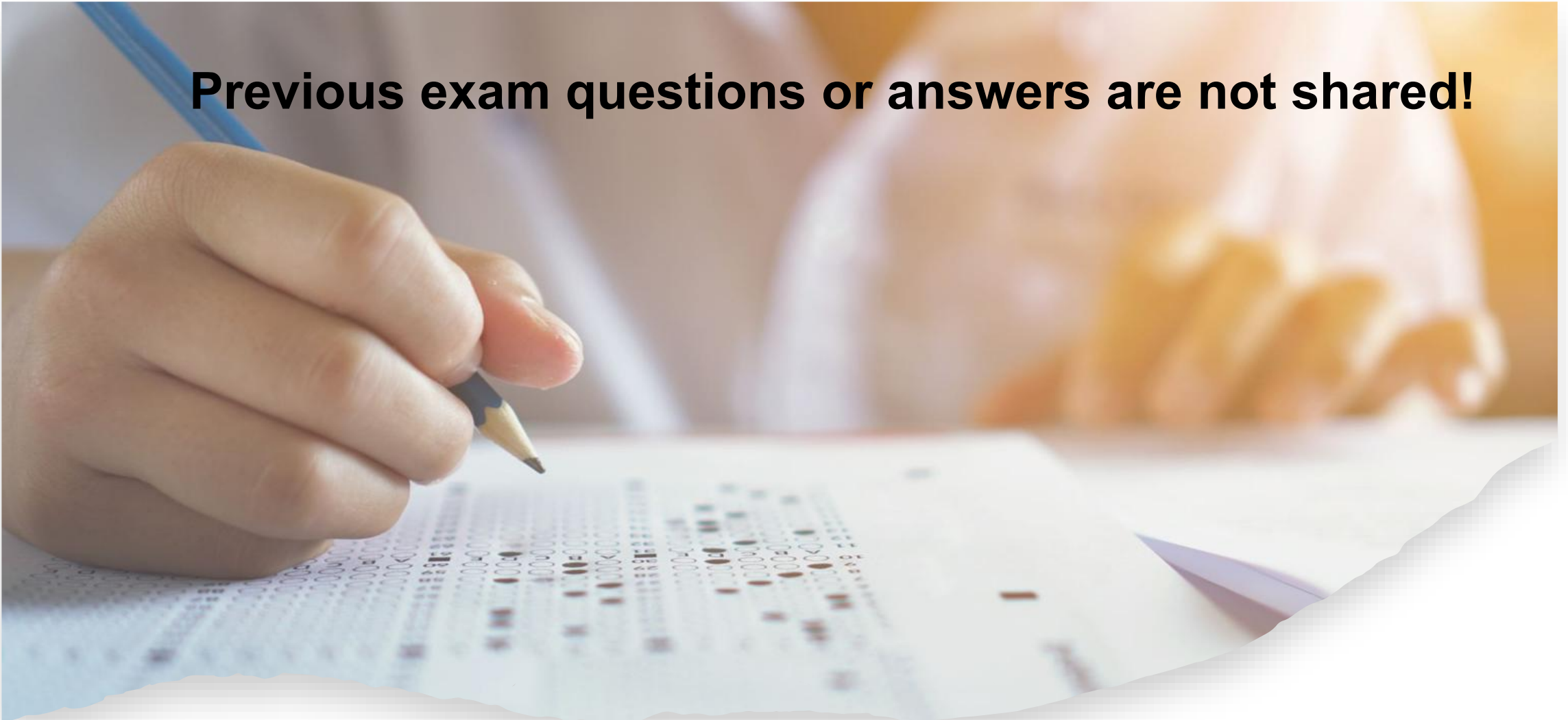
Preparation: A Key to Success

Learning Opportunities

- **Many available: be sure to select a method that resonates with you!**
- **Prep courses: AAOHN and others**
- **Certification Self Assessment Tests (CSATs)**
- **References used for the exams**

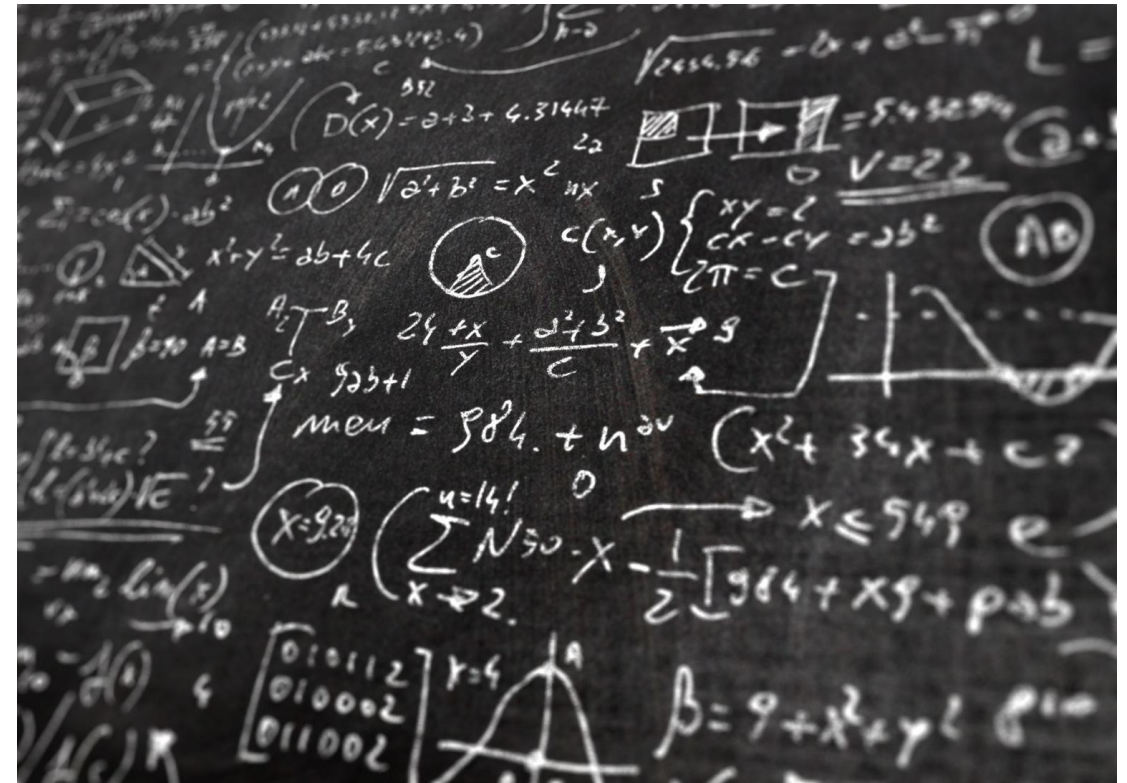
What to Expect

Previous exam questions or answers are not shared!



Courses

- Structured to align with ABOHN outline
- Personalized study plan suggestions
- Pre and post tests



Topics Covered

- Case Management
- Chemical Hazards
- Clinician Role
- Health Promotion
- Industrial Hygiene
- Safety
- Consultant Role
- Emergency Response
- Research
- Recordkeeping
- Information Management
- Biohazards
- Standards & Regulations
- Principles of Leadership & Management
- Stress Management
- Chronic Disease Management
- Physical Hazards & Ergonomics
- Legal & Ethical Issues
- Occupational Health Programs
- Toxicology
- Laws

Pathway to Success











ABOHN Certification Exams

Board Certification: Engage Excellence

Certification vs. certificate

Key Differences

<u>Certification</u>	<u>Certificate</u>
 Earned credential that demonstrates specialized knowledge, experience, and skills	 Educational program that awards a document upon completion
 Focuses on job role or professional practice	 Focuses on a specific skill set or topic
 Longer , broader in scope	 Shorter , narrower in scope
 Requires assessment and validation by a certifying body	 Usually does not require ongoing validation

CERTIFICATIONS OFFERED



- Core Credentials
- Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN)
- Certified Occupational Health Nurse-Specialist (COHN-S)
- Additional Specialty Credential
- Case Management (CM)



- ABOHN conducted a Practice/Job Analysis in 2023 to identify the job activities of occupational health nurses (OHNs).
 - Conducted every 5-7 years or more frequently contingent on needs/changes.
- In national certification examination programs, the examination specifications (ES) must appropriately reflect task responsibilities of all groups who will participate to ensure that the ES and resulting exam include tasks that are important for the target practitioners.
- ABOHN appointed a Practice Analysis Advisory Committee (PAAC) to develop a description of the scope of practice and to create a Job Analysis Survey (JAS) of OHNs and develop the ES for all 3 examinations:
 - **Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN)**
 - **Certified Occupational Health Nurse – Specialist (COHN-S)**
 - **Case Management (CM)**



NEW EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES (ECOs)

What we learned:

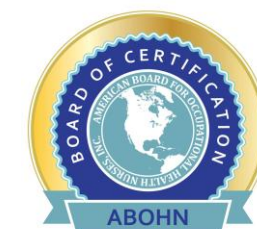
A lot has changed due to and since the pandemic

Exam competency areas needed to be updated

Task list was not inclusive enough

How we responded:

- PAAC reviewed the task and knowledge area survey platform and performance results:
- Estimated the exam content area weights after reviewing the results. The draft content weighting was developed by calculating the criticality value (mean importance rating multiplied by the mean frequency rating) and then determined a percentage weight based on the relative weight of the criticality value for each content area.
- New blueprints developed for all three exams
- ABOHN BOD reviewed and approved the new ECOs in June
- All items were re-classified by July
- New exam forms published in September





COHN Content Areas

2018	2024
1. Clinician Role	1. Clinical Practice and Case Management
2. Coordinator Role	2. Risk and Compliance
3. Advisor Role	3. Program Management and Quality Assurance
4. Case Manager Role	

2018	2024
• 44 Task Statements	• 41 Task Statements

Board Certification: Engage Excellence





COHN-S Content Areas

2018	2024
1. Clinician Role	1. Clinical Practice and Case Management
2. Manager Role	2. Risk and Compliance
3. Educator Role	3. Program Management and Quality Assurance
4. Consultant Role	4. Operations and Business Management
5. Case Manager Role	

2018	2024
• 60 Task Statements	• 58 Task Statements





CM Content Areas



2018	2024
1. Fitness for Work	1. Clinical Practice and Case Management
2. Occupational Disability	2. Risk and Compliance
3. Non-Occupational Disability	3. Program Management and Quality Assurance
4. Case Manager Concepts	

2018	2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 Task Statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37 Task Statements

Board Certification: Engage Excellence



Impact of Changes

	Jan. – July 2024 (PSI)	Jan. – July 2025 (ASC)
COHN	47% Pass Rate 17 Total (8 pass/9 fail)	73.5% Pass Rate 49 Total (36 pass/13 fail)
COHN-S	53% Pass Rate 32 Total (18 pass/16 fail)	72.8% Pass Rate 62 Total (45 pass/17 fail)
CM	100% 3 Total	85% 7 Total (6 pass/1 fail)

PSI: Psychometric Systems Inc.

ASC: Assessment Systems Co.

Board Certification: Engage Excellence



CHOOSING AN EXAM



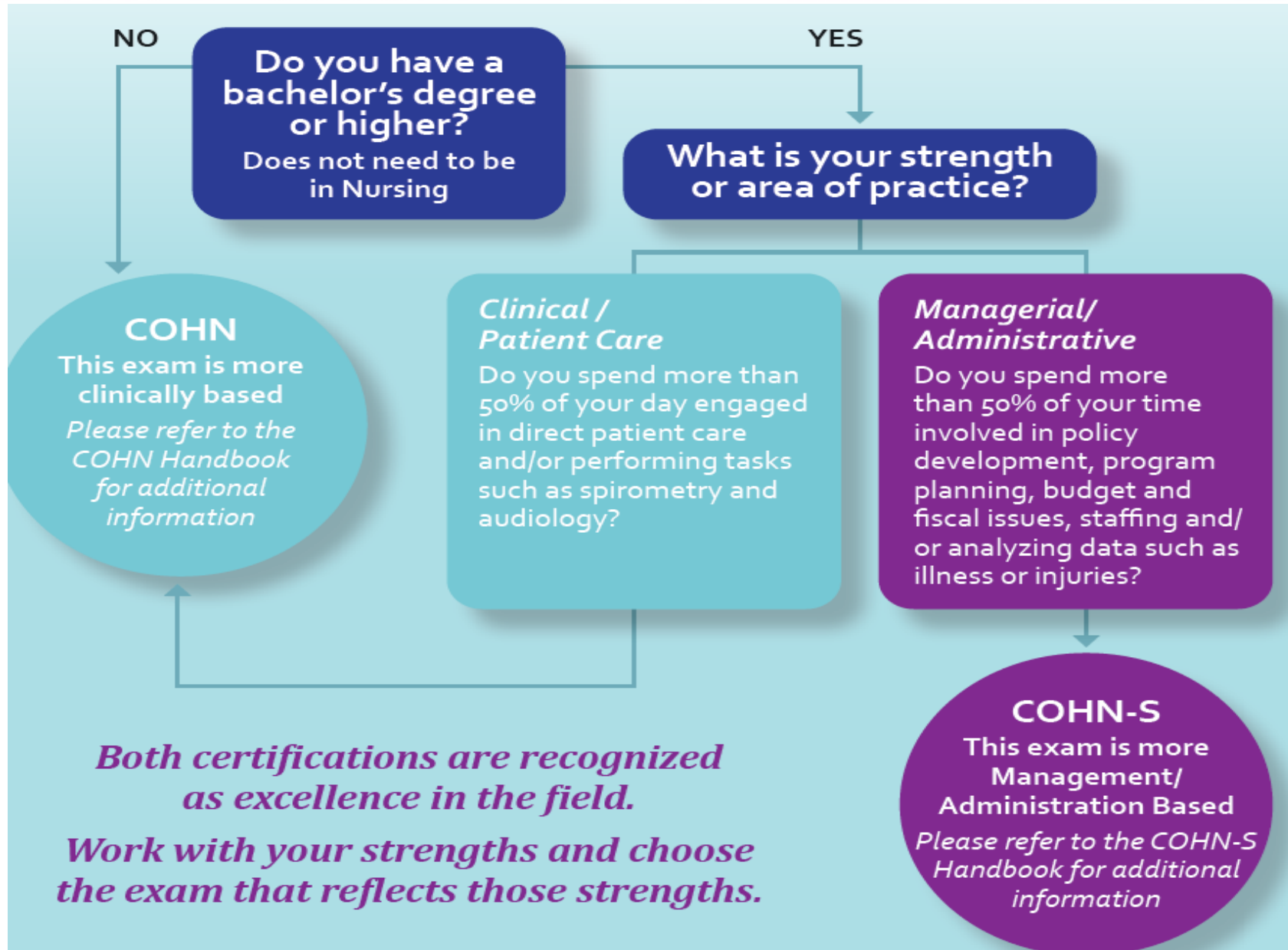
Practice analysis in 2023 determined the primary focus of the ABOHN examinations remain the same:

- COHN: patient centered/clinical care
- COHN-S: managerial/administrative

Both certifications are a mark of distinction, recognizing demonstration of excellence and expertise in the specialty of occupational health nursing



WHICH EXAM IS FOR YOU?



COHN

- Active RN license
- 3000 hours experience in occupational health nursing within the past five years

COHN-S

- Active RN license
- 3000 hours experience in occupational health nursing within the past five years
- Baccalaureate or higher degree (does not have to be in nursing)

CM

- Currently active as a COHN or COHN-S
- Additional 10 continuing education hours in case management

APPLYING FOR THE EXAM

Apply online: www.abohn.org

Fees

- \$150 - Application
- \$400 - Core Exam
- \$250 - CM Exam

Required Documentation

- Nursing license
- Job description
- College transcripts/degree (COHN-S only)



CM EXAM INFORMATION

Case Manager (CM)

- COHN or COHN-S in active status
- Submit 10 hours of CM continuing education

Examination Focus (OHN CM practice)

- Fitness for work
- Occupational disability
- Non-occupational disability
- Case management concepts



EXAM ADMINISTRATION


 Computer-based tests Must be scheduled


 Live remote proctoring On demand 24/7 363 days/year

 Offered year-round Administered by ASC

 Security Identification required

 Timing 3 hours (core
2 hour
Practice test not timed

 Core exams comprised of 135 multiple choice questions with an additional 25 pre-test questions

 CM exam comprised of 100 multiple choice questions with an additional 10 pre-test questions

SUMMARY

✓ Why Get Certified?

- Validates **expertise** and **professional judgment**
- Demonstrates **commitment** to excellence in OHN

☀ Benefits of Certification

- Recognition as a **leader and expert** in the field
- Opportunities for **career growth** and **financial recognition**
- Encourages **lifelong learning, personal, and professional development**

🔗 Why ABOHN?

- Provides **ongoing professional support**
- Respected, nationally recognized certifying body within the field of occupational health



NEXT STEP:

Invest in Yourself & Your Future!



Questions?



Please contact ABOHN office at info@abohn.org



Website: www.abohn.org





References

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