Candidate Guide to Certification

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGEMENT

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGER (CHAM) *AND*

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS ASSOCIATE (CHAA)

National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM)

2025 M Street NW, Suite 800

Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: (202) 367-1125 | Fax: (202) 367-2125

E-mail: info@naham.org | Web: www.naham.org

Welcome

Congratulations on taking the first step toward earning the Certified Healthcare Access Manager (CHAM) or the Certified Healthcare Access Associate (CHAA) credential. The National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM) established the CHAM and CHAA programs to promote the highest standards of patient access services through the credentialing of those working in access at both the front line and manager and above levels.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide summarizes key aspects of the NAHAM credential program and is intended to help you understand policies and procedures and the steps to earning the CHAM or CHAA credential.

The NAHAM credential program continues to grow and be refined with the evolution of patient access services and best practices associated with professional certification programs. No document can address every potential question, policy detail, or future program change. Use this Guide to help you make your decision whether to pursue certification, to learn the benefits of certification, and to learn about the steps to follow to become certified in the field of patient access services.

CONTENTS

Candidate Guide to Certification

NAHAM

CONTACT INFORMATION

National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM)
NAHAM Certification Commission
2025 M Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: (202) 367-1125 | Fax: (202) 367-2125
E-mail: info@naham.org | Web: www.naham.org

ABOUT NAHAM

The National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM) is the only national professional organization dedicated to promoting excellence in the management of patient access services in all areas of the healthcare delivery system.

Patient access services professionals provide quality services in registration and all of its support processes to patients, providers, and payors into, through, and out of their healthcare experience. Patient access services includes: admissions, scheduling, registration, patient finance, guest relations, and other related services.

NAHAM is *the* source for valuable education and support on issues impacting patient access services.

2016/2017 NAHAM CERTIFICATION COMMISSION

Annemarie Mariani, CHAM, Certification Commission Chair

Connie Longuet, CHAM, MBA, MHA

Kerrie West, CHAM, CHAA

Katherine Harwood, CHAM

Gina McKenna, CHAM

Christopher Horton, CHAM

Bob Thalls, Public Member

PURPOSE OF THE CANDIDATE GUIDE

The purpose of this Candidate Guide is to provide you with substantive information on the NAHAM credential program. Persons looking to pursuing CHAM or CHAA certification benefit from reviewing this document *and assessing their preparedness*. By providing information on examination development and sample questions, one's preparation for the Certified Healthcare Access Manager (CHAM) and the Certified Healthcare Access Associate (CHAA) can be enhanced.

HOW THE NAHAM CREDENTIAL PROGRAM WAS DEVELOPED

The Certified Healthcare Access Manager credential program was developed in 1977 and was originally known as the Accredited Admitting Manager (AAM) credential. The name of this certification was changed to Certified Healthcare Access Manager in the late 1990s to align the examination's name with the name of the association and to more broadly reflect the scope of practice of those working in patient access services.

The Certified Healthcare Access Associate credential program was launched in the fall of 1999 and was developed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance, and designate individuals that demonstrate the knowledge essential in patient access services at the front line staff level.

In the spring of 2007, the NAHAM Board of Directors approved reengineering the credential program and approved the necessary resources to do so. NAHAM contracted with Schroeder Measurement Technologies (SMT), a professional testing company, to apply the most appropriate technologies, methodologies, and psychometric models to a completely revised credentialing program for patient access services.

The eligibility requirements and test materials for the CHAM and the CHAA examinations were developed based on a thorough study of the scope of practice and current state of knowledge in patient access services. A national job analysis survey of those working in patient access services was conducted in the fall of 2007 to define the scope of practice and determine the content areas appropriate for both examinations. The survey was designed to identify the knowledge used by patient access staff in the day-to-day performance of their jobs. A representative panel of experts reviewed the results of the survey and identified the scope of practice for both examinations based on these data, thus ensuring that the content of the tests reflects the practice of those working in patient access services nationwide.

The CHAM and CHAA test questions were written by separate working groups of individuals who hold these credentials. The test question pool will be continually updated to reflect current practices in patient access services. Individual questions that have been shown by statistical analysis to be unfair or unclear are modified or deleted from the pool.

Both the CHAM and CHAA certification examinations have been designed to meet testing industry standards for validity and reliability. The activities related to the NAHAM Credential Program are organized and overseen by the Certification Commission of NAHAM.

The Certification Commission, with the assistance and advice of professionals, has attempted to develop these two credentials to recognize accepted levels of expertise in the profession with the goal of improving professional standards in patient access services. No certification program can guarantee professional competence. Additionally, given the frequent changes in professional practices, the Certification Commission cannot warrant that the examinations will at all times reflect the most current state of the profession.

PURPOSE OF THE NAHAM CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

The purpose of the credential program is to:

- Establish the body of knowledge of front line staff and managers for patient access services;
- Assess the level of knowledge demonstrated by those working in patient access services in a valid and reliable manner;
- Encourage professional growth in the field;
- Formally recognize individuals who meet the requirements set by the Certification Commission; and
- Serve the public by encouraging quality in patient access services.

BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

Certifications can help employers match job requirements with a candidate's qualifications. Quite simply, the certifications you hold can be the difference between you and a lesser-qualified candidate.

The fact that one holds a certification also tells employers quite a bit about their personality and work ethic. It demonstrates that one honors commitment and follow-through, two traits that employers recognize and appreciate. It shows that one possesses the determination and skills to complete a challenging program, revealing highly prized traits of self-discipline and problem solving. What's more, completing a certification program shows one is "teachable" and can acquire new knowledge and skills quickly and easily, enabling one to get up-to-speed rapidly when new technologies arise.

Studies have shown that certified professionals are more productive in their work. Because of their knowledge and skills, access to special resources, and problem-solving abilities, certified employees are able to implement solutions more quickly and with fewer problems than their non-certified counterparts. And surveys show that certified professionals, in general, are paid more than their non-certified counterparts.

Perhaps the best aspect of certification programs is that they allow individuals to control their own career. Whether one's current employer supports staff certification or not, individuals can develop themselves and take control of their knowledge, skills, and future by becoming certified in their field.

Benefits of certification for employers include increased productivity, enhanced professionalism, less training time needed to bring employees up-to-speed, and increased staff morale and satisfaction.

EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

NAHAM has contracted with Schroeder Measurement Technologies (SMT) to develop, score, and administer the CHAM and CHAA examinations. SMT is an established, full-service international testing company serving the needs of licensing boards and credentialing agencies with a wide range of test development and computer-based administration services.

The development of a valid examination for the NAHAM certification process begins with a clear and concise definition of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for competent job performance. Using interviews, surveys, observation, and group discussions, NAHAM works with

experts in the field of patient access services to delineate critical job components. The knowledge and skill bases for the questions in the examinations are derived from the actual practice of the professional in the field of patient access services including admissions, scheduling, registration, patient finance, guest relations, and other related services, as outlined in the *2008 NAHAM CHAM and CHAA Job Analysis Studies*.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAM EXAMINATION

A voluntary certification effort founded in 1977, the Certified Healthcare Access Manager program is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance, and designate those who demonstrate knowledge essential to the practice of patient access services.

The CHAM examination consists of 115 multiple choice questions and candidates are limited to two (2) hours to test. Upon registering for the examination, each candidate will have up to two (2) attempts to pass the examination. The first attempt is included in the registration fee which is $175 for NAHAM members and $350 for non-members. The second attempt requires pre-payment of a $50 retesting fee.

Through obtaining your CHAM, you will gain expanded knowledge of in-depth insights into every aspect of patient access management and national professional recognition from supervisors, peers, staff, and volunteer leaders that all value the CHAM designation.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAA EXAMINATION

The Certified Healthcare Access Associate program was established in 1999 and is available to all eligible Access Services healthcare staff.

The CHAA examination consists of 115 multiple choice questions and candidates are limited to two (2) hours to test. Upon registering for the examination, each candidate will have up to two (2) attempts to pass the examination. The first attempt is included in the registration fee which is $125 for both NAHAM members and non-members. The second attempt requires pre-payment of a $25 retesting fee.

THE EXAMINATIONS-AT-A-GLANCE

The CHAM and CHAA examinations are both 115-question multiple choice examinations designed to test and challenge the candidate's knowledge of and experience in the field of patient access services. The CHAM examination is designed to test manager-level or above individuals, while the CHAA examination is designed to test associate-level individuals.

Both examinations are two (2) hours long and are proctored. Examinations are Internet-based, unless administered at a NAHAM Annual Conference or Affiliate Meeting.

The composition of both examinations is guided by extensive research on the job tasks performed and knowledge needed by those working at patient access services. Please note that the questions from each content area will be mixed throughout the examinations. The questions will not be presented in the order listed on the content outlines.

The following is a detailed outline of the major content areas which will be used to guide the composition of the CHAM and CHAA examinations effective October 2008, with an indication (in parentheses) of the approximate percentage of the test devoted to each area.

CHAM EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

The CHAM examination addresses the following subject matter. Candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency by answering questions that evaluate their knowledge of facts, concepts, and processes required to complete the tasks described below.

I. **Pre-Encounter (45%)**

A. Customer Service
1. Quality Service and Customer Satisfaction
2. Staff who are Caring, Compassionate, Knowledgeable, Respect Privacy, and have Good Communication Skills

B. Referral/Transfer Services
1. Inpatient and Outpatient Transfers
2. Intra- and Inter-Facility Referrals
3. Contractual, Legal, and Regulatory Requirements

C. Resource Scheduling
1. Assessing Customer Expectations and Special Needs of the Patient (e.g., Age Specific, Interpretive Service, and Physical Needs)
2. Arranging and Scheduling Location, Equipment, and/or Staff
3. Documentation of Pertinent Schedule Information
4. Confirmation of Service for a Specific Date and Time

D. Pre-Registration
1. Patient Account Creation
2. Medical Record Validation/initiation to ensure Identification and Safety

E. Clinical Prerequisites
1. Requirements based on Physician Orders, Protocols, and/or Medical Necessity
2. Testing, Prep, and Procedure Requirements (e.g., Fasting and/or Labs)

F. Financial Clearance
1. Accurate Payer Identified
2. Assuring Payer Requirements are met
3. Informing and/or Collecting Customer Financial Obligations prior to Service
4. Regulatory Agencies and Compliance Standards (e.g., Federal, State, and Local)
5. Financial Counseling

G. Verification of Benefits

H. Payer Authorization

II. **Encounter (35%)**

A. Patient Check-in, Admission, Registration
1. Processes related to Registering Patient
    a. Validating or obtaining demographic, admission source, clinical, and financial information
    b. Required forms for patient registration (e.g., The Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities)
    c. Obtaining consents, signatures, and other required documents
    d. Order processing
    e. Medical terminology and medical coding

    2. Level of Care Requirements (e.g., Inpatient, Observation, and Outpatient)
    3. Payer Plan Coverage (e.g., Governmental Payers, Workers Compensation, and Insurance)
    4. Coordination of Benefits

B. Guest Services
    1. Services to help reduce Patient and Family Stress and increase Customer Satisfaction
    2. Internal and External Way finding (e.g., Transportation, Parking, and Drop-off)
    3. Providing Information needed for Patient and Family (Room Number, Visiting Hours, etc.)
    4. Release of Information Limitations
    5. Service Recovery Measures (e.g., Validating Parking and Free Meal Tickets)

C. Discharge/Departure
    1. Collection and/or Financial Counseling

D. Revenue Cycle
    1. Data Elements necessary for Accurate Billing
    2. Case Management, Utilization Review, and Clinical Documentation
    3. Health Information Management (HIM)/Medical Records
    4. Billing, Follow-up, Cash Posting, and Accounts Receivable
    5. Collection of Payment and Knowledge of Average Collection Periods
    6. Denials Management
    7. Managed Care Contracting

E. Information Systems
    1. Timely Input of Data
    2. Impact of Patient Management System Transactions (e.g., Electronic Medical Records and Ancillary Systems)
    3. System Down Time and Recovery

III. Future Development (20%)

A. Statistical Reporting
    1. Benchmarking Processes to improve Outcomes through Education, Performance Feedback, and improved Systems/Devices
    2. Summarizing Information in a Timely Manner for Process Improvement, Administration, and Management
    3. Trending Areas of Interest (e.g., Payment, Patient Flow, and Denials)

B. Resource Management and Productivity
    1. Managing Resources to Accommodate Customer Needs (e.g., Facility, Budget)
    2. Responsive to Delays and Unexpected Changes
    3. Disaster Preparedness

C. Customer Satisfaction and Retention
    1. Courtesy, Respect, and Patient Confidentiality
    2. Measures of Customer Satisfaction
    3. Anticipating and Managing Customer Expectations

D. Staff Education and Competency
    1. Performance Standards Development
    2. Staff Education to meet Desired Outcomes
    3. Ensuring Staff is competent in Assigned Responsibilities

   E. Quality and Accuracy
      1. Monitoring and Auditing Selected Processes
      2. Reporting and Utilizing Information to Impact Change

   F. Leadership and Management
      1. Customer Relationship Management (e.g., Physician, Payers, Departments)
      2. Human Resource Management
      3. Effective Communication
      4. Strategic Planning
      5. Professional Development and Continuing Education
      6. Regulatory Compliance

CHAA EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

The CHAA examination addresses the following subject matter. Candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency by answering examination questions that evaluate their knowledge of facts, concepts, and processes required to complete the tasks described below.

I. Pre-Encounter (40%)

   A. Customer Service
      1. Internal Customer Service
      2. External Customer Service
      3. Patient Rights and Responsibilities
      4. Staff Behavior towards Customer
         a. Caring and Compassionate
         b. Technically Competent
         c. Sensitive to all Customer Needs
         d. Respect and Maintain Privacy

   B. Customer Assessment
      1. Age Specific Criteria and Concerns
      2. Customer Expectations and Concerns
      3. Clinical Concerns and Patient Needs
      4. Financial Concerns and Patient Needs
      5. Customer Literacy and Comprehension

   C. Resource Scheduling (e.g., Equipment, Service, and Staff)
      1. Availability
      2. Scheduling
      3. Documentation
      4. Communication
      5. Scheduling System Applications
      6. Referral Services

   D. Pre-Registration
      1. Registration Systems
      2. Medical Record Initiation
      3. Collection, Storage, and Dissemination of Patient Information
      4. Respect for Patient Needs (e.g., Confidentiality and Security)

E. Patient and Family Education
  1. Way finding
     a. Directions
     b. Parking
     c. Maps
     d. Drop-off and pick-up
  2. Provide Information to Customer about Assessment using Appropriate Materials and Methods

F. Prerequisites
  1. Service
     a. Testing and Procedure Prerequisites (e.g., blood work, fasting, or stop medication)
     b. Reviewing Service/Procedure Information with Patient
  2. Financial
     a. Financial Obligations Prior to Service
     b. Regulatory Requirements
     c. Payment Programs
     d. Insurance Plans or Contracts
     e. Information Systems and/or Web Sites for Payers

G. Payer Authorization and/or Determination

H. Verification of Benefits

II. Encounter (45%)

A. Customer Service

B. Patient Check-in, Admission, or Registration
  1. Identification of Patient
  2. Special Needs of Patient
  3. Patient Placement
  4. Notification and Communication of Admission
     a. Internal
     b. External
  5. Level of Care (e.g., Inpatient, Observation, and Outpatient)
  6. Processes Related to Registering Patient
     a. Demographic information
     b. Explaining and obtaining consents, forms, and signatures
     c. Insurance and payment information
     d. Physician orders
     e. Medical terminology

C. Way finding
  1. Maps and Signage
  2. Parking
  3. Patient Drop-off and Pick-up Points

D. Patient Tracking
  1. Locating Patient
  2. Transporting Patient
  3. Routing Patient

E. Census Management
   1. Account for Patient Activity across Entities
   2. Patient Data Interfaced with Other Systems

F. Customer Information (e.g., HIPAA Compliance on providing information)

G. Departure or Discharge
   1. Collection of Patient-portion Payment

H. Billing
   1. Capturing all Data Elements necessary for Accurate Billing

III. Future Development (15%)

A. Data Integrity
   1. Used to measure Quality and Accuracy
   2. Statistics Reporting of All Data
   3. Reporting and Accessing Database

B. Resource Management
   1. Staff
   2. Equipment
   3. Supplies

C. Customer Satisfaction
   1. Survey Results
   2. Quality Improvement

D. Staff Education and Competency
   1. Performance Indicators
   2. Performance Improvement
   3. Staff Training and Continuing Education

E. Benchmarking
   1. Quality of Service
   2. Productivity
   3. Peer Group Comparisons

CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the candidate to read the entire contents of this Guide *before applying for the examination*. This Guide contains current information about the policies and procedures of the NAHAM certification program.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to know of all deadlines associated with the certification process. Late registrations are not able to be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to identify and confirm a qualified proctor. NAHAM is not responsible for selecting and securing proctors for examination candidates. A proctor must be in a management position, may not be your supervisor or in your line of command, and cannot be currently enrolled to take a NAHAM Certification exam.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to understand the Certification Maintenance program and applicable deadlines to keep his or her certification active.

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

The NAHAM Certification Commission offers the following suggestions for preparing for the examinations.

Review the applicable examination content outline and ask yourself the following questions:

- **Do I have a good understanding of the content areas?**

- **Do I use this knowledge area regularly at work?**

Plan your studying based on the examination content outline. For example, for content areas you have a good understanding of and use every day, you may only need to do a quick review to prepare for the test, whereas in areas in which you are less familiar, you may decide that you need more in-depth studying or training before taking the test. Some individuals may simply not be at the point whereby they will be successful testing and may wish to consider deferring applying until they feel more prepared.

When planning your studying, you should think about what percentage of the test questions will cover each major content area (this information is included in each examination content outline). If you are not very familiar with a content area that will include a significant proportion of the test questions, you probably should spend some additional time studying this area.

There are many resources available to candidates as they prepare for the CHAM or CHAA examination. One's education and practical work experience are certainly included in the body of resources key to success. For both certification examinations, NAHAM publishes a Study Guide. It must be noted that the guides are but one resource and should not be the only material reviewed in preparation for the examinations. Candidates are strongly encouraged to approach studying holistically—reviewing current literature, participating in instructor-led courses such as at the NAHAM Annual Conference, attending hospital in-service training, and forming study groups to name just a few methods of preparation. No test questions are directly taken from the NAHAM Study Guides.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Examinations are administered four (4) times annually for one (1) full month: January, April, July, and October. *Applications and fees must be received a minimum of one (1) month prior to the testing month*. NAHAM will notify the candidate and proctor of candidate examination application status at least two (2) weeks before the desired testing date. Testing will be done at a suitable location, time, date and place is to be agreed upon by you and your proctor. Candidates who take the examination will receive results on the computer screen immediately following the completion of the exam.

If a candidate does not pass an examination during their first attempt, they may opt to retake the examination for an additional fee. Retake examinations may not be taken in the same testing period as the first attempt. *All retake examinations must be administered in the next consecutive testing window.* Candidates who are not successful with a retake examination and wish to continue to pursue certification will need to reapply and pay the applicable examination fees.

To maintain CHAM or CHAA certified status, all certificants must participate in the certification maintenance program. Failure to renew your certification will result in loss of your credential.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGER (CHAM)

Eligibility Requirements:	
Membership	Voluntary; not required for examination
Practical Experience	Two (2) years management experience in the healthcare or finance industry
Minimum Education	High school diploma or GED equivalent plus 90 professional development contact hours earned within the past three (3) years; *or* a four year degree from an accredited institution in healthcare, business, or related field
References	Signature of one (1) supervisor or course instructor/advisor *and* one (1) CHAM certified individual
Application	Completed application with fee
Certification Maintenance:	
Advancement	NAHAM Fellows Program
Membership Requirement	Voluntary; not required for certification maintenance
Continuing Education	Commencing in 2011, sixty (60) professional development contact hours earned within the past *two (2)* years.
Submission	Completed certification renewal application with fee

Note: Continuing education/professional development hours will be increased to 60 and certificants will renew their certification every two (2) years commencing in 2011.

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS ASSOCIATE (CHAA)

Eligibility Requirements:	
Membership	Voluntary; not required for examination
Practical Experience	One (1) year in healthcare or finance industry *or* successful completion of an accredited college program in healthcare
Minimum Education	High school diploma or GED equivalent plus 30 professional development contact hours earned within the previous two (2) years; *or* an associate degree from an accredited institution
References	Signature of one (1) supervisor or course instructor/advisor
Application	Completed application with fee

Certification Maintenance:	
Advancement	CHAM certification
Membership Requirement	Voluntary; not required for certification maintenance
Continuing Education	High school diploma or GED equivalent plus 30 professional development contact hours earned within the previous three (2) years
Submission	Completed application with fee

CRITICAL DATES & DEADLINES

January 2017 Testing Deadlines	
Application Deadline	Wednesday, November 30, 2016
Testing Period *Computer-based administration*	Sunday, January 1 through Saturday, January 31, 2017
April 2017 Testing Deadlines	
Application Deadline	Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Testing Period *Computer-based administration*	Saturday, April 1 through Sunday, April 30, 2017
July 2017 Testing Deadlines	
Application Deadline	Wednesday, May 31, 2017
Testing Period *Computer-based administration*	Saturday, July 1 through Monday, July 31, 2017
October 2017 Testing Deadlines	
Application Deadline	Monday, August 31, 2017
Testing Period *Computer-based administration*	Sunday, October 1 through Tuesday, October 31, 2017

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All candidates must submit a completed application and application fee to NAHAM at least one (1) month before their desired testing period. Applications received after the deadline will be returned to the candidate and the fee, less a $15 processing assessment, will be refunded.

Testing Month	Application Deadline
January	November 30
April	February 28
July	May 31
October	August 31

When completing an examination application, candidates will need the following information: mailing address, phone number, e-mail address, proctor's full name, proctor's job title, proctor's phone number, proctor's e-mail address, and examination month and day.

Candidates will also need to prove their eligibility by listing their work experience, education, and references. A percentage of applicants will be required to provide NAHAM with documents supporting their eligibility. Applicants will need to read and sign a statement to indicate agreement to the terms of an application audit. Applications may be audited to verify employment or education information. Failure to provide the requested documentation for an audit will result in the denial of the application.

Applications must be submitted to NAHAM along with an application fee: $175 for NAHAM-member CHAM examinations and $350 for nonmember CHAM examinations and $125 for CHAA examinations.

Candidates will receive confirmation of receipt of application and approval of examination date and proctor approximately two (2) weeks before the desired testing date. Incomplete applications will be returned to the candidate.

EXAMINATION FEES

CHAM Examination Fees	
NAHAM Member	$175
Nonmember	$350
Examination Retake Fee	$50
CHAA Examination Fees	
NAHAM Member	$125
Nonmember	$125
Examination Retake Fee	$25

Candidate Guide to Certification

NAHAM

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

The computer on which you test should meet or exceed the following requirements:

- Intel® Pentium® III processor (or faster)
- 256 MB RAM
- Internet Explorer 6.0 (or higher) or Mozilla Foxfire version 2.0 (or higher)
- High-speed Internet access
- Three feet (3') of spacing between each computer

All automatic features such as virus sweeping software should be disabled during the examination.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Due to processing and administrative costs associated with the testing company (SMT), the application fee is non-refundable. A candidate who is a no-show for the examination is considered a cancellation.

DEFERRAL OF EXAMINATION DATE OR PERIOD

Candidates wishing to change their test date within the same testing period may do so by submitting the *Examination Date Change and Period Deferment Form* found on the NAHAM website. Candidates wishing to change their test date to the next consecutive testing period may do so by completing the *Examination Date Change and Period Deferment Form* and submitting a period change fee. NAHAM will only accommodate one change per candidate. Only under the following circumstances, will deferral be otherwise considered for a future testing period with no fee assessed:

1. Natural disaster
2. Documentable personal medical emergency (Must provide documentation)
3. Hospitalization or death of an *immediate* family member (Must provide documentation)

Requests for deferral related to the three circumstances above must be made in writing and submitted to NAHAM no more than ten (10) business days after the scheduled examination date. The decision of NAHAM is final.

RE-EXAMINATION

If a candidate does not pass the examination during the first attempt, he or she may take the examination one (1) additional time. All CHAM and CHAA candidates are extended the opportunity to retest for an additional fee: $50 for a CHAM retake and $25 for a CHAA retake. A candidate may not retake an examination in the same testing period as the original attempt. All retake examinations must be taken in the next consecutive testing period. *Note:* Special consideration with regard to scheduling of retakes will be extended to qualifying persons who test in October 2008 and who are not successful.

Each candidate wishing to retake an examination must complete the online Examination Application Form, provide proctor information and examination date, and submit their payment to NAHAM at least one (1) month before the next testing period begins.

Examination Month	Retake Month	Retake Application Deadline
January	April	February 28
April	July	May 31
July	October	August 31
October	January	November 30

Candidates who do not retake the examination in the testing period following their original attempt forfeit the right to a retake examination.

SCORING INFORMATION

The pass/fail cut-off score is determined using a criterion-referenced method, which allows the performance of each candidate taking the examination to be judged against a predetermined standard rather than against other candidates. The predetermined standard is set by a committee of subject matter experts working with testing experts to ensure the validity, reliability, and legal defensibility of the examination.

NAHAM and SMT routinely apply a post-examination administrative review of the validity of examination scores. If irregularities are found, candidates will be notified of issues concerning their scores, when appropriate.

The statistical analyses performed on the CHAM and CHAA examinations have shown that the examinations are highly reliable. This reliability is a direct result of the efforts of NAHAM working with testing experts, to ensure that ambiguity is eliminated from individual examination questions, and that the questions address concepts appropriate for candidates sitting for the examination.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Preliminary examination results for computer-based CHAM and CHAA examinations are immediate and are able to be viewed on screen at the conclusion of your examination. Official examination results, as well as a score report, will be mailed to the candidate within eight (8) weeks after the last day of the testing period. Certificates will be mailed with the score reports to those candidates who successfully pass the examination.

The score report provided to candidates who passed the exam will only confirm that they passed the test. Only score reports going to those who did not pass will show how they performed on the test as a whole, and how they performed on each section of the test. Test results are formulated using a standard setting technique in which all test questions are reviewed extensively to ensure validity and legal defensibility.

The scores required to pass the CHAA and CHAM examinations are based on the total number of questions answered correctly. For NAHAM to report test scores in a consistent way for all test administrations, the scores are converted to a common scale, called a scaled score, which is similar to other standardized examinations such as the SAT, MCAT, the LSAT, etcetera. The CHAA and CHAM test results are calculated as scores in a range of 250 to 900, with a score of 600 and above representing the passing score.

Non-passing candidates are provided with a breakdown of their scores within each of the section of the examination (also referred to as the examination content areas). The scores represent the percentage of questions answered correctly within each section (out of a possible 100%) and is

provided to assist candidates in determining how well they performed within each section as well what areas you may need to focus on for studying purposes.

To ensure the confidentiality of examination results, actual scores will not be released via telephone, fax, or any other electronic transmission by either NAHAM or SMT personnel. Scores will *not* be sent to employers, schools, other individuals, or organizations under any circumstances. Names of candidates who do not pass the examination are confidential and are not revealed under any circumstances, except by legal compulsory process. Any questions concerning results should be referred to NAHAM at *info@naham.org*.

SPECIAL NEEDS

NAHAM complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to accommodate candidates with special needs. Candidates with documented visual, physical, hearing, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking an examination under standard conditions may request special testing accommodations and arrangements.

For both the paper-and-pencil and computer-based exam administrations, special needs must be documented in writing by the candidate's doctor or other qualified professional on official letterhead. This written documentation must accompany the CHAM/CHAA Examination Application. Please note that requests for accommodations must be received at least six (6) weeks prior to the start of a testing period.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

NAHAM does not discriminate against any individual or entity on the basis of religion, age, gender, race, disability, nationality, or any other reason prohibited by law. All individuals submitting an application for the examination will be considered solely on published criteria. Candidates are not required to be a member of any organization to apply for NAHAM certification.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

All proprietary rights to the CHAM and CHAA examinations, including copyright, are held by NAHAM. In order to protect the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling these copyrighted proprietary materials. The law strictly prohibits any attempt to reproduce all or part of the CHAM or CHAA examinations and study guides. Such attempts may include, but are not limited to: removing materials from the testing room; aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the exam; and selling, distributing, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the exam. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that examination scores might become invalid in the event of this type of suspected breach. Permanent revocation of certification may occur if allegations are substantiated.

EXAMINATION SECURITY & GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

NAHAM and SMT maintain established test administration and security standards to ensure that all candidates are provided with a fair and consistent opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Any candidate who does not have positive identification, uses unauthorized aids, engages in misconduct, or does not follow testing rules may be dismissed from the testing center by their proctor. NAHAM may choose to have the scores of such candidates cancelled, in which case all applicable examination fees will be forfeited.

The following are examples of behaviors considered to be misconduct and will not be tolerated during the administration of the CHAM or CHAA examinations:

- Providing or receiving assistance of any kind
- Using unauthorized references or aids
- Attempting to take the examination for another person
- Attempting to print any examination question
- Failing to follow testing regulations and/or test center instructions
- Copying, removing, or attempting to remove examination questions and/or scratch paper from the examination room
- Tampering with testing center computers
- Creating disturbances or leaving the examination room without permission
- Using electronic communication devices during an examination (cell phones, pagers, etc.).

NAHAM will investigate all reported charges of misconduct. NAHAM has the right to question the validity of test scores. If there is sufficient cause to question the score, NAHAM will make the final decision on whether or not the score is to be invalidated. In the event NAHAM determines a test score is invalid and should be cancelled, NAHAM will notify the candidate and may decide to:

- Allow the candidate to retest at an additional cost;
- Prohibit the candidate from testing and earning the certification; or
- Take other action as deemed appropriate.

PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

The Principles of Conduct are intended to serve as a framework within which CHAM or CHAA certified individuals perform their duties and to serve as a foundation upon which professionalism in the field of patient access services can be promoted.

These Principles of Conduct for certificants of the National Association of Healthcare Access Management promote and maintain the highest standards of service and personal conduct. Adherence to these standards is expected from certificants and serves to assure public confidence in the integrity and service of patient access professionals.

CHAM and/or CHAA certified individuals of the National Association of Healthcare Access Management pledge themselves to:

- Practice with honor and dignity to myself, the profession and the Association.
- Strive at all times to provide access services consistent with the need for quality, efficient, customer-focused healthcare and treatment to all.
- Hold up the doctrine of confidentiality and the individual's right to privacy in the disclosure of personally identifiable medical and social information.
- Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures in the professional relationship with individuals or organizations.
- Collaborate and cooperate with other health professions and organizations to promote the quality of health programs and the advancement of healthcare delivery as it relates to patient access services.

- Strive to increase the profession's body of systematic knowledge and individual competency through continued self-improvement and application of current advancements in the conduct of patient access services.
- Represent truthfully and accurately professional credentials, education, and experience in any official transaction or notice, including other positions and duality of interest.
- Use every opportunity to improve understanding of the role of patient access services.

CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE

Each CHAM and each CHAA certified individual must renew their certification to maintain their credential. *It is the certified individual's responsibility* to know when they need to renew their certification as well as the fees, processes, and policies associated with certification maintenance. Certificants should not expect to be notified of impending renewal obligations.

Fulfilling certification maintenance requirements is one way of demonstrating the certificant's efforts to maintain continuing competence in the field of patient access services and their desire to keep their certification. NAHAM's Web site will be kept current with all information individuals need to know to successfully maintain their certification.

CHAM Individuals holding the CHAM credential must engage in appropriate educational activities on subjects relevant to the field of patient access services. All CHAM certificants will be required to report a minimum of 60 educational contact hours every two (2) years. CHAMs must download the Certification Maintenance Application from the NAHAM Web site, complete it in full, and remit it to NAHAM along with payment between June 1 and June 30 of each renewal year.

CHAA Individuals holding the CHAA credential are required to participate in the Certification Maintenance Program in order to retain their CHAA credential. Participation means that the individual holding the CHAA credential has engaged in appropriate educational activities on subjects relevant to the field of patient access services and obtained 1,500 hours in a position relevant to Access Services during the two-year cycle. All CHAA certificants will be required to report a minimum of 30 educational contact hours every other year. CHAAs must download the Certification Maintenance Renewal Application form from the NAHAM Web site, complete it in full, and remit it to NAHAM along with payment between April 1 and April 30 of each renewal year.

CHAA certificants who earned their credential prior to May 31, 2004 are exempt from the Certification Renewal Program; however, employers may require CHAA Certification Renewal as part of an internal maintenance process for "exempted CHAAs" which is separate from the NAHAM requirements. Once in the CHAA Certification Maintenance Program, one may not return to exempt status.

Waiver/Extension: An individual who is retired or disabled, or no longer working in patient access services, either full or part time, may request consideration for a waiver from NAHAM. Documentation concerning the circumstances must be provided in writing via U.S. mail and be received by NAHAM prior to their examination testing window. If employment is resumed, the individual must notify NAHAM in order to return to active status. Upon notification, the individual is responsible for meeting the requirements of the certification maintenance program. These individuals are subject to the reactivation process. Extensions cannot be granted.

Don't risk losing your credential! Be sure to continually review the NAHAM Web site for all information related to certification maintenance and remit renewal applications on time.

Candidate Guide to Certification

NAHAM

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

SAMPLE CHAM EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following are key elements when validating a patient's Master Patient Index (MPI)?

   (A) Social security number, date of birth, and patient's legal name
   (B) Driver's license, medical record number, date of birth
   (C) Patient's legal name, date of birth, mailing address
   (D) Patient's legal name, insurance card, patient photo identification

2. Reverse isolation is primarily for the protection of:

   (A) the staff   (C) visitors
   (B) the patient   (D) volunteer staff

3. Which of the following statements is true about Accounts Receivable (A/R)?

   (A) Rising A/R is an indicator that a facility is doing well in its billing and collections process.
   (B) Active A/R typically includes accounts written off to bad debt.
   (C) Administration looks for a low number of days in receivable as an indicator of how well A/R is being managed.
   (D) Vigorous up-front collection by the Patient Access department of deductibles and copays helps the facility's cash flow but has no impact on A/R.

4. A medical center's Patient Access department is staffed as follows: 8 full-time employees at 40 hours per week each, 2 part-time employees at 32 hours per week each, 2 part-time employees at 8 hours per week each, 6 part-time employees at 20 hours per week each. Based on a Standard forty-hour work week, how many FTEs are in this department?

   (A) 8
   (B) 13
   (C) 15
   (D) 18

5. The purpose of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is to:

   (A) guarantee that women of childbearing age are not discriminated against in the workplace.
   (B) reduce the risk of infection in the workplace by assuring that employees with contagious diseases are granted leaves of absence.
   (C) balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of families.
   (D) provide financial support to families with children with chronic illness.

SAMPLE CHAA EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. The Patient Self-Determination Act requires hospitals that receive federal funds to provide information to patients about:

   (A) pre-certification and co-pays required on day of admission.
   (B) their right to make decisions about medical care and their right to accept or refuse treatment.
   (C) their right to select the physician of their choice.
   (D) none of the above.

2. It is permissible to provide confidential patient information without patient consent to which of the following?

   (A) Hospital employees whose job duties require it
   (B) Clergy and church elders
   (C) Out-of-town family members
   (D) Employers who fall under the Human Resources Follow-up Act of 1999

3. Which of the following statements is true about Medicare Part B?

   (A) All Medicare patients have Medicare Part B.
   (B) Medicare Part A patients may enroll in Part B and pay a premium.
   (C) Employers enroll all employees over 65 in Medicare B.
   (D) All senior citizens are automatically enrolled on their 65th birthday.

4. Additional key information needed when registering a patient with a work related injury includes all except:

   (A) names of persons who witnessed the injury.
   (B) time and date of injury.
   (C) name of employer and contact person.
   (D) type of injury.

5. The acronym ABN issued to describe:

   (A) Advance Benefits Necessity.
   (B) Active Benefits Notification.
   (C) Advance Beneficiary Notice of Non-coverage.
   (D) Account Balance Notice.

6. Mailing maps to a patient prior to services, and placing directional signs in a facility are examples of:

   (A) way finding.
   (B) gatekeeping.
   (C) capitation.
   (D) compliance.

7. A patient has fallen in the hospital and is complaining of back pain. Which of the following is the MOST appropriate response?

   (A) Call 911.
   (B) Initiate the hospital response team.
   (C) Call security.
   (D) Initiate the hospital disaster team.

8. A new patient is registered by patient access staff for outpatient visit and is then admitted. The patient realizes after two days that their name is spelled wrong and the date of birth is off by 1 year. Who is most affected by this error?

    (A) The patient.
    (B) The patient's insurance company.
    (C) The entire health system.
    (D) The medical records department.

9. An example of an Advance Directive is:

    (A) a will directing disposition of personal effects.
    (B) a directive assigning benefits in advance of receiving medical services.
    (C) written permission from a parent to treat a minor patient.
    (D) assigning Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare.

10. In regard to insurance coverage, the term deductible is the:

    (A) percentage of the bill the patient is responsible to pay.
    (B) amount the insured is responsible for before their insurance will pay.
    (C) percentage of the bill the insurance company will pay for covered Services.
    (D) maximum amount a patient may earn to be eligible for Medical.

11. The purpose for gathering financial information from patients is for:

    (A) physician office personnel   (C) administration
    (B) hospital/physician billing   (D) registration policy and procedure requires it

12. The federal agency responsible for the administration of Medicare and Medicaid is the

    (A) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
    (B) Joint Commission.
    (C) Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
    (D) Department of Public Health (DPH).

13. Benchmarking is a tool used to

    (A) exhibit a relationship between two sets of numbers as a set of points having coordinate determined by the relationship.
    (B) impose a particular characteristic or quality upon something.
    (C) measure a product according to specified standards in order to compare it with and improve one's own product.
    (D) gather a sample of opinions considered to be representative of a whole.

PROCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

All NAHAM examinations must be proctored. All proctors must be manager-level or above and cannot directly supervise any candidates taking the examination. As of July 1, 2010 all proctors will be required to complete the Proctor Training Webinar, which can be found on the NAHAM website.

Prior to the testing date, proctors will receive examination log-in information for all candidates. It is the responsibility of your proctor to print all testing materials, including the CHAA/CHAM Rules, Candidate Feedback Form, and sign-in sheet, prior to the examination date. These materials will be emailed at a minimum of one week prior to the start of each testing period.

On the testing date, the proctor must remain in the room for the entire two-hour testing period. It is the proctor's responsibility to ensure that all candidates follow the rules and code of ethics set by NAHAM. If a computer error should occur, the proctor is responsible for contacting the testing vendor. Proctors must distribute and collect the CHAA/CHAM Rules, signed by each candidate, and the sign-in sheet. It is the responsibility of your proctor to return these materials to NAHAM.

It is also the responsibility of the proctor to report any examination violations or breach of ethics to NAHAM.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q   **If I don't pass one section of the examination, can I take that part over or do I have to repeat the whole examination?**

A   If you do not pass the examination, you will need to retake the entire examination.

Q   **Will I be told what questions I missed so I can study that part more thoroughly for the next exam?**

A   No. Each candidate will receive score reports providing information about their examination performance. Included in the score report will be areas in which you may wish to focus your studies. The report will not list the specific questions that were answered incorrectly.

Q   **How soon after I take the examination will I receive the results?**

A   Candidates who take the examination will receive results on the computer screen immediately following the completion of the exam.

Q   **Will the study guide material be sufficient for study? If not, where can I obtain relevant references?**

A   The study guide is intended to be only *one of many* resources that you can use to prepare for the examination. Other resources you may wish to use include your professional experience, materials that your facility provides during training, co-workers whose daily duties focus on different areas of Access, the resource list included in the study guide, and resources found on the *Links of Interest* page of the NAHAM Web site under the *Resources* section.

Q   **When can I take the examination?**

A   The revised examinations will be offered quarterly for a period of one (1) month. They will be offered during January, April, July, and October. Candidates may arrange with their proctor to test any time during these months.

Q   **What computer equipment and software is needed in order to test via the Internet?**

A   Although no special equipment or software is needed, we recommend broadband access to the Internet.

Q   **Must the examination be taken online or may I take a paper/pencil examination?**

A   The revised examination will be administered online. Paper examinations will only be available at affiliate meetings and at the NAHAM Annual Conference. Paper/pencil administration of the examination will be offered for during regular testing months for any individuals with ADA requirements.

Q   **If I fail the exam, can I retake it?**

A   Yes. Candidates who fail the CHAM or examinations may retake them once. If candidates do not pass the retake examination they must submit a new application and application fee in order to take the examination again.

Q   **Why is NAHAM charging for examination retakes?**

A   The retake fees are intended to cover the administrative and professional testing company fees that NAHAM incurs when we offer examination retakes.

Q   **How much does a retake cost?**

A   The CHAM examination retake fee is $50. The CHAA examination has a $15 additional retake fee.

Q   **How long must I wait after failing an examination before I can take it again?**

A   If you fail an examination and wish to take the examination again, you must wait until the next quarter's examination month. Retakes must be taken in the next quarter's examination month or the candidate will need to reapply and remit the application fee once again.

Q   **I am applying for the examination. How do I set up a testing date?**

A   Examination dates may be arranged any time during the selected examination months. You will need to find a proctor and agree with him or her on an examination date and time. Once you have set up your examination date and time, you need to include it on your *Examination Application Form*.

Q   **How do I arrange for a proctor?**

A   You should start by checking within your facility. A proctor must be someone who is:
- In a management position
- Not your supervisor and is not in your line-of-command
- Not currently enrolled to take a NAHAM Certification examination

If there is no one in your facility, you can ask the NAHAM Regional Delegate in your area for assistance. Visit *www.naham.org* to locate your Regional Delegate.

Q   **What do I do if I need to reschedule my examination date?**

A   If your new examination date is within the same quarterly examination month:
- Work with your proctor to ensure that she or he can accommodate you;
- Submit an *Examination Date Change and Period Deferment Form* on the NAHAM Web site, *www.naham.org*.

If your new examination date is in the next quarterly examination month:
- Work with you proctor to ensure that she or he can accommodate you.
- Complete an *Examination Date Change and Period Deferment Form* on the NAHAM Web site, *www.naham.org* , including a $50 administrative fee.

Candidates may defer or change their examination date once. If a second deferral is needed, the candidate would have to reapply and pay the registration fee again.

Q **What do I need to bring with me to the examination?**

A Bring photo identification and your examination registration confirmation page.

Q **Can I refer to materials during the examination?**

A No. The examinations are "closed book".

Q **Will I need to renew my certification?**

A Yes, the certification renewal process will remain the same. Please see the *Certification Maintenance* pages under the *Certification* section of the NAHAM Web site, *www.naham.org*.

Q **How do I get a refund?**

A All application fees are non-refundable.

Q **Are substitutions permitted?**

A Yes, substitutions are permitted. All substitutions must be submitted to NAHAM a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of the examination period.

Q **Do I need to become a NAHAM member to take the examination?**

A No, you do not need to be a NAHAM member to become CHAM or CHAA certified, but we would warmly welcome you as a NAHAM member.

Q **How do I become a NAHAM member?**

A Please visit the NAHAM Web site, *www.naham.org*, to learn about the value of NAHAM membership and conveniently join online.

Q **Does my score depend on the group I take the examination with? (Is it graded on a curve?)**

A Your score does not depend upon other candidates' scores. The Pass/Fail line will be adjusted each examination period in response to the difficulty level of that period's examination questions.

APPEALS PROCESS

Decisions by the NAHAM Certification Commission regarding initial determination of eligibility to take an examination, continued certification, disruptive examination conditions, and verification of an examination score may be appealed to the NAHAM Certification Commission. The grounds for appeal to the NAHAM Certification Commission are only those stated in the previous sentence. The Certification Commission may elect to not review appeals.

An appeal to the NAHAM Certification Commission must be made in writing by letter, fax, or e-mail, with the subject line "Appeal" to the following address:

ATTN: NAHAM Certification Commission – Appeals
2025 M Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
Fax: (202) 367-2125 | E-mail: info@naham.org

All appeals must be received by the NAHAM Certification Commission within 30 days of the date (1) that the NAHAM Certification Commission mailed the notice denying eligibility to take the examination or (2) the date the examination was taken. The written appeal must identify the

precise factual basis and applicable rules or examination conditions that are the basis for the appeal.

CHAM SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY

1. A 4. B
2. B 5. C
3. C

CHAA SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTION ANSWER KEY

1. B   7. B
2. A   8. C
3. B   9. D
4. A   10. B
5. C   11. B
6. A   12. A
       13. C

If you have any questions beyond those answered in the Candidate Guide to Certification, please contact NAHAM at info@naham.org or (202) 367-1125.

G:\NAHAM\Certification\REVISED CREDENTIAL PROGRAM\2010 Candidate Handbook\NAHAM Candidate Guide to Certification.doc