

Candidate Guide to Certification

2019

National Association of Healthcare Access Management

Certified Healthcare Access Manager (CHAM) and
Certified Healthcare Access Associate (CHAA)

National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM)

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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.

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ABOUT NAHAM

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

Patient access services professionals provide quality services in registration and all of its support processes to patients, providers, and payors throughout their healthcare experience. Patient access services includes hospital and other healthcare providers 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.

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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 pursue the 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

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The Certified Healthcare Access Manager (CHAM) credential program is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance and designate those who demonstrate knowledge essential to the practice of patient access management. This program is targeted for those with at least two (2) years of management experience in a patient access management position. The 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 (CHAA) 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 with at least one year experience in the healthcare or finance industry.

NAHAM contracts with Schroeder Measurement Technologies (SMT), a professional testing company, to apply the most appropriate technologies, methodologies, and psychometric models to administer the NAHAM credential program.

The eligibility requirements and test materials for the CHAM and the CHAA examinations are developed based on a thorough study of the scope of practice and current state of knowledge in patient access services. A national job analysis study of those working in patient access services is conducted every five to eight years to define the scope of practice and determine the content areas appropriate for both examinations. These studies identify the knowledge used by patient access staff in the day-to-day performance of their jobs. A representative panel of experts reviews the results of the studies and identifies the scope of practice for both examinations based on this data, thus ensuring that the content of the exams reflects the practice of those working in patient access services nationwide.

The CHAM and CHAA exam questions are written by separate working groups of individuals who hold these credentials. The exam question bank is 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 bank.

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 NAHAM Certification Commission.

The Certification Commission, with the assistance and advice of professionals, has developed these two credentials to recognize accepted levels of expertise in the profession with the goal of improving professional standards in patient access services.

Candidates who achieve a passing score on the CHAA or CHAM exam may use the designation when representing themselves in their credentials. Continued use of the designations must be maintained through the NAHAM certification maintenance program.

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;
- Distinguish those professionals who demonstrate an established level of expertise in patient access services in a valid and reliable manner;
- Encourage professional growth and raise awareness in the field;
- Formally promote industry standards
- Serve the employers and the public by providing a means to identify quality professionals in patient access services.

BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

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

Certification demonstrates to employers 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.

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.

Additionally, certification programs allow individuals to control their own career and professional development. 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, 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, the patient experience, and other related services.

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. The registration fee is \$200 for NAHAM members and \$400 for non-members. The retake fee is \$75 for both members and nonmembers.

Candidates that do not pass the exam on the initial attempt may re-apply and re-take the exam at a discounted rate in a subsequent testing window. Candidates may re-take the exam as many times as they would like, however, the discounted re-take fee only applies if the candidate paid full price in the most recent attempt. Therefore, if the candidate does not pass their second attempt, they will be required to pay full price for the exam again on their third attempt, before receiving a second re-take discount.

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 patient access staff who meet the eligibility requirements.

The CHAA examination consists of 115 multiple choice questions and candidates are limited to two (2) hours to test. The registration fee is \$140 for both NAHAM members and nonmembers. The retake fee is \$50.

Candidates that do not pass the exam on the initial attempt may re-apply and re-take the exam at a discounted rate in a subsequent testing window. Candidates may re-take the exam as many times as they would like, however, the discounted re-take fee only applies if the candidate paid full price in the most recent attempt. Therefore, if the candidate does not pass their second attempt, they will be required to pay full price for the exam again on their third attempt, before receiving a second re-take discount.

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.

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, with an indication (in parentheses) of the approximate percentage of the test devoted to each area.

CHAM EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

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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. This content outline is effective as of October 2016 and can be found on the Certification page of the NAHAM website at www.naham.org/CHAMContentOutline.

I. Pre-Arrival (25%)

- A. Patient and Family Experience
 - 1. Deliver quality service and customersatisfaction
 - 2. Analyze patient satisfaction surveys (eg. Press Ganey, Gallup, etc.)
 - 3. Employ service recovery measures
- B. Admission and Transfer Services
 - 1. Manage intra- and inter- facility referrals/transfers
 - 2. Comply with contractual, legal and regulatory requirements
- C. Scheduling
 - 1. Assess customer expectations and special needs of the patient (eg. age specific, interpretive service, and physical, cultural & emotional needs)
 - 2. Arrange and schedule location, equipment, and/or staff (resources) and document pertinent schedule information
 - 3. Identify information required to confirm service for a specific date
 - 4. Inform patients of clinical prerequisites
- D. Pre-Registration
 - 1. Maintain integrity of enterprise master patient index (EMPI)
 - a. Create patient account
 - b. Validate/initiate medical record to ensure identification and safety
 - 2. Perform financial clearance
 - a. Identify accurate payer
 - b. Validate and meet payer requirements
 - c. Inform and/or collect customer financial obligations prior to service
 - d. Adhere to regulatory compliance standards (eg. federal, state, local)
 - e. Perform financial clearance (eg. financial counseling, ensure payer authorization is obtained)
 - f. Verify benefits

II. Arrival (35%)

- A. Patient Check-in, Admission, Registration
 - 1. Administer patient registration processes:
 - a. Validate or obtain demographic, admission source, clinical, and financial information (eg. patient identification, validation)
 - b. Provide and explain patient registration forms (e.g., The Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, HIPAA)
 - c. Execute consents, signatures, and other required documents
 - d. Comprehend medical terminology and coding
 - 2. Validate ordered levels of care (eg. inpatient, observation, outpatient and status changes)
 - 3. Verify payer plan coverage (eg. governmental payers, workers compensation and insurance)

4. Determine coordination of benefits
 5. Perform point of service collection
 6. Provide financial counseling
- B. Patient and Family Experience
1. Utilize services to help reduce patient and family stress and increase customer satisfaction
 2. Facilitate internal and external way finding (eg. transportation, parking, and drop-off signage)
 3. Identify relevant information to provide to patient and family (room number, visiting hours, etc)
 4. Manage patient directory exclusions
 5. Employ service recovery measures (eg. validating parking and free mealtickets)
- C. Revenue Cycle
1. Capture data elements necessary for accurate billing
 2. Strategically align with case management, utilization review, clinical documentation, health information management (HIM/medical records, billing, follow-up, cash posting, and accounts receivable
 3. Mitigate denials management
 4. Collaborate with managed care department (eg. communicate payer issues)
- D. Information Systems
1. Manage timely input of data
 2. Understand impact of patient management system transactions (eg. electronic data interface, electronic medical records and ancillary systems)
 3. Educate on system down time and recovery

III. Access Management (40%)

- A. Statistical Reporting
1. Determine benchmark processes to improve outcomes
 2. Facilitate process improvement
 3. Monitor trending areas of interest (eg. payment, patient flow and denials)
 4. Develop, review, and refine key performance indicators
 5. Track Productivity
- B. Patient Experience and Management
1. Protect patient confidentiality
 2. Measure customer satisfaction
 3. Anticipate and manage customer expectations
- C. Professional Development and Competency
1. Develop and measure perform
 2. Oversee quality metrics
- D. Leadership and Management
1. Collaborate with human resource management
 2. Establish effective communication
 3. Drive strategic planning
 4. Adhere to regulations for compliance
 5. Participate in disaster preparedness
 6. Manage financial performance
 7. Maximize employee engagement
 8. Embrace change management

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. In October of 2017, a new CHAA content outline will go into effect. View this new content outline on [our website](#).

I. Patient Access Foundations (40%)

A. Customer Experience

1. Customer Assessment

- a. Identify customer expectations and concerns (eg confidentiality, emotional, spiritual)
- b. Identify clinical concerns and patient needs
- c. Identify financial concerns and patient needs
- d. Arrange customer literacy & comprehensive services (eg interpreter services, meaningful use)

2. Quality and Customer Service

- a. Employ strategies to deliver quality service and customer satisfaction (eg in-person and remotely)
- b. Interpret results from customer satisfaction metrics (eg HCAHPS, patient satisfaction survey)
- c. Recognize the purpose of benchmark processes to improve outcomes
- d. Recommend the process and quality improvement initiatives
- e. Comprehend key performance indicators (KPIs), best practices and dashboards
- f. Employ principles of effective communication (eg written, verbal, age appropriate)
- g. Utilize national patient safety guidelines (eg two patient identifiers, physical safety)

B. Regulatory Compliance

1. Recognize requirements of OIG (eg EMTALA, Patient's Rights & Responsibilities, Advanced Directives)
2. Recognize requirements for CMS (eg HIPAA, IMM, MSP, ABN, Condition Code 44, fraud & abuse)
3. Comprehend accreditation guidelines (eg Joint Commission, DNV)
4. Recognize requirements for other governing agencies (eg TRICARE, VA, Medicaid)

C. Revenue Cycle

1. Identify data elements necessary for accurate billing (eg occurrence codes, condition codes, CPT, diagnosis)
2. Comprehend billing indicators for the UB-04 and CMS 1500 billing forms
3. Verify payer plan coverage (eg governmental payers, third party liability, insurance eligibility)
4. Comprehend the effect of the Affordable Care Act (eg HMO, PPO, POS, the exchange)
5. Determine coordination of benefits
6. Perform point-of-service collection
7. Provide and coordinate financial counseling
8. Comprehend medical terminology and coding
9. Collaborate with health information management (eg prevent duplicate medical records)
10. Collaborate with patient financial services (eg billing, accounts receivable)
11. Mitigate denials

D. Information Systems

1. Manage timely input of data
2. Recognize purpose for down-time or mass casualty procedures and reconciliation

E. Resource Management

1. Recognize need for resource management (e.g., staff, time, equipment, funds)
2. Interpret quality metrics and productivity data

II. Pre-Arrival (31%)**A. Scheduling**

1. Identify accurate patient and record pertinent schedule information
2. Arrange and schedule location, equipment and/or staff (resources)
3. Identify insurance information required to schedule service (e.g., authorization, medical policy)
4. Identify clinical information required to confirm service for specific date & time (e.g., referrals)

B. Pre-Registration

1. Patient Information
 - a. Utilize the electronic master patient index (EMPI) to ensure accurate patient identification and safety
 - b. Collect and record patient information (e.g., patient and guarantor demographics)
2. Perform financial clearance
 - a. Identify and collect accurate payer information and subscriber demographics
 - b. Verify eligibility and interpret benefits
 - c. Validate and meet payer requirements
 - d. Secure prior authorization
 - e. Inform and/or collect customer financial obligations prior to service
 - i. Explain estimates and make payment arrangements
 - ii. Screen for other state or federal program eligibility and/or identify need for financial assistance
3. Patient and family education
 - a. Identify testing and procedure prerequisites (e.g., blood work, fasting, stop medication)
 - b. Review service or procedure information with patient
 - c. Review wayfinding (e.g., parking, valet, facility maps)

III. Arrival (25%)**A. Patient Check-in, Admission, Registration**

1. Validate patient class order (e.g., inpatient, observation, outpatient, ED)
2. Explain and execute patient registration forms (e.g., The Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, HIPAA, consents, other required documents)
3. Validate demographics, admission source, and clinical and financial information
4. Validate patient identification, order, and insurance validation
5. Validate ordered levels of care (e.g., ICU, PCU, and telemetry)
6. Indicate value of patient portal

B. Patient and Family Experience

1. Identify services to help reduce patient and family stress and increase customer satisfaction
2. Indicate internal wayfinding (e.g., transport and facility signage)
3. Identify relevant information to provide to patient and family (room number, visiting hours, etc.)
4. Manage patient tracking (e.g., location, transporting, routing)
5. Recognize service recovery opportunities (e.g., validation parking and free meal tickets)

C. Bed Management

1. Knowledge of information concerning patient placement
2. Validate patient status change orders (e.g., observation to in-patient)
3. Collaborate with case management (e.g., Status changes)

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 should spend some additional time studying this area.

NAHAM offers several resources to candidates preparing for the CHAM or CHAA exams. It must be noted that NAHAM cert prep products are one of many resources for exam prep and many other resources are available in the industry to use for exam prep. Candidates are strongly encouraged to approach studying holistically—reviewing current literature, participating in instructor-led courses and webinars, attending hospital in-service training, and forming study groups.

The Certification Commission does not develop, administer, endorse or financially benefit from any type of exam review, preparation course or published materials related to the content of the CHAA or CHAM exam. The purchase and/or use of exam prep materials does not guarantee a passing score on the CHAA or CHAM exam.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Examinations are computer-based* and require internet access and are administered four (4) times annually for one (1) full month: January, April, July, and October. Proctor information must be included on the application. Proctors will be responsible to administer the exam to the candidate(s) at a suitable testing location. NAHAM will provide the proctors specific instructions on how to proctor the exam.

Testing will be done at a suitable location, date and time agreed upon by the candidate and the proctor during one of the four testing windows. A suitable location must include adequate lighting, comfortable seating and an environment free from noise and other distractions. Proctors must document the exam location and submit this information to NAHAM. NAHAM staff will review all exam locations to ensure that the location is appropriate and does not present a conflict of interest for the candidate or the proctor.

Candidates who take the examination will receive results on the computer screen immediately following the completion of the exam, with the exception of the first window when a new content outline goes into effect. Candidates will be notified in advance if preliminary scores will not be supplied.

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. 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.

**Paper and pencil exam are no longer offered with the exception of candidates who request this accommodation per ADA Guidelines*

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGER (CHAM)

<i>Eligibility Requirements:</i>	
Membership	Voluntary; not required for examination
	High school diploma or GED equivalent plus 90 professional development contact hours earned within the past three (3) or a four year degree from an accredited institution in healthcare, business, or related field
	Signature of one (1) supervisor or course instructor/advisor and one (1) CHAM certified individual
Application	Completed application with fee
<i>Certification Maintenance:</i>	
Advancement	NAHAM Fellows Program
Membership Requirement	Voluntary; not required for certification maintenance
	Sixty (60) professional development contact hours earned within the past <i>two (2) years</i>
Work Experience	1500 hours worked inpatient access during the two (2) year period

**Note:* Ten (10) continuing education/professional development hours provided by NAHAM will be required to report during the June 2017 (earned starting May 31, 2015) certification maintenance window.

CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS ASSOCIATE (CHAA)

<i>Eligibility Requirements:</i>	
Membership	Voluntary; not required for examination
	One (1) year in healthcare or finance industry or completion of an accredited college program in healthcare
	High school diploma or GED equivalent plus 30 professional or
References	Signature of one (1) supervisor or course instructor/advisor
Application	Completed application with fee

<i>Certification Maintenance</i>	
Advancement	CHAM certification
Membership Requirement	Voluntary; not required for certification maintenance
	30 professional development contact hours earned within the previous two (2) years
Work Experience	1500 hours worked in patient access during the two year period

CRITICAL DATES & DEADLINES

<i>January Testing</i>	
Application Deadline	November 30
Testing Period <i>Computer -based administration</i>	January 1 – January 31
<i>April Testing</i>	
Application Deadline	February 28
Testing Period <i>Computer -based administration</i>	April 1 – April 30
<i>July Testing</i>	
Application Deadline	May 31
Testing Period <i>Computer -based administration</i>	July 1 – July 31
<i>October Testing</i>	
Application Deadline	August 31
Testing Period <i>Computer -based administration</i>	October 1 – October 31

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 will not 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. Requirements for who may serve as a proctor can be found in the Proctor Responsibilities section on page 25 of this Handbook.

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

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 will not be accepted after the deadline. All applications must be completed online at www.naham.org. NAHAM members must login through their member accounts to complete the application. Non-members must create a free non-member account.

Testing Month	Application Timeline
January	Apply between 9/1 – 11/30
April	Apply between 12/1 – 2/28
July	Apply between 3/1 – 5/31
October	Apply between 6/1 – 8/31

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

Candidates will also attest that they meet the eligibility requirements, and consent to the NAHAM audit. 10% of applicants are randomly selected per testing period, and will be required to supply additional documentation supporting their eligibility. 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: \$200 for NAHAM-member CHAM examinations, \$400 for non-member CHAM examinations, and \$140 for CHAA examinations.

Candidates will receive confirmation of receipt of application and approval of examination date and proctor approximately two (2) weeks before the testing window begins. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

EXAMINATION FEES

CHAM Examination Fees	
NAHAM Member	\$200
Nonmember	\$400
Examination Retake Fee	\$75
CHAA Examination Fees	
NAHAM Member	\$140
Nonmember	\$140
Examination Retake Fee	\$50

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

The computer on which that candidate tests must meet or exceed the following requirements:

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

All automatic features such as virus sweeping software should be disabled during the examination. The proctor is responsible for securing a computer that meets these minimum requirements.

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 to a different testing period may do so by completing the Exam Deferral request available **within their existing application** and submitting a date change fee of \$50. 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 testing period. 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 at the discounted re-take price. All CHAM and CHAA candidates are extended the opportunity to retest for an additional fee: \$75 for a CHAM retake and \$50 for a CHAA retake. A candidate may not retake an examination in the same testing period as the original attempt. A candidate may take the examination as many times as he or she would like, but the discount rate only applies after the initial attempt rate was paid.

Candidates must wait until the next testing window to enforce requisite preparation time to review weaker areas of the candidates' exam performance.

Each candidate wishing to retake an examination must complete the online Examination Application Form. If eligible for retake, the certification system will **automatically** apply the retake discount for you.

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

The table above outlines the first exam window following the candidate's original attempt that he/she can sit for the next exam and the applicable deadlines.

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.

All items on the CHAA and CHAM exam have a single correct response. Review and validation of item keys is conducted by subject matter experts during the exam development process. NAHAM and SMT routinely apply a post-examination administrative review of the validity of exam scores. If irregularities are found, candidates will be notified of issues concerning their scores, as 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 indicates whether they passed the test, 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, etc. 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.

Candidates are provided with a breakdown of their performance within each of the section of the examination with their official score report. The scores demonstrate how well a candidate performed in each area and is provided to assist failing candidates in determining where they should focus their future study.

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.

Requests for special accommodations must be documented in writing by the candidate's doctor or other qualified professional on official letterhead. A request for ADA accommodations should be made at the time of application submittal, within your existing application. This written documentation can be uploaded within the 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, creed, socioeconomic status or any protected classification. 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 uses unauthorized aids, engages in misconduct, or does not follow testing rules may be dismissed from the exam 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 questions
- Copying, removing, or attempting to remove examination questions and/or scratch paper from the examination room
- Tampering with testing 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 AND ETHICS

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.

Violations of the Principles of Conduct and Ethics and exam security should be reported in writing to the NAHAM Headquarters and must include the nature of the violation and names of involved parties. The Certification Commission will investigate all claims and determine sanctions as appropriate.

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. Certification maintenance is required to maintain the knowledge and skills required for competent occupational and professional performance. Additionally, the certification maintenance process encourages currency in the patient access field and increases confidence among the public, employers and other stakeholders.

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.

The NAHAM certification maintenance program promotes continuing education throughout your career in the field of patient access services by requiring periodic submission of contact hours and ongoing work experience. NAHAM's website 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 and obtained 1,500 hours in a position related to access services during the two-year cycle. All CHAM certificants will be required to report a minimum of sixty (60) educational contact hours every two (2) years. 10 of these hours must be **NAHAM-approved contact hours**. To renew, candidates must enter these Contact Hours in the Certification Central portal, and submit 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 thirty (30) educational contact hours every two (2) years. To renew, candidates must enter these Contact Hours in the Certification Central portal, and submit payment between April 1 and April 30 of each renewal year.

All candidates due for recertification must submit a recertification application through the NAHAM website. NAHAM members must be logged in through their online profile.

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 application.

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

SAMPLE CHAM EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

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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
 - (B) the patient
 - (C) visitors
 - (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
 - (B) hospital/physician billing
 - (C) administration
 - (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

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All NAHAM examinations must be proctored. All proctors must be in a manager-level or above in patient access and cannot directly supervise any candidates taking the examination. All proctors are required to complete the Proctor Training Webinar, which can be found on the NAHAM website. Proctors are responsible for securing a suitable testing location.

Prior to the testing date, proctors will receive instructions for administering the examination including log-in information for all candidates and the Proctor Manual. It is the responsibility of the candidate's proctor to print all testing materials, including the CHAA/CHAM Rules, and sign-in sheet, prior to the examination date. These materials will be emailed at a minimum of two weeks 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 the candidate's 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. Proctors must ensure that any necessary ADA accommodations are provided as advised by NAHAM. Proctors must thoroughly review the Proctor Manual that further details the responsibilities of the proctor.

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. Fail candidates 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. Candidate should focus their study holistically and utilize several different resources to prepare for the exam.
- 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. References to requirements for the computer needed on page 16.

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

A The examination is currently administered online. Paper/pencil administration of the examination will be offered for during regular testing months for 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 the exam. 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 \$75. The CHAA examination has a \$50 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.

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 or view the proctor database at www.naham.org

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;
- You will not need to let NAHAM know, the testing window is open 24/7 all month long.

If your new examination date is in the next quarterly examination month:

- Work with your proctor to ensure that she or he can accommodate you.
- Complete an *Examination Date Change and Period Deferment Form* found in your application, 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 (this can also include your receipt of payment).

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 website, www.naham.org.

Q How do I get a refund?

A All application fees are non-refundable.

Q Are substitutions permitted?

A No, substitutions are not permitted.

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, disciplinary actions, violations to the NAHAM Principles of Conduct and Ethics, 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.

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.