



# PMHNP Nurse Boards Prep 2026

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## Practice Questions

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### 1. In the clinical practice of a PMHNP, what is a key feature of virtue ethics?

- A. Giving importance to the outcomes of actions when making ethical decisions
- B. Utilizing ethical principles to determine the best course of action in specific situations
- C. Prioritizing the rights and autonomy of the patient in ethical decision-making
- D. Making decisions based on individual character and moral excellence

### 2. In order to encourage hospitals to implement meaningful use, the federal government provided financial rewards. Which of the following was NOT required by the incentive program?

- A. Implementation of a government-designed electronic health record
- B. Efficient collection and sharing of data
- C. Utilization of advanced technology in clinical processes
- D. Enhancement of patient outcomes

### 3. During a mental status exam, a PMHNP observes a patient with a history of schizophrenia speaking in a rhythmic pattern, using words that have similar sounds but lack meaning. What is the term used to describe this phenomenon?

- A. Word salad
- B. Clang associations
- C. Echolalia
- D. Neologisms

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### 4. What eye findings may be observed during the physical examination of a patient with schizophrenia?

- A. Unusual smooth pursuit eye movements
- B. Astigmatism
- C. Protrusion of the eyeballs (exophthalmos)
- D. Normal rapid eye movements (saccadic eye movements)



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**5. When implementing the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program for students who have experienced trauma, what is the primary objective?**

- A. To completely eradicate all trauma symptoms in students who have experienced traumatic events
- B. To prevent future traumatic events from happening in the school setting
- C. To encourage students to report traumatic events to school staff and administration
- D. The main aim of CBITS is to assist students in comprehending and dealing with their emotions and responses to traumatic events

**6. During a visit with parents of a two-year-old child, what is the most crucial topic for a PMHNP to discuss as part of anticipatory guidance?**

- A. Restricting screen time
- B. Toilet training
- C. Engaging in reading with the child
- D. Ensuring proper nutrition

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**7. What are the necessary baseline laboratory tests required before starting lithium therapy, which is considered the gold standard treatment for managing manic episodes?**

- A. Additional baseline laboratory tests include a thyroid panel, CBC with diff, and LFTs
- B. Fasting blood sugar (FBS), liver function tests (LFTs), and CBC with diff are also important baseline tests to consider
- C. Prior to initiating lithium therapy, it is important to conduct a thyroid panel, BUN/creatinine, and a pregnancy test
- D. Other laboratory tests that may be conducted include CBC with diff, HA1C, and LFTs

**8. In order to be effective in their role, what should a forensic PMHNP have a solid understanding of?**

- A. Recognizing nonverbal cues displayed by the accused
- B. Conducting proper physical assessments of victims
- C. Ensuring safety, security, managing individuals, and conducting risk assessments
- D. Familiarity with the rights of the accused



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**9. What is the term used to describe the sum of money individuals must pay before their health insurance covers the expenses of healthcare services?**

- A. Copayment
- B. Premium
- C. Loading charge
- D. Deductible

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**10. What is a known risk factor for substance abuse?**

- A. Advanced in age
- B. Feminine gender
- C. Therapy for persistent pathological anxiety
- D. Sustained discomfort

**11. When working with a client who has depression, which of the following is a fundamental element of depressive thinking, according to Beck's cognitive theory of depression?**

- A. Emotional reasoning
- B. Personalization
- C. Catastrophizing
- D. Overgeneralization

**12. What is the hormone imbalance that is most likely to result in a depressed patient waking up early in the morning?**

- A. Increased testosterone
- B. Increased cortisol
- C. Decreased cortisol
- D. Increased catecholamine

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**13. If a patient is displaying disorganized thinking, loose associations, tics, and stereotypic behavior, which neurotransmitter is likely to be in excess?**

- A. Serotonin
- B. Acetylcholine
- C. Norepinephrine
- D. Dopamine

**14. A patient presents with symptoms consistent with frontal lobe dementia, which include a lack of restraint, indifference, and challenges with arranging and coordinating tasks. The psychiatric nurse practitioner should suspect and conduct further evaluation for which of the following conditions?**

- A. Frontotemporal dementia
- B. Alzheimer's Disease
- C. Huntington's Disease
- D. Parkinson's Disease

**15. Which of the following treatment options is not included in the pharmacological management of social anxiety (phobia) disorder?**

- A. SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)
- B. Short-term benzodiazepines
- C. Beta-blockers
- D. Anticonvulsants

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**16. A patient is prescribed memantine to address moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. The PMHNP is knowledgeable about the prescribing guidelines for memantine. Which of the following medications is frequently prescribed alongside memantine?**

- A. It should be utilized in conjunction with an antidepressant
- B. It should be utilized in conjunction with an antipsychotic
- C. It should be utilized in conjunction with a cholinesterase inhibitor
- D. It should be utilized as a standalone treatment



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**17. Which statement best describes managed care?**

- A. An established organization that offers a network of preferred healthcare providers
- B. A system where the insurance company reimburses healthcare providers for the services they render
- C. Managed care is a system where the insurance company not only pays for healthcare but also provides the healthcare services
- D. A traditional payment model based on fees for each service provided

**18. What is the term that refers to a procedure implemented to safeguard the public by ensuring a minimum level of professional competency?**

- A. Registration
- B. Credentialing
- C. Licensure
- D. Certification

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**19. What is the most accurate definition of an insurance benefit?**

- A. It occurs when an insurance company refuses to cover a bill due to unmet required conditions
- B. It refers to the payment made by the insurance company when the insured experiences a loss
- C. It signifies a request made to the insurance company for payment in the event of a loss
- D. It represents the criteria established by an insurance company to authorize specific healthcare services before they are provided

**20. Which of the following statements is true regarding the nurse practitioner's ability to prescribe controlled substances?**

- A. A separate controlled substance license is required for NPs in all states
- B. NPs licensed in states that do not allow prescribing of controlled substances will not receive DEA numbers from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- C. The NPs ability to prescribe controlled substances is determined by DEA regulations
- D. Individual office/practice protocols are overridden by the regulations of the state regarding the NP's prescriptive authority

**21. Which insurance program is financed by both federal and state taxes?**

- A. Medicaid
- B. Medicare
- C. Veterans Health Administration
- D. TriCare



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**22. Which of the following statements about a nurse practitioner's certification is false?**

- A. It is not established by the government
- B. It is granted by a professional organization
- C. It confirms the expertise in a specific medical specialty
- D. It determines the nurse practitioner's range of practice

**23. In what year did the Institute of Medicine (IOM) publish the groundbreaking report that contributed to the popularity of the evidence-based practice movement?**

- A. The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health
- B. Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care
- C. Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century
- D. Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality

**24. Rett syndrome is characterized by the development of specific deficits following a period of normal functioning after birth. As a nurse practitioner assessing a new six-year-old female patient, you carefully observe her mental status and conduct a mental status exam. Which of the following symptoms would NOT be expected in a patient with Rett syndrome?**

- A. Difficulty with speaking and understanding language
- B. Repetitive hand movements
- C. Lack of focus
- D. Reduced emotional expression

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**25. Which of the following is a nonpharmacological approach used to manage major depressive disorders?**

- A. Acupuncture
- B. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)
- C. Ketamine therapy
- D. EEG



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**26. Which of the following psychiatric disorders is not associated with insomnia?**

- A. Borderline personality disorder
- B. Alzheimer's disease
- C. Social anxiety
- D. Bipolar I or II

**27. A woman in her eighties comes to your office with her son, expressing concerns about her declining memory and difficulty recognizing people and remembering things. She has also been experiencing frequent mood swings and struggles with written tasks. Based on this information, what is the most probable diagnosis?**

- A. Huntington's disease
- B. Frontotemporal dementia
- C. Alzheimer's disease
- D. Dementia with Lewy bodies

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**28. How frequently should excessive worry, apprehension, or anxiety persist in order to fulfill the criteria for generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)?**

- A. Anxiety that persists for the majority of the day, lasting for a minimum of one month
- B. On a greater number of days than not, lasting for a minimum of six months
- C. On a greater number of days than not, lasting for a minimum of three months
- D. At least ten days per month, lasting for a minimum of three months

**29. Which of the following inquiries is an instance of clarification?**

- A. "Why do you think that you do...?"
- B. "What would your life be like if you woke up tomorrow and the problem was gone?"
- C. "What surprised you today?"
- D. "What do you mean when you say...?"

**30. Which of the following is a commonly used non-psychoactive supplement that helps alleviate symptoms of various illnesses such as depression, osteoarthritis, and liver disease?**

- A. Omega-3 fatty acids
- B. Tryptophan
- C. Fish oil
- D. SAM-e



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## Answer Key & Explanations

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### 1. D — Making decisions based on individual character and moral excellence

Virtue ethics is an ethical theory that highlights the significance of developing virtuous character traits, such as honesty, bravery, and empathy, to guide ethical decision-making. Rather than focusing on the outcomes of actions or applying ethical principles to specific situations, virtue ethics places emphasis on nurturing moral excellence in the individual

### 2. A — Implementation of a government-designed electronic health record

The incentive program offered financial rewards to hospitals to promote meaningful use. Hospitals were required to demonstrate the following: - Efficient collection and sharing of data - Utilization of advanced technology in clinical processes - Enhancement of patient outcomes

### 3. B — Clang associations

Clang associations, a symptom frequently seen in individuals with schizophrenia, refer to the use of words that are associated with similar sounds rather than their intended meaning. This can manifest as speaking in a rhyming pattern or using words that seemingly have no connection to the topic at hand. For instance, instead of saying "I feel okay, it's getting late, I'm going to have some dinner," a patient may say "I'm fine, it's time, I'll dine on a lime." Clang associations often indicate disordered thinking and can hinder effective communication. Echolalia involves the repetition of words or phrases that have been previously heard. Neologisms are newly created words or phrases that lack meaning to others. Word salad refers to a jumbled assortment of words and phrases that lack logical or meaningful connection

### 4. A — Unusual smooth pursuit eye movements

It is common for individuals with schizophrenia to exhibit abnormal smooth pursuit eye movements. These eye movements are considered a vulnerability marker for schizophrenia. However, there is no significant association between astigmatism or exophthalmos and schizophrenia. Additionally, a patient with schizophrenia is more likely to have atypical rapid eye movements (saccadic eye movements)

### 5. D — The main aim of CBITS is to assist students in comprehending and dealing with their emotions and responses to traumatic events

The primary goal of the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program is to equip students who have experienced trauma with the necessary tools and skills to manage their emotions and reactions to a traumatic event. This intervention is designed to help students understand how trauma affects their thoughts and behaviors and to learn alternative methods for managing their symptoms. Although CBITS aims to reduce the impact of trauma on students, it is not feasible to expect that all trauma symptoms will be completely eliminated. The program does not aim to prevent future traumatic events from occurring, nor does it encourage students to report traumatic events to school staff and administration

### 6. A — Restricting screen time

Anticipatory guidance is an essential aspect of well-child care, involving the provision of information and education to parents to support their child's healthy development. When working with parents of a two-year-old child, the most critical topic to address during this visit is restricting screen time. According to the



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American Academy of Pediatrics, children aged two to five should not exceed one hour of screen time per day, focusing on high-quality programming. Excessive screen time can adversely impact a child's development, leading to language delays, sleep disturbances, and behavioral issues. While topics such as toilet training, reading with the child, and ensuring proper nutrition are all vital for a child's overall development, limiting screen time takes precedence during this visit due to its significant influence on a child's development

**7. C — Prior to initiating lithium therapy, it is important to conduct a thyroid panel, BUN/creatinine, and a pregnancy test**

Before starting lithium therapy for managing manic episodes, it is crucial to assess the patient's thyroid function (thyroid panel), kidney function (BUN/creatinine), and pregnancy status (pregnancy test). Additionally, patients who are 50 years of age or older should also undergo an electrocardiogram (EKG) as part of the baseline assessment

**8. C — Ensuring safety, security, managing individuals, and conducting risk assessments**

To excel in their position, a forensic PMHNP must possess both theoretical and practical knowledge of the criminal justice and mental health systems. Specifically, they should be well-versed in: - The functions of the court system - Litigation procedures - The inner workings of the criminal justice system - Relevant case law and health litigation - Mental health conditions, distorted thinking patterns, and impaired cognition - Ensuring safety, security, managing individuals, and conducting risk assessments However, it is important to note that understanding the rights of the accused, recognizing nonverbal cues displayed by the accused, or conducting proper physical assessments of victims are not included in the primary knowledge base of forensic PMHNPs

**9. D — Deductible**

The deductible represents the amount of money that individuals are required to pay before their health insurance begins covering the costs of healthcare services. A copayment refers to the specific amount individuals are obligated to pay each time they utilize a particular healthcare service. The insurance premium denotes the fee charged for insurance coverage, typically paid on a monthly basis by both the employer and the employee. Lastly, the loading charge signifies the amount added to a person's renewal premium by the health insurance company when they file claims on their policy

**10. D — Sustained discomfort**

Sustained discomfort, such as chronic pain, is recognized as a risk factor for substance abuse. While older individuals and females are less likely to have substance abuse problems, young males are more prone to such issues. Additionally, untreated chronic pathological anxiety is also a known risk factor

**11. C — Catastrophizing**

Beck's cognitive theory of depression suggests that depressive thinking consists of negative and distorted thought patterns that contribute to feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and helplessness. Catastrophizing is a core component of depressive thinking and involves exaggerating the negative consequences of a situation while downplaying any positive aspects. Overgeneralization refers to drawing broad and negative conclusions based on limited information. Emotional reasoning involves using one's emotions as evidence to support a belief rather than relying on facts. Personalization involves taking responsibility for negative events that are beyond one's control

**12. B — Increased cortisol**

A heightened level of cortisol is frequently observed in individuals suffering from depression, leading to early



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morning awakening. In contrast, both catecholamines and testosterone tend to be reduced in individuals with depression

**13. D — Dopamine**

When there is an excess of dopamine, it can lead to symptoms such as disorganized thinking, loose associations, tics, and stereotypic behavior. On the other hand, a dopamine deficit can result in symptoms of Parkinson's disease, endocrine alterations, poor spatiality, and lack of abstract thought. An excess of serotonin, on the other hand, can cause restlessness, agitation, myoclonus, and vital sign abnormalities. An excess of acetylcholine can lead to over-inhibition, anxiety, somatic complaints, self-consciousness, and drooling. Finally, an excess of norepinephrine can result in hyperalertness, paranoia, and decreased appetite

**14. A — Frontotemporal dementia**

Frontotemporal dementia, also referred to as frontal lobe dementia, is a form of dementia that impacts the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain. This results in symptoms like a lack of restraint, indifference, and difficulties with arranging and coordinating tasks. These symptoms vary from those observed in Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, and Parkinson's disease, which primarily affect memory, movement, and cognitive function, respectively

**15. D — Anticonvulsants**

Anticonvulsants are not typically used as a first-line treatment for social anxiety (phobia) disorder. While they can be beneficial in stabilizing mood disorders like bipolar and depression, they are not specifically indicated for social anxiety disorder. The other treatment options mentioned - SSRIs, short-term benzodiazepines, and beta-blockers - are all commonly used in the management of social anxiety (phobia) disorder

**16. C — It should be utilized in conjunction with a cholinesterase inhibitor**

Memantine is an FDA-approved N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptor antagonist for the management of moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. It functions by regulating the activity of a neurotransmitter known as glutamate, which plays a role in learning and memory. The prescribing guidelines for memantine recommend combining it with a cholinesterase inhibitor, as research has demonstrated that this combination is more effective than monotherapy in treating moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. Memantine should not be used as a standalone treatment. Additionally, it should not be used in conjunction with an antidepressant or antipsychotic, as these are not evidence-based treatment options for Alzheimer's disease

**17. C — Managed care is a system where the insurance company not only pays for healthcare but also provides the healthcare services**

Managed care is a system in which the insurance company not only pays for healthcare but also provides the healthcare services. Before managed care, insurance companies would simply reimburse healthcare providers for the services they rendered, without any control over the quality or quantity of care. In a managed care system, the insurance company monitors the utilization and cost of healthcare services. They agree to pay a fixed fee for each patient, regardless of the services required, which means that the healthcare provider shares in the financial risk. This system incentivizes insurance companies and healthcare providers to deliver the highest quality care

**18. B — Credentialing**

Credentialing is a procedure put in place to protect the public by guaranteeing a minimum level of professional competency. Licensure is a procedure in which a state government agency grants permission to individuals to practice a specific profession. Licensure prevents any unlicensed individuals from engaging in a legally



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protected practice. Certification is a procedure in which a professional organization certifies that an individual has met specific predetermined standards set by the specialty practice. The certification of a nurse practitioner determines their scope of practice and assures the public that they have acquired a comprehensive understanding of a particular medical specialty. Registration is not relevant to this subject matter

**19. B — It refers to the payment made by the insurance company when the insured experiences a loss**

An insurance benefit refers to the payment made by the insurance company when the insured experiences a loss. A claim is a formal request made to the insurance company for payment in the event of a loss.

Pre-approval refers to the criteria established by an insurance company to authorize specific healthcare services before they are provided. Denying the claim happens when an insurance company refuses to cover a bill due to unmet required conditions

**20. B — NPs licensed in states that do not allow prescribing of controlled substances will not receive DEA numbers from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)**

The nurse practitioner's ability to prescribe controlled substances, known as prescriptive authority, varies from state to state and can be further restricted by protocols or policies of the specific practice where the NP is employed. Even in states that grant full prescriptive authority to NPs, the NP's ability to prescribe controlled substances may still be limited if the practice has protocols or policies that restrict the NP's prescribing rights beyond what the state allows. In such cases, the NP must adhere to the protocols or policies set by their employer. While each state determines the extent of prescriptive privileges for NPs licensed within their jurisdiction, the DEA also oversees the licensing process for NPs. The DEA will deny DEA licensing to any NP licensed to practice in a state that does not grant NPs the authority to prescribe controlled substances

**21. A — Medicaid**

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) receive funding from both state and federal taxes. Medicare, TriCare, and the Veterans Health Administration are all funded solely by federal taxes

**22. A — It is not established by the government**

Certification is a process in which a professional organization verifies that an individual has met specific predetermined standards set by that specialty practice. The nurse practitioner's certification establishes their scope of practice and assures the public that they have achieved a comprehensive understanding of a particular medical specialty. However, it is important to note that this certification is not established by the government

**23. C — Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century**

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) published Crossing the Quality Chasm in 2001, which shed light on the significant disparity between scientific knowledge and clinical practice. The report revealed a substantial gap that exists between the healthcare we currently provide and the care we have the potential to deliver. The IOM estimated that nearly 200,000 patients die each year due to preventable medical errors, and 40% of patients do not receive treatments that are backed by scientific evidence

**24. C — Lack of focus**

Children diagnosed with Rett syndrome typically display the following symptoms: 1. Reduced emotional expression or a lack of emotional response. 2. Challenges in expressing themselves and understanding language. 3. Engaging in repetitive hand movements. However, inattentiveness, which refers to a lack of focus, is not typically associated with Rett syndrome. Instead, it is a characteristic commonly seen in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)



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**25. B — Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)**

Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is a nonpharmacological treatment option for major depressive disorders. It involves the administration of sedation to the patient and the use of shock treatments to stimulate the release of dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin. ECT typically consists of 6 to 12 treatments. Ketamine therapy, although effective in treating major depressive disorders, is a medication-based approach. EEGs, on the other hand, are not utilized in the management of major depressive disorders. They are primarily used for measuring brain function. Acupuncture is an alternative form of treatment, but it is not approved for the treatment of major depressive disorders

**26. A — Borderline personality disorder**

Insomnia can be linked to various psychiatric disorders, including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and Alzheimer's disease. However, it is not typically associated with borderline personality disorder

**27. C — Alzheimer's disease**

Distinguishing between different types of dementia can be challenging. However, based on the symptoms described, the most likely diagnosis for this patient is Alzheimer's disease. This is supported by her difficulties in language, motor function, and recognition. Dementia with Lewy bodies typically presents with additional extrapyramidal symptoms. Huntington's disease is characterized by spasmodic movement and coordination problems. Patients with frontotemporal dementia tend to be excessively talkative and lack inhibition

**28. B — On a greater number of days than not, lasting for a minimum of six months**

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is characterized by excessive worry, apprehension, or anxiety that occurs on a greater number of days than not, lasting for at least six months

**29. D — "What do you mean when you say...?"**

Queries aimed at clarification are utilized to assist the patient in exploring their beliefs on a deeper level. In therapy, it is not suitable to pose a "why" question. Inquiring about how one's life would appear if the problem vanished overnight is an illustration of a miracle question. Interrogations such as "What surprised you today?" are frequently employed in humanistic therapy to elicit positive emotions

**30. D — SAM-e**

SAM-e is a dietary supplement that is frequently utilized to treat depression, osteoarthritis, and liver disease. Other commonly used non-psychoactive dietary supplements that have physiological effects for treating illnesses and maintaining health include: - Omega-3 fatty acids - Tryptophan - Vitamin E - Melatonin - Fish oil Omega-3 fatty acids play a crucial role in managing and preventing heart disease. Tryptophan is a dietary supplement that aids in maintaining nitrogen balance in adults and promoting growth in infants. Additionally, tryptophan assists in the synthesis of niacin, which is essential in producing the neurotransmitter serotonin. Fish oil is a dietary supplement known for its ability to reduce inflammation in the body and improve hypertriglyceridemia



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