



**Content Blueprint for NCCPA’s Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination (PANRE)  
and the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination Longitudinal Assessment  
(PANRE-LA)  
(effective January 2023)**

This content blueprint provides information on how exam questions are allocated to the different content categories on PANRE and PANRE-LA. In 2019, NCCPA revised the format of its recertification exams to assess the core medical knowledge deemed important for all Board Certified PAs, regardless of their practice discipline or setting. That transition was the culmination of an extensive multi-year initiative to gather feedback from certified physician assistants, including data from various focus groups and surveys of the PA profession. The updated blueprint, effective in January 2023, builds on that earlier work and reflects the findings from the 2021 practice analysis. A panel of Board Certified PAs collaborated with NCCPA to develop a survey that was disseminated to the profession. In that survey, PAs were asked to share feedback on whether specific diseases and disorders were considered to be core medical knowledge and, if so, the performance expectation at which each disease and disorder should be assessed.

Board Certified PAs are involved throughout the exam development process by collaborating on the practice analysis survey, reviewing results of the practice analysis and core medical knowledge response data, writing questions that are included on the recertification assessments, reviewing assessments before they are administered, reviewing performance data for questions, and developing recommendations for passing standards. Certified PAs work with NCCPA to continuously review the content included on the recertification assessments to ensure that it is relevant and current, as the practice of medicine changes and treatment guidelines are revised or new ones introduced.

The percentage allocations of questions by organ system on the recertification exams, effective January 2023, are as follows:

<b>Organ System</b>	<b>% Allocation*</b>
Cardiovascular System	12%
Dermatologic System	5%
Endocrine System	8%
Eyes, Ears, Nose, and Throat	8%
Gastrointestinal System and/or Nutrition	10%
Genitourinary System	5%
Hematologic System	4%
Infectious Diseases	7%
Musculoskeletal System	8%
Neurologic System	5%
Psychiatry/Behavioral Science	7%
Pulmonary System	10%
Renal System	4%
Reproductive System	5%
Emergent Topics (Legal, Ethical, DEI)	2%

\*Percentages may vary slightly

The diseases and disorders that may be covered on PANRE and PANRE-LA are provided in the following content blueprint. The blueprint is categorized by organ system, with percentage allocations for each category. Due to the limited number of questions administered on the exams, all topics are not covered on a single exam. The percentage allocations are approximate and may vary slightly with each exam.

The blueprint also specifies the performance expectation(s) at which each disease and disorder will be assessed. The performance expectations are defined as follows:

**History & Physical:**

Given a stated/differential condition, the PA knows the associated signs, symptoms, history, and physical examination components, complications, risk factors for and risks caused by the stated/differential condition.

**Diagnosis:**

Given the signs, symptoms, history, risk factors, physical examination findings, and/or appropriate study results/interpretations, the PA is able to determine the most likely diagnosis.

**Intervention (Basic)**

The PA is able to manage a disease/disorder with a basic/straightforward presentation, including referral to a specialist, and complications of the management intervention.

**Intervention (Complex)**

The PA is able to manage a disease/disorder made complex by other factors and/or increasing in severity and complications of management or intervention.

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Cardiovascular System – 12%</b>				
Abdominal aortic aneurysm	•	•	•	
Acute myocardial infarction: non-ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI)	•	•	•	
Acute myocardial infarction: ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI)	•	•	•	•
Acute myocarditis	•	•		
Acute pericarditis	•	•		
Angina pectoris (stable and unstable angina)	•	•	•	
Aortic dissection	•	•		
Arterial embolism/thrombosis	•	•	•	
Atrial fibrillation	•	•	•	
Atrial flutter	•	•		
Atrioventricular block	•	•		
Bacterial endocarditis	•	•	•	
Bradycardia (stable and unstable)	•	•	•	
Bundle branch block	•	•		
Cardiac arrest	•	•	•	
Cardiac tamponade	•	•		
Cardiogenic shock	•	•	•	
Congenital heart disease	•	•		
Coronary artery disease	•	•	•	•
Deep venous thrombosis	•	•	•	•
Diastolic heart failure	•	•	•	•
Dilated cardiomyopathy	•	•		
Dyslipidemia	•	•	•	•
Essential hypertension	•	•	•	•
Hypertensive emergency	•	•	•	
Hypotension	•	•	•	
Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy	•	•		
Orthostatic hypotension	•	•	•	
Paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia	•	•	•	
Pericardial effusion	•	•		
Peripheral artery disease	•	•	•	•
Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis	•	•	•	
Premature atrial/ventricular contractions	•	•		
Rheumatic heart disease	•	•		
Secondary hypertension	•	•	•	
Systolic heart failure	•	•	•	•
Thoracic aortic aneurysm	•	•		
Torsades de pointes	•	•	•	
Valvular disorders (regurgitation, prolapse, stenosis)	•	•		
Varicose veins	•	•	•	
Venous insufficiency	•	•	•	
Ventricular fibrillation	•	•	•	
Ventricular tachycardia	•	•	•	

	Performance Expectation			
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Dermatologic System – 5%</b>				
Acne vulgaris	•	•	•	
Actinic keratosis	•	•	•	
Alopecia	•	•		
Atopic dermatitis	•	•	•	
Basal cell carcinoma	•	•		
Bites (animal, insect, human)	•	•	•	
Burns	•	•	•	
Cold injuries	•	•		
Contact dermatitis	•	•	•	
Dermatophyte infections	•	•	•	
Drug eruptions	•	•	•	
Erythema multiforme	•	•		
Hidradenitis suppurativa	•	•	•	
Lipomas	•	•		
Localized skin infections (cellulitis, erysipelas, abscesses, impetigo, carbuncles, furuncles)	•	•	•	•
Melanoma	•	•	•	
Molluscum contagiosum	•	•	•	
Necrotizing soft-tissue infection	•	•	•	
Onychomycosis	•	•	•	
Paronychia	•	•	•	
Pigmentation disorders (vitiligo, acanthosis, melasma)	•	•		
Pilonidal disease	•	•	•	
Pityriasis rosea	•	•		
Psoriasis	•	•	•	
Rosacea	•	•	•	
Roseola	•	•		
Seborrheic dermatitis	•	•	•	
Severe cutaneous adverse reactions (toxic epidermal necrolysis, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, staphylococcal scalded skin syndrome)	•	•		
Skin infestations (scabies, lice)	•	•	•	
Squamous cell carcinoma	•	•		
Ulcers (pressure, diabetic)	•	•	•	
Urticaria	•	•	•	

<b>Performance Expectation</b>				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Endocrine System – 8%</b>				
Benign thyroid nodules	•	•		
Cushing syndrome	•	•		
Diabetes insipidus and SIADH	•	•		
Hyperparathyroidism	•	•		
Hyperthyroidism and thyrotoxicosis	•	•	•	
Hypertriglyceridemia	•	•	•	
Hypoparathyroidism	•	•		
Hypothyroidism	•	•	•	•
Metabolic syndrome, obesity	•	•	•	•
Osteoporosis	•	•	•	
Primary adrenal insufficiency	•	•		
Thyroid cancer	•	•		
Thyroiditis	•	•		
Type 1 diabetes mellitus, diabetic ketoacidosis	•	•	•	•
Type 2 diabetes mellitus, hyperosmolar hyperglycemic syndrome	•	•	•	•
Vitamin D deficiency	•	•	•	

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Eyes, Ears, Nose, and Throat – 8%</b>				
Acute epiglottitis	•	•	•	
Acute glaucoma	•	•		
Acute pharyngitis	•	•	•	•
Acute/chronic otitis media	•	•	•	•
Acute/chronic sinusitis	•	•	•	•
Allergic rhinitis	•	•	•	•
Angioedema	•	•	•	
Apthous ulcers	•	•		
Blepharitis	•	•	•	
Cataract	•	•		
Chalazion	•	•	•	
Conjunctivitis	•	•	•	
Corneal abrasion	•	•	•	
Corneal ulcer	•	•	•	
Dental pain/abscess	•	•	•	
Epistaxis	•	•	•	
Eustachian tube dysfunction	•	•	•	
Foreign body in ear	•	•	•	
Foreign body in eye	•	•	•	
Foreign body in nose	•	•	•	
Hearing loss	•	•		
Hordeolum	•	•	•	
Hyphema	•	•		
Labyrinthitis	•	•		
Laryngitis	•	•	•	
Macular degeneration	•			
Mastoiditis	•	•	•	
Meniere disease	•	•		
Nystagmus	•	•		
Ocular trauma	•	•	•	
Leukoplakia	•	•	•	
Orbital cellulitis	•	•	•	
Otitis externa (acute, malignant)	•	•	•	
Papilledema	•	•		
Parotitis	•	•	•	
Peritonsillar abscess	•	•	•	
Retinal detachment	•	•		
Retinal vascular occlusion	•	•		
Retinopathy (diabetic, hypertensive)	•	•		
Subconjunctival hemorrhage	•	•		
Temporomandibular disorders	•	•		
Tinnitus	•	•		
Tympanic membrane perforation	•	•	•	
Vertigo	•	•	•	

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Gastrointestinal System and/or Nutrition – 10%</b>				
Acute cholecystitis	•	•	•	
Acute hepatitis	•	•		
Acute liver failure	•	•		
Acute pancreatitis	•	•	•	
Anal abscess/fistula	•	•	•	
Anal fissure	•	•	•	
Appendicitis	•	•	•	
Celiac disease	•	•	•	
Cholangitis	•	•		
Cholelithiasis	•	•	•	
Chronic hepatitis	•	•	•	
Chronic pancreatitis	•	•		
Cirrhosis	•	•		
Colon cancer	•	•	•	
Constipation	•	•	•	•
Diverticulitis and diverticulosis	•	•	•	
Dysphagia	•	•	•	
Esophageal varices	•	•	•	
Esophagitis	•	•	•	
Fecal incontinence	•	•	•	
Food allergies	•	•	•	
Food intolerances (gluten, lactose)	•	•	•	
Foreign body ingestion	•	•	•	
Gastritis	•	•	•	
Gastroesophageal reflux disease	•	•	•	•
Gastrointestinal bleeding	•	•	•	
Hemorrhoids (internal, external)	•	•	•	
Hernias	•	•	•	
Infectious diarrhea	•	•	•	
Inflammatory bowel disease	•	•	•	
Intussusception	•	•		
Irritable bowel syndrome	•	•	•	
Ischemic bowel disease	•	•		
Large-bowel obstruction	•	•		
Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease	•	•	•	
Noninfectious diarrhea	•	•	•	
Pancreatic cancer	•	•	•	
Peptic ulcer disease	•	•	•	
Pyloric stenosis	•	•		
Small-bowel obstruction	•	•	•	
Toxic ingestion (caustic substances, medications)	•	•	•	
Toxic megacolon	•	•		

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Genitourinary System – 5%</b>				
Acute prostatitis	•	•	•	
Bacterial cystitis	•	•	•	•
Benign prostatic hyperplasia	•	•	•	
Bladder cancer	•	•		
Chronic prostatitis	•	•		
Epididymitis	•	•	•	
Hydrocele and varicocele	•	•		
Interstitial cystitis	•	•		
Nephrolithiasis and urolithiasis	•	•	•	
Orchitis	•	•	•	
Overactive bladder	•	•	•	
Paraphimosis/phimosis	•	•		
Prostate cancer	•	•	•	
Testicular cancer	•	•		
Testicular torsion	•	•	•	
Urethritis	•	•	•	
Urinary incontinence	•	•	•	
<b>Hematologic System – 4%</b>				
Acute/chronic lymphocytic and myeloid leukemia	•	•		
Anemia of chronic disease	•	•		
Folate deficiency anemia	•	•	•	
Hemolytic anemia	•	•		
Hodgkin lymphoma	•	•		
Hypercoagulable states (pregnancy-induced, trauma, COVID-19, DVT, Factor V Leiden)	•	•		
Hypocoagulable states	•	•		
Immune thrombocytopenic purpura	•	•		
Iron deficiency anemia	•	•	•	•
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	•	•		
Sickle cell anemia	•	•		
Vitamin B12 deficiency anemia	•	•	•	



Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Infectious Diseases – 7%</b>				
Candidiasis	•	•	•	
Chlamydial infections	•	•	•	
Coronavirus infections	•	•	•	
Epstein-Barr virus infections	•	•	•	
Gonococcal infections	•	•	•	
Herpes simplex virus infection	•	•	•	
HIV infection	•	•		
Human papillomavirus infections	•	•	•	
Influenza	•	•	•	
Malaria	•	•		
Measles	•	•		
Mumps	•	•		
Rabies	•	•		
Respiratory syncytial virus infection	•	•	•	
Rubella	•	•		
Septic disorders (sepsis, septic shock, systemic inflammatory response syndrome)	•	•	•	
Syphilis	•	•	•	
Tetanus	•	•		
Tick-borne diseases (Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, anaplasmosis)	•	•	•	
Tuberculosis	•	•	•	
Varicella-zoster virus infections (chickenpox, herpes zoster)	•	•	•	

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Musculoskeletal System – 8%</b>				
Acute osteomyelitis	•	•	•	
Avascular necrosis	•	•		
Bursitis	•	•	•	
Carpal tunnel syndrome	•	•	•	
Compartment syndrome	•	•	•	
Fibromyalgia	•	•		
Fractures and dislocations	•	•	•	
Ganglion	•	•		
Gout and psuedogout	•	•	•	
Inflammatory arthropathy (rheumatoid arthritis [including juvenile], psoriatic arthritis)	•	•		
Lateral/medial epicondylitis	•	•	•	
Osgood-Schlatter disease	•	•		
Osteoarthritis	•	•	•	
Rotator cuff tear	•	•	•	
Scoliosis	•	•		
Septic arthritis	•	•	•	
Slipped capital femoral epiphysis/congenital hip dysplasia	•	•		
Spinal disk herniation	•	•	•	
Spinal stenosis	•	•		
Sprain and strain injuries	•	•	•	
Systemic lupus erythematosus	•	•		
Temporal arteritis (giant cell arteritis)	•	•	•	
Tendinitis (infectious, non-infectious)	•	•	•	

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Neurologic System – 5%</b>				
Bell palsy	•	•	•	
Cauda equina syndrome	•	•		
Cerebral aneurysm	•	•		
Delirium	•	•		
Encephalopathy	•	•		
Essential tremor	•	•	•	
Headache disorders (cluster headache, migraine, tension headache, pseudotumor cerebri)	•	•	•	
Hydrocephalus	•			
Major neurocognitive disorder and dementia	•	•		
Meningitis and encephalitis	•	•		
Neuromuscular disorders (Guillain-Barre syndrome, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, botulism, Parkinson disease)	•	•		
Peripheral neuropathy	•	•	•	
Radiculopathy	•	•	•	
Seizure disorders	•	•	•	
Stroke and transient ischemic attack	•	•	•	•
Syncope	•	•	•	
Traumatic brain injury (intracranial hemorrhage, concussion, post-concussion syndrome)	•	•	•	

Performance Expectation				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Psychiatry/Behavioral Science – 7%</b>				
Abuse and neglect (child abuse, adult abuse, spouse or partner abuse)	•	•	•	
Acute stress disorder	•	•	•	
Adjustment disorders (bereavement and grief reaction)	•	•	•	
Anxiety disorders (generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder)	•	•	•	•
Bipolar disorders	•	•		
Depressive disorders (major depressive disorder, major depressive disorder with peripartum onset, major depressive disorder with seasonal pattern, post-partum)	•	•	•	•
Disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders (oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder)	•	•		
Feeding and eating disorders (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge-eating disorder, mixed disorder)	•	•		
Neurodevelopmental disorders (autism spectrum disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder)	•	•		
Non-substance-related addictive disorders	•	•		
Obsessive-compulsive disorder	•	•		
Post-traumatic stress disorder	•	•	•	
Schizophrenia	•	•		
Substance use disorders (illicit substances, prescription drugs, alcohol, tobacco)	•	•	•	
Suicide/homicide (risk, attempt, ideation)	•	•	•	

<b>Performance Expectation</b>				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Pulmonary System – 10%</b>				
Acute bronchiolitis	•	•	•	
Acute bronchitis	•	•	•	
Acute respiratory distress syndrome	•	•	•	
Hypersensitivity reactions (allergies, anaphylaxis)	•	•	•	
Asthma	•	•	•	•
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (chronic bronchitis, emphysema, chronic obstructive asthma)	•	•	•	•
Croup	•	•	•	
Cystic fibrosis	•	•		
Foreign body aspiration	•	•	•	
Lung cancer	•	•	•	
Pertussis	•	•	•	
Pleural effusion	•	•	•	
Pneumonia (bacterial, fungal, viral)	•	•	•	•
Pneumothorax	•	•	•	
Pulmonary embolism	•	•	•	•
Pulmonary hypertension	•	•		
Pulmonary nodules	•	•		
Sleep apnea	•	•	•	
<b>Renal System – 4%</b>				
Acute kidney injury (prerenal, postrenal, intrinsic, rhabdomyolysis)	•	•	•	
Chronic kidney disease	•	•	•	•
Electrolyte abnormalities	•	•	•	
Pyelonephritis	•	•	•	
Renal cell carcinoma	•	•		

<b>Performance Expectation</b>				
	History & Physical	Diagnosis	Intervention (Basic)	Intervention (Complex)
<b>Reproductive System – 5%</b>				
Abnormal uterine bleeding	•	•	•	
Abruptio placentae	•	•		
Amenorrhea	•	•	•	
Breast abscess and mastitis	•	•	•	
Breast cancer	•	•	•	
Cervical cancer	•	•	•	
Dysmenorrhea	•	•	•	
Ectopic pregnancy	•	•	•	
Endometriosis	•	•		
Fertility issues (contraception)	•	•	•	
Gestational diabetes	•	•		
Hypertension disorders during the perinatal period	•	•	•	
Normal pregnancy (medication use during the perinatal period, prenatal diagnosis/care)	•	•	•	
Menopause	•	•	•	
Ovarian cancer	•	•		
Ovarian cysts	•	•		
Ovarian torsion	•	•	•	
Pelvic inflammatory disease	•	•	•	•
Pelvic organ prolapse	•	•		
Placenta previa	•	•		
Postpartum hemorrhage	•	•	•	
Pregnancy loss	•	•		
Premature rupture of membranes	•	•		
Premenstrual syndrome	•	•	•	
Rh incompatibility	•	•	•	
Sexual dysfunction	•	•	•	
Uterine masses (fibroids, uterine cancers)	•	•		
Vaginitis	•	•	•	
<b>Emergent Topics (Legal, Ethical, DEI) – 2%</b>				