



Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification Examinations Key Initiative

Overview

The new EMR Certification Examination and EMT Certification Examination are built to align with current EMS practices, ensuring they remain relevant and accurate. Based on a comprehensive practice analysis conducted by the National Registry of EMTs, these examinations reflect the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required for safe and competent practice at the BLS level.

To stay current, certification examinations are regularly updated to incorporate advances in clinical practice, research, and the evolving needs of EMS professionals. Input from subject matter experts (SMEs) ensures the examinations accurately assess the competencies essential for safe and effective care, maintaining alignment with EMS standards.

Current Domains:

1. Airway, Respirations, and Ventilation
2. Cardiology and Resuscitation
3. Trauma
4. Medical, Obstetrics, and Gynecology
5. Operations

New Domains:

1. Scene Size-Up and Safety
2. Primary Assessment
3. Secondary Assessment
4. Patient Treatment and Transport
5. Operations

What you Need to Know

The National Registry's BLS practice analysis, which began in 2022, updated the skills and knowledge required for entry-level EMR and EMT roles. Using research methods like event reviews, ride-alongs, interviews, and surveys, data was collected on real-world job tasks. SMEs ensured the findings accurately reflect the knowledge and skills needed for safe and effective performance, forming the foundation for relevant examination content.



Key Takeaways

- * The new EMR Certification Examination and EMT Certification Examination went live on Monday, April 7, 2025.
- * The examination domains have been updated to reflect the current practice of EMRs and EMTs as identified in the 2023 Practice Analysis.

Questions

Q- Why didn't you make this change at the same time as the new ALS examinations?

A- The BLS practice analysis was conducted after the completion of the ALS analysis. It focused on EMRs and EMTs, while the ALS analysis addressed AEMTs and Paramedics. The analyses were conducted separately between the BLS and ALS levels. Although there were similarities, each provided unique insights. The National Registry prioritized the ALS Redesign Initiative first, with a separate BLS analysis conducted later to ensure a thorough assessment of competencies at each level.

Why are the domains changing?

- Q-** The domain change reflects the feedback we received from hundreds of BLS Clinicians. Input was gathered through a multi-step process that included observations, interviews, focus groups, and a validation survey. Ultimately, it was actively working EMRs and EMTs that used these domains to describe the job tasks they felt were critical to perform in their role.

Why is the National Registry changing the name of the BLS examination from "cognitive

Q- examination" to "certification examination?"

A- The National Registry is updating the terminology to align with industry standards in the certification and assessment community. Changing the name from "cognitive" to "certification" more accurately reflects the purpose of the examination, which is to assess the knowledge and skills identified in the practice analysis as essential for competency in the job role. This update ensures clarity and consistency in how the examination is described and its role in certifying individuals for competent practice.

Regarding a psychomotor skills examination or a Student Minimum Competency requirement, does the BLS certification examination include all components of certification, like the ALS certification

Q- examination?

All states require a psychomotor skills component alongside the National Registry BLS Certification Examination. Some states mandate a psychomotor examination, while others use student minimum competency programs to assess practical skills. Please check with your state to determine your specific state-required psychomotor skills examination requirements.

Important Dates to Know

New BLS certification examinations launched Monday, April 7, 2025.