Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality ®

2020 Domestic Candidate Examination Handbook





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It is the candidate's responsibility to read and understand the contents of this handbook before applying for the examination.

This handbook contains current information about the Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality® (CPHQ) certification examination developed by the Healthcare Quality Certification Commission (HQCC). It is essential that you keep it readily available for reference until you are notified of your performance on the examination. All previous versions of this handbook are null and void.

For address changes, requests for a current candidate handbook, and information about the development and administration of the CPHQ examination, certification program, and recertification, direct correspondence to:

Certification/Recertification

HQCC Headquarters 8600 West Bryn Mawr Ave. Suite 710 N. Chicago, IL 60631, USA

For general inquiries and questions about the exam or recertification, contact HQCC by phone at 847.375.4720, fax 312.579.3041, or e-mail info@nahq.org.

Candidates can register for the examination online at www.nahq.org.

Affiliation

HQCC, previously known as the Healthcare Quality Certification Board (HQCB), is the certifying arm of the not- for-profit National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ), which was formed in 1976 to advance the profession of healthcare quality through the development of a certification program. HQCC establishes policies, procedures, and standards for certification and recertification in the field of healthcare quality. The granting of CPHQ status by HQCC recognizes professional and academic achievement through the individual's participation in this voluntary certification program.

Accreditation

The CPHQ certification program is fully accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accrediting arm of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE), Washington, DC.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The certification examination is offered to all eligible candidates, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability. Neither NAHQ nor AMP, a PSI business, the examination service provider, discriminates on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Introduction to the CPHQ Program

The purpose of certification in the healthcare quality field is to promote excellence and professionalism. The program certifies individuals who demonstrate their knowledge and expertise in this field by passing a written examination. The CPHQ designation provides the healthcare employer and the public with the assurance that certified individuals possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience in healthcare quality to perform competently.

The high standards of the certification program are ensured by the close working relationships among NAHQ, HQCC, healthcare quality professionals, and testing experts. HQCC adheres to NCCA standards in the development and implementation of its certification program.

The certification program is not designed to determine who is qualified or who shall engage in healthcare quality activities. The goal is to promote excellence and professionalism by documenting individual performance as measured against a predetermined level of knowledge about quality. All CPHQ are expected to comply with NAHQ's code of ethics in spirit and action. A cooperative effort by HQCC, PSI, and practicing healthcare quality professionals has resulted in the definition of tasks significant to the practice of quality. These competencies are included in the certification examination. The examination materials are developed by practicing healthcare quality professionals and HQCC.

Examination Services

NAHQ contracts with PSI to provide examination services internationally or outside of the United States and its territories. PSI carefully adheres to industry standards for development of practice-related, criterion-referenced examinations to assess competency and is responsible for administering and scoring the certification exam and reporting examination results.

Questions related to the examination should be referred to

PSI/AMP CPHQ Examination 18000 W. 105th Street Olathe, KS 66061-7543

USA 913.895.4600 Fax: 913.895.4650 Email: info@goAMP.com

www.goAMP.com

Objectives of Certification

The objectives of the certification program for quality professionals are to

- 1. Promote professional standards and improve the practice of quality
- 2. Give special recognition to those professionals who demonstrate an acquired body of knowledge and expertise in the field through successful completion of the examination process
- 3. Identify acceptable knowledge of the principles and practice of healthcare quality for employers, the public, and members of allied professions
- 4. Foster continuing competence and maintain the professional standard in healthcare quality through the recertification program.

Definition of the Quality Professional

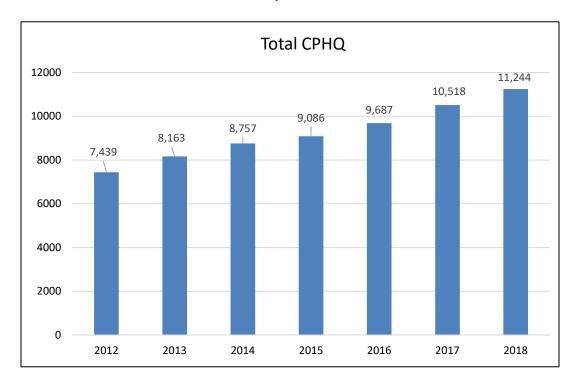
The practice of quality occurs in all healthcare settings, is performed by professionals with diverse clinical and nonclinical educational and experience backgrounds, and involves the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the tasks significant to practice in the CPHQ examination content outline. (Refer to the Examination Content Outline on page 23)

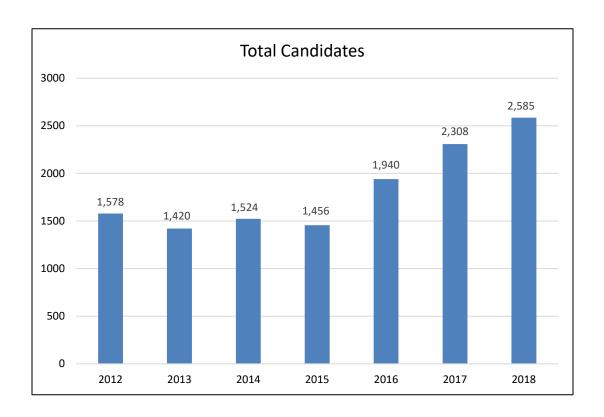
A Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ) is

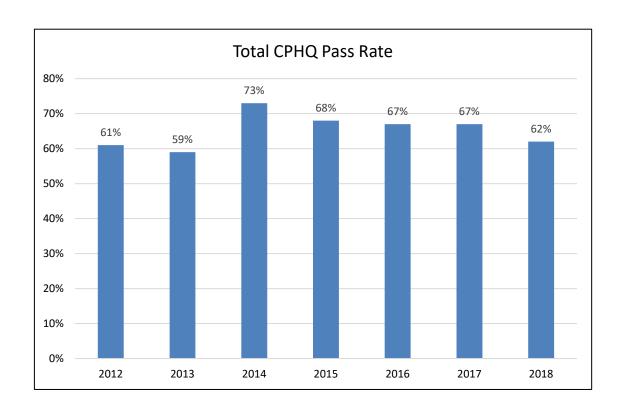
an individual who has passed the accreditation examination, demonstrating competent knowledge, skill, and understanding of program development and management, quality improvement concepts, coordination of survey processes, communication and education techniques, and departmental management.

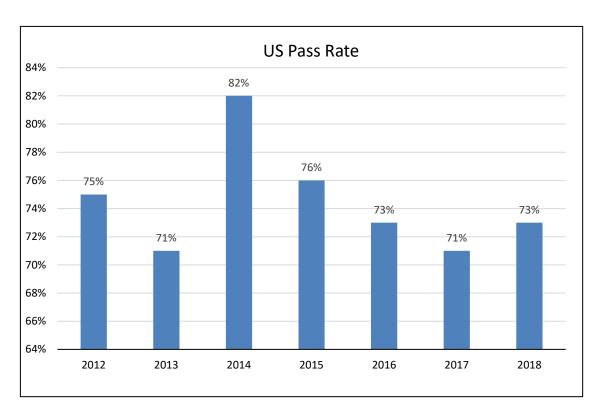
HQCC's goal is to produce examinations that test generic concepts that can be applied to any healthcare setting. Candidates who pass the CPHQ examination must also understand how all of these important elements of quality and case/care/disease/utilization/risk management, as well as data and general management skills, integrate to produce an effective and efficient system to monitor and improve care.

CPHQ Statistics









Certification

To become certified, each quality professional must pass the CPHQ examination. The examination is available in computer-based format at assessment centers in the United States and multiple international locations.

U.S. certificants will receive a frameable certificate, identification card, CPHQ pin, and recertification information by mail approximately 6–8 weeks after completing the examination. If you do not receive your certificate, contact info@nahq.org within 6 months of passing the exam. After 6 months, a replacement certificate will be issued for \$25.

The credential is valid from the time you receive your certificate through a 2-year period, which begins on January 1 of the year following the date you pass the examination. Certified professionals are entitled to use the designation "CPHQ" after their names.

Candidates who do not achieve a passing score or whose cycle of eligibility has expired must submit a new application.

Recertification

Following successful completion of the certification examination, the CPHQ is required to maintain certification by fulfilling continuing education (CE) requirements, which are reviewed and established annually by HQCC. The current requirements include obtaining and maintaining documentation of 30 CE hours over the 2-year recertification cycle—beginning January 1 of the year following the date you passed the exam—and payment of a recertification fee. All CE must relate to areas covered in the most current examination content outline. Current employment in the quality field is not required to maintain active CPHQ status. The process for obtaining recertification is described on the website at https://nahq.org/certification/cphq-recertification and the Recertification Handbook.

Eligibility Requirements

All candidates have complete access to the examination process. Those who aspire to excel and demonstrate their competency in the field of healthcare quality have a chance to do so and achieve certification.

After years of extensive experience in testing research and development, and after observing the extraordinarily diverse backgrounds of exceptional candidates who have been successful on the examination and as CPHQs, the commission is confident that the carefully crafted CPHQ examination will differentiate between candidates who are able to demonstrate competence and those who are not. It is with this confidence that HQCC celebrates the elimination of barriers such as minimum education and experience requirements that are not objectively linked to success on the examination and effectiveness as a healthcare quality professional.

Candidates must take time to assess and judge their own readiness to apply to take the CPHQ examination, particularly if they have not worked in the field for at least 2 years. A careful review of all available information about the tasks covered in the CPHQ examination content outline, sample examination questions, reference list, and any other available data is essential before making the decision to apply for the examination.

The examination committee develops and writes the examination to test the knowledge, skills, and

abilities of effective quality professionals who have been performing a majority of the tasks on the examination outline for at least 2 years. The examination does not test at the entry level and is not appropriate for entry-level candidates. If the candidate is new to healthcare quality, has worked in the field less than 2 years, or his or her experience as a quality professional was not specifically related to healthcare, HQCC cautions that the candidate may not be ready to attempt the examination. Refer to the content outline later in this handbook for detailed content information and other tools to assess readiness.

About the Examination

The CPHQ examination is the only fully accredited examination that standardized measurement of the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of competent healthcare quality professionals. The examination is available in a computerized format throughout the year at PSI Test Centers.

The certification examination is an objective, multiple-choice examination consisting of 140 questions. Of these questions, 125 are used in computing the score, as discussed later in this handbook. The following percentage guidelines are used in selecting the three types of questions that appear on each examination: approximately 23% recall, 57% application, and 20% analysis. Recall questions test the candidate's knowledge of specific facts and concepts. Application questions require the candidate to interpret or apply information to a situation. Analysis questions test the candidate's ability to evaluate, problem solve, or integrate a variety of information and judgment into a meaningful whole.

Pretest Questions on the Examination

In addition to the 125 scored questions, CPHQ examinations also include an additional 15 pretest questions. You will be asked to answer these questions; however, they will not be included in the scored examination result. Pretest questions will be dispersed within the examination, and you will not be able to determine which of the questions are being pretested and which will be included in your score. This is necessary to ensure that candidates answer pretest questions in the same manner as they do scored questions. This allows the question to be validated as accurate and appropriate before it is included as a measure of candidate competency.

The examination content is based upon a practice analysis conducted every 3-5 years to ensure the content is current, practice-related, and representative of the responsibilities of healthcare quality professionals. Participants in the practice analysis survey must have completed a minimum of 1 year working in healthcare quality, case/care/disease/utilization/risk management for their responses to be included in the research.

THE CPHQ EXAMINATION

Examination Administration

Examinations are delivered by computer at approximately 300 PSI Test Centers located throughout the United States. The examination is administered by appointment only Monday through Friday. Appointment times may vary by location. Evening and Saturday appointments may be scheduled based on availability. Available dates will be indicated when scheduling your examination. Candidates are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Assessment Center Locations

PSI Test Centers have been selected as CPHQ testing sites to provide accessibility to the most candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. A current listing of PSI Test Centers may be viewed at http://online.goamp.com/CandidateHome/displayTCList.aspx?pExamID=20651. Specific address information will be provided when you schedule an examination appointment.

Holidays

Examinations will **not** be offered on the following U.S. holidays:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day (and the following Friday), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day

Special Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities

PSI complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strives to ensure that no individual with a disability—as defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment—is deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely by reason of that disability. PSI will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities. Candidates requesting special accommodations must notify PSI at the time of application and scheduling.

- 1. Candidates must advise PSI at the time of scheduling that wheelchair access is necessary.
- Candidates with visual, sensory, physical, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions may request special accommodations and arrangements and will be reviewed by PSI.

Verification of the disability and a statement of the specific type of assistance needed must be made in writing to PSI at least 45 calendar days prior to your desired examination date by completing the Request for Special Examination Accommodations and Documentation of Disability-Related Needs forms at the end of this handbook. PSI will review the submitted forms and will contact you regarding the decision for accommodations.

Attestation

If you choose to apply for the CPHQ Examination, you will be required to attest to the candidate declaration statement. Please take a moment to read the full declaration statement below:

- ✓ I authorize the Healthcare Quality Certification Commission (HQCC)/National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ) to make whatever inquiries and investigations that it deems necessary to verify my credentials and professional standing. Further, I understand that the HQCC/NAHQ will treat the contents of this application as well as all documents relating to certification as confidential, except when required by legal compulsory process, with the following exception. If I successfully pass the examination and attain the CPHQ designation, I authorize the HQCC/NAHQ to release my name and address to HQCC/NAHQ and affiliated organizations for the purpose of mailing me association information. I also authorize HQCC/NAHQ to use information from my application and subsequent examination for the purpose of statistical analysis, provided my personal identification with the information has been deleted. I understand that the initial certification period is two calendar years following successfully passing the examination and agree to meet current requirements if I wish to maintain active certification status thereafter. I further understand that the governing body has the authority to change requirements to attain and maintain certification from time to time.
- ✓ I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and abide by the **code of ethics** of my professional practice.
- ✓ I have read and understand the information provided in the applicable Candidate Handbook. Under penalties of perjury, I declare that the foregoing statements are true.
- ✓ I understand that false information may be cause for denial or loss of the credential. I understand that I can be disqualified from taking or continuing to sit for an examination or from receiving examination scores if the HQCC/NAHQ determines through either proctor observation or statistical analysis that I engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other prohibited behavior during the administration of the examination.
- ✓ I understand that all examination questions are the copyrighted property of NAHQ. I will not reproduce, record, distribute, or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. This includes posting exam questions to social media or other networking sites/internet sites. I understand that doing so may subject me to severe civil and criminal penalties and jeopardize my credential or my opportunity to take the examination.

Applying for and Scheduling an Examination

1. Apply and Pay for Exam

<u>Pay by Credit Card</u>: You may complete the application process online by visiting <u>www.nahq.org</u>. From there, click Login. Sign in with your e-mail address and password or, if you are a new customer, create an account. Click My NAHQ. In the navigation panel on the left, click My Certification. Click Enroll Now. The instructions will guide you through the application process. After the application and credit card payment (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover) have been submitted, you will receive an e-mail from PSI within approximately 10 business days with instructions on how to schedule your exam.

<u>Pay by Check</u>: If you are paying by check, you will need to fill out the <u>application form</u>. Mail the application form and your check for appropriate fees to HQCC/NAHQ. Please note that there is an additional \$25 fee for payment by check. Within approximately 2 weeks, you will receive a confirmation notice including an e-mail address and toll-free telephone number to contact PSI to schedule an examination appointment. If eligibility cannot be confirmed, notification why the application is incomplete will be sent. If a confirmation of eligibility notice is not received within 4 weeks, contact PSI at 877.714.5686.

All fees are nonrefundable.

2. Schedule Exam

After your application and payment have been received, you will receive an e-mail from Schedule@goAMP.com with instructions for scheduling your exam. You will be required to schedule and sit for your exam within 90 days of payment. You can schedule your examination online or call PSI to complete the scheduling process.

If you would like to schedule online, please complete the following once you've received an email from Schedule@goamp.com:

- a. Visit www.goAMP.com
- b. Select Candidates and this will open up to a new page. Fill in the following information:
 - a. (1) Healthcare
 - b. (2) Healthcare Quality Certification Commission
 - c. (3) Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality Examination
- c. You will be re-directed to a new page. Select **Register for this Exam** to schedule your exam.
- d. If you have never registered for a CPHQ exam, select **New User**. If you have previously sat for the CPHQ exam, log in with your username and password.
- e. Fill in the required information and include the Assigned ID # provided in the scheduling email. Select **Continue**.
- f. Confirm the information provided is correct and provide your Date of Birth and Gender. Select **Next**.
- g. Answer the security questions to provide and select **Next**.
- h. Search for your desired test location from the drop-down menu. Then, select the desired testing center location. This will appear in a calendar view with dates and times for your CPHQ Exam.
- i. Once you select your date and time, a purple **Schedule** button will appear which states that by scheduling your appointment you are verifying your selections.

If you would like to schedule your exam by phone, please contact PSI at 877.714.5686. When you schedule your examination appointment, be prepared to confirm a location and preferred date and time for testing. You will be asked to provide your unique identification number.

After you've scheduled your examination, you will be notified of the time to report to the assessment center and if an e-mail address is provided you will be sent an e-mail confirmation notice.

If special accommodations are being requested, complete the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form included in this handbook and submit it to PSI at least 45 days prior to the desired examination date.

Rescheduling an Examination

You may reschedule your appointment ONCE at no charge within your eligibility window by calling PSI at 877.714.5686 at least 2 business days prior to your scheduled appointment. The schedule below applies:

If your examination is scheduled on	You must call PSI to reschedule the examination by 3pm (CT) on the previous
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday/ Saturday	Tuesday

All fees are nonrefundable.

Missed Appointments

You will forfeit your examination registration and all fees paid to take the examination under the following circumstances:

- You cancel your examination after confirmation of eligibility is received.
- You wish to reschedule an examination but fail to contact PSI at least 2 business days prior to the scheduled testing session.
- You wish to reschedule a second time.
- You appear more than 15 minutes late for an examination.
- You fail to report for an examination appointment.

A new, complete application and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

No Refunds

Fees are nonrefundable. Declined credit cards will be subject to a \$25 handling fee. A certified check or money order for the amount due, including the handling fee, must be sent to HQCC/NAHQ to cover declined credit card transactions.

Inclement Weather, Power Failure, or Emergency

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, PSI will

determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination. The examination will usually not be rescheduled if the assessment center personnel are able to open the assessment center.

Visit PSI's website at http://online.goamp.com/CandidateHome/testcenterclosings.aspx prior to the examination to determine if PSI has been advised that any assessment centers are closed. Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be canceled at an assessment center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification following the examination regarding rescheduling or reapplication procedures.

If power to an assessment center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will be restarted. The responses provided up to the point of interruption will be intact, but for security reasons the questions will be scrambled.

RULES FOR COMPUTERIZED TESTING

Taking the Examination

Your examination will be given by computer at a PSI assessment center. You do not need any computer experience or typing skills to take your examination. On the day of your examination appointment, report to the assessment center no later than your scheduled testing time. Look for signs indicating PSI assessment center check-in. If you arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time, you will not be admitted.

Identification

To gain admission to the assessment center, you must present two forms of identification, one with a current photograph. Both forms of identification must be valid and include your current name and signature. No forms of temporary identification will be accepted. You will also be required to sign a roster for verification of identity. You MUST bring one of the following:

- driver's license with photograph
- state identification card with photograph
- passport
- military identification card with photograph

The second form of identification must display your name and signature for signature verification (e.g., credit card with signature, social security card with signature, employment or student ID card with signature). If your name on these documents is different than it appears on your identification, you must bring proof of your name change (e.g., marriage license, divorce decree, or court order).

Assessment Center Security

PSI administration and security standards are designed to ensure all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The assessment center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

• Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, or cellular phones are allowed

- in the testing room. Possession of a cellular phone or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination.
- Calculators are not necessary as all calculations found on the examination can be performed
 without the aid of a calculator. However, if you wish to do so you are permitted to bring a
 personal calculator and use it during the examination. The only type of calculator permitted is a
 simple battery-powered pocket calculator that does not have an alphanumeric keypad, and does
 not have the capability to print or to store or retrieve data. You MUST present your calculator to
 the examination proctor for inspection PRIOR to the start of the examination. Using a calculator
 during the examination that has NOT been inspected may result in dismissal from the
 examination.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- Candidates may be subjected to a metal detection scan upon entering the examination room.

Personal Belongings

No personal items, valuables, or weapons should be brought to the assessment center. Only wallets and keys are permitted. Coats must be left outside the testing room. You will be provided a soft locker to store your wallet and/or keys with you in the testing room. You will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed. Please note the following items will not be allowed in the testing room except securely locked in the soft locker:

- watches
- hats

Once you have placed everything into the soft locker, you will be asked to pull out your pockets to ensure they are empty. If all personal items will not fit in the soft locker you will not be able to test. The site will not store any personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed in the testing room after the examination is started, the administration will be forfeited.

Examination Restrictions

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- You will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination, unless noted on the sign-in roster for a particular candidate. You must return the scratch paper to the supervisor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive your score report.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the assessment center.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking, or smoking will not be permitted in the assessment center.
- You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

Misconduct

If you engage in any of the following conduct during the examination you may be dismissed, your scores will not be reported, and examination fees will not be refunded. *Examples* of misconduct are when you

- create a disturbance, are abusive, or otherwise uncooperative
- display or use electronic communications equipment such as cellular phones

- talk or participate in conversation with other examination candidates
- give or receive help or are suspected of doing so
- leave the assessment center during the administration
- attempt to record examination questions or make notes
- attempt to take the examination for someone else
- are observed with personal belongings
- are observed with notes, books, or other aids without it being noted on the roster

Candidate Responsibility

As a CPHQ candidate, it is your responsibility and duty to report suspicious or inappropriate activity both inside and outside of the testing center. Suspicious activity includes, **but is not limited to:**

- the dissemination of exam questions or other copyrighted works either in the testing center, electronically, or through other channels (including the memorization and subsequent distribution of items)
- attempting to steal content from the testing center
- sharing information or answers to the exam at the testing site, electronically, or through other channels
- obtaining the questions in advance of the examination
- providing the questions to other candidates in advance of the examination
- taking, or trying to take, an exam for someone else
- allowing someone to take an exam on your behalf
- taking unauthorized notes or study aids into the examination
- using your cell phone or other devices to store or receive information and referring to this information during the examination
- conferring with candidates during the examination
- allowing another candidate to look at your exam
- attempting to cheat on the exam in any other way

Alerting NAHQ and HQCC of this activity protects the integrity of the credential you have worked hard to achieve. Breaches of copyright and conduct impact the value that the CPHQ holds, and it is your responsibility to report such breaches to maintain the high standards of the credential. Exam content is the copyrighted work of NAHQ, and breach of copyright is illegal and punishable by law.

Report all incidents of breach of conduct to **NAHQ** by mail at 8600 West Bryn Mawr Ave., Suite 710 N., Chicago, IL 60631, USA, by email at info@nahq.org, or call 847.375.4720.

Copyrighted Examination Questions

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of NAHQ. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. This includes posting exam questions to social media or other networking sites/internet sites. This constitutes a test security and copyright violation. Doing so may subject the candidate to severe civil and criminal penalties and jeopardize your credential. See *Disciplinary Policy* for the full disciplinary policy.

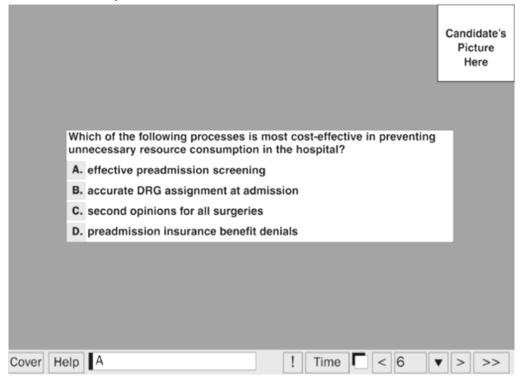
Practice Examination

Prior to attempting the timed examination, you will be given the opportunity to practice taking an

examination on the computer. The time used for this practice examination is NOT counted as part of the examination time or score. When you are comfortable with the computer testing process, you may quit the practice session and begin the timed examination.

Timed Examination

Following the practice examination, the actual examination will begin. Before beginning, instructions for taking the examination are provided on-screen.



The computer monitors the time spent on the examination. You will have 3 hours to complete the examination. The examination will terminate if testing exceeds the time allowed. Click on the "Time" box in the lower right portion of the screen to monitor testing time. A digital clock indicates the time remaining to complete the examination. The time feature may be turned off during the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the lower right portion of the screen. Choices of answers to the examination questions are identified as A, B, C, or D. You must indicate your choice by either typing in the letter in the response box in the lower left portion of the computer screen or clicking on the option using the mouse. To change an answer, enter a different option by typing A, B, C, or D or by clicking on the option using the mouse. You may change your answer as many times as you wish during the examination, within the time limit.

To move to the next question, click on the forward arrow (>) in the lower right portion of the screen. This action will move you forward through the examination question by question. To review any question, click the backward arrow (<) or use the left arrow key to move backward through the examination.

An examination question may be left unanswered for return later in the examination session. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by using the mouse and clicking in the blank square to the

right of the "Time" box. Click on the double arrow (>>) to advance to the next unanswered or bookmarked question on the examination. To identify all unanswered and bookmarked questions, repeatedly click on the double arrow (>>). When the examination is completed, the number of examination questions answered is reported. If not all questions have been answered and there is time remaining, return to the examination and answer those questions. Be sure to provide an answer for each examination question before ending the examination. There is no penalty for guessing.

Candidate Comments

During the examination, comments may be provided for any question by clicking on the button displaying an exclamation point (!) to the left of the "Time" box. This opens a dialogue box where comments may be entered. Comments will be reviewed, but individual responses will not be provided.

Following the Examination

After you finish the examination, you are asked to complete a short evaluation of your testing experience. Then, you are instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive your score report. Scores are reported in printed form only, in person or by U.S. mail. To ensure confidentiality, no candidate examination scores will be reported over the telephone, by electronic mail, or by facsimile. Neither HQCC nor the testing agency will release a copy of individual score reports to employers, schools, or other individuals or organizations without your written authorization.

The score report you receive as you leave the assessment center will include your photograph, taken prior to the start of the examination. This is an unofficial score report. You may not use the CPHQ credential until you receive your official documentation. The score report will reflect either "pass" or "fail," followed by a raw score indicating the number of questions you answered correctly. Additional detail is provided in the form of raw scores by each of the four major content categories. This information is provided as feedback to help you understand your performance within the major content categories. Your pass or fail status is determined by your overall raw score for the entire examination. Even though the examination consists of 140 questions, your score is based on 125 scored questions. Fifteen of the questions on the examination are "pretest" questions and are not included in the final score.

The content category scores on the score report are not used to determine pass-fail decision outcomes. They are only provided to offer a general indication regarding your performance in each content category. The examination is designed to provide a consistent and precise determination of your overall performance and is not designed to provide complete information regarding your performance in each content category. You should remember that areas with a larger number of items (questions) will affect the overall score more than areas with a fewer number of items. The precision and consistency of scores diminishes with fewer items, and therefore, sub-scores should be interpreted with caution, especially those that correspond to content categories with very few items.

Failing candidates may reapply for subsequent examinations. Candidates may reapply for subsequent examinations 90 days after your initial exam date. Candidates may not test more than three times in 365 days. If a candidate fails to pass the exam after three attempts in 365 days, he or she must wait 365 days from time of the third attempt to reapply for the exam again. For more information regarding failing the examination, see *If You Fail the Examination*.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Fees

Fees for the CPHQ examination are shown in the table that follows:

CPHQ Domestic Examination Fees				
All Examinations:	Online by credit card	By mail via Check*		
NAHQ Member Fee (USD)	\$423	\$448		
Nonmember Fee (USD)	\$529	\$554		

^{*}Though candidates must apply for certification online, payment can be sent by via a check in the mail with the completed printed application. An additional \$25 fee must be included if payment is submitted in any way other than online. Please address any check payment to:

HQCC/NAHQ 8600 West Bryn Mawr Ave., Suite 710 N. Chicago, IL 60631, USA

If you wish to become a member of NAHQ, contact NAHQ at 847.375.4720 or visit www.nahq.org.

Exam fees may be paid by credit card, personal check, or money order for the total amount, payable to HQCC/NAHQ. Please write the name of the candidate taking the exam on the face of your check. An additional \$25 charge will be added for any returned checks or rejected credit cards to cover additional handling fees and service charges imposed by the bank or Credit Card Company. Your canceled check or credit card receipt serves to document payment for the examination.

Scores Canceled by HQCC or PSI

HQCC and PSI are responsible for the integrity of the scores they report. On occasion, occurrences such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate may cause a score to be suspect. HQCC and PSI are committed to rectifying such discrepancies as expeditiously as possible. Examination results may be voided if, upon investigation, violation of regulations is discovered.

Disciplinary Policy

HQCC grants the CPHQ certification to qualified healthcare quality professionals as a means of promoting excellence and professionalism in the healthcare quality field. The Certification program is a voluntary process. The Commission, in accordance with its policies and procedures, determines whether individuals are qualified for Certification, and issues said Certification when applicable. The Commission does not determine, monitor, or otherwise become involved in the manner employers and other third parties apply the Certification.

Applications for initial Certification or renewal of the same are determined by HQCC at its sole discretion. Without limiting the foregoing, applications may be refused, candidates may be barred from future examinations, or candidates or individuals already Certified may be sanctioned, including revocation of the Certification, for, but not limited to, the following conduct ("Improper Conduct"):

- Including and/or otherwise providing false, misleading, or incomplete information on any application for Certification or renewal, or other CPHQ related document.
- Failing to complete or provide proof of completion of the any Certification or renewal requirements.

- Commissions' determination that Certification or renewal was improperly granted.
- Cheating or assisting others to cheat on any CPHQ exam.
- Purchasing, sharing, and/or reviewing preparatory materials that have, or claim to have, actual questions, answers, or other materials from prior CPHQ exams.
- Removing or attempting to remove examination materials or information from a test site.
- Unauthorized possession or distribution of any official testing or examination materials via social media sites, text messaging, or other medium, and/or reproduced in any format.
- Causing, creating, or participating in an examination irregularity.
- Assisting others to wrongfully obtain Certification or renew their Certification.
- Failure to comply with the code of ethics in which Certification is held.
- Any conduct unbecoming of the healthcare quality profession and/or failure to comply with HQCC's policies and procedures regarding Certification.

The definitions of any and all terms (e.g., misleading, incomplete, cheating, irregularity, unbecoming, spirit, and action, etc.) included in the above example violations shall be determined by the Commission in its sole discretion, and are not subject to other interpretation. All CPHQs must read and agree to abide by HQCC's Disciplinary Policies and Procedures prior to sitting to the exam.

Pass or Fail Score Determination

Neither HQCC nor PSI is able to release or discuss individual questions with candidates following the examination. To do so would require elimination of that question from the item bank of pretested questions and deplete the number of pretested questions required to develop future versions of the examination.

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score is the Angoff method, applied during the performance of a Passing Point Study by a panel of experts in the field. The experts evaluated each question on the examination to determine how many correct answers are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to pass this examination portion. Your ability to pass the examination depends on the knowledge and skill you display, not on the performance of other candidates.

Passing scores may vary slightly for each version of the examination. To ensure fairness to all candidates, a process of statistical equating is used. This involves selecting an appropriate mix of individual questions for each version of the examination that meet the content distribution requirements of the examination content blueprint. Because each question has been pretested, a difficulty level can be assigned. The process then considers the difficulty level of each question selected for each version of the examination, attempting to match the difficulty level of each version as closely as possible. To ensure fairness, slight variations in difficulty level are addressed by adjusting the passing score up or down, depending on the overall difficulty level statistics for the group of scored questions that appear on a particular version of the examination.

If You Pass the Examination

If you pass the CPHQ examination, you will receive a congratulatory letter and informational packet to each new CPHQ, which includes an identification card, certificate, and CPHQ pin from HQCC. Your name, as stated on the application, will appear on the certificate. HQCC will attempt to mail the materials to the candidate's primary address on file. You should expect to receive this packet approximately 6-8 weeks after you passed the exam. If you do not receive your certificate, contact info@nahq.org within 6 months of passing the exam.

Certified professionals are entitled to use the designation Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality® and acronym "CPHQ" with your name on letterheads, business cards, and all forms of address once you receive your official certificate from HQCC. The credential is valid from the time you receive your certificate through a 2-year period, which begins on January 1 of the year following the date you pass the examination. Certification is for individuals only. The CPHQ designation may not be used to imply that an organization, association, or private firm is certified.

HQCC reserves the right to recognize publicly any candidate who has successfully completed a CPHQ certification examination, thereby earning the certification credential.

Replacement certificates can be requested by completing an online order at www.nahq.org and paying the required \$25 fee. Replacement or extra CPHQ pins are available for \$25 and can be ordered at www.nahq.org.

Continuing Education Credit

Some organizations accept successful completion of a certification examination for continuing education (CE) credit. Check with your licensure or registration board or association for acceptance and CE credits allowed.

Refer to the *Recertification* section of this handbook for details about CE requirements to maintain CPHQ status after passing the examination.

Verification of CPHQ Status

Information on the current certification status of an individual can be obtained at www.nahq.org. Employers who request verification of CPHQ status must provide the individual's name, CPHQ Certification number, and a signature from the candidate to allow the release of candidate's information. Quarterly, a listing of successful candidates will be published at www.nahq.org.

If You Fail the Examination

If you do not pass the certification examination, you may reapply for subsequent examinations 90 days after your initial exam date. You may test three times in 365 days. If a candidate fails to pass the exam after three attempts in 365 days, he or she must wait 365 days from time of the third attempt to sit for the exam again. Repeat candidates must submit a new application and full examination fee. Names of candidates who do not pass the examination are confidential and are not revealed under any circumstances, except by legal compulsory process.

Appeals

Because the performance of each question on the examination that is included in the final score has been pretested, there are no appeal procedures to challenge individual examination questions, answers, or a failing score.

Actions by the commission affecting eligibility of a candidate to take the examination may be appealed. Additionally, appeals may be considered for alleged inappropriate examination administration procedures or environmental testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process and which could have been avoided.

Appeals may be submitted by e-mail to <u>info@nahq.org</u> or in writing by mail to the attention of the HQCC chair at the address below:

HQCC Headquarters 8600 West Bryn Mawr Ave. Suite 710 N, Chicago, IL 60631, USA

Equivalency eligibility appeals must be received within 30 days of the initial HQCC action. Appeals for alleged inappropriate administration procedures or severe adverse environmental testing conditions must be received within 60 days of the release of examination results.

The HQCC Chair will respond within 30 days of receipt of the appeal. If this decision is adverse, the candidate may file a second-level appeal within 30 days. A three-member panel of HQCC will review the chair's decision and respond with a final decision within 45 days of receipt.

Duplicate Score Report

You may purchase additional copies of your score report at a cost of \$25 per copy payable to PSI. Requests must be submitted to PSI, in writing, within 12 months of the administration. The request must include your name, CPHQ number, mailing address, date of examination, and authorization signature. Use the form at the end of this handbook to request a duplicate score report. Duplicate score reports will be mailed approximately 5 business days after receipt of the request.

Verification of Scores

In computer-based testing, the computer accepts responses from a keyboard or mouse in digitized form. Computer- based testing eliminates problems that may have previously arisen with scanning paper-and-pencil answer sheets, because all responses are recorded by candidates during their examinations. However, verification of examination scores from electronic responses can be requested. For more information about the process and fee for this service, contact PSI at 877.714.5686 within 90 days after the examination.

Preparation for the CPHQ Certification Examination

HQCC neither sponsors, endorses, nor financially benefits from any review courses or published preparation materials for the CPHQ certification examination. We are aware of organizations that claim to have real exam items; please be aware that it is illegal for them to possess real exam items since the items are the copyrighted property of NAHQ. If an organization or individual does have real exam items these are stolen property of NAHQ and the organization or individual can face severe civil and criminal penalties.

If a candidate is found to be utilizing materials from a company or individual claiming to have real exam items HQCC retains the right to prevent the candidate from testing, revoke their credential and bar from future testing. See the section *Disciplinary Policy* for the full disciplinary policy.

Examination questions are written from a wide variety of publications and resources in the field. Some suggested preparation for the examination might include but should not be limited to the following resources:

1. HQ Solutions: Resource for the Healthcare Quality Professional (4th ed.) Luc R. Pelletier & Christy L Beaudin, Eds. (2018)

- 2. Q Solutions: Essential Resources for the Healthcare Quality Professional. 3rd edition. (2012)
- 3. CPHQ Practice Exam. This self-assessment can help identify areas of strength of improvement for the CPHQ examination. www.nahq.org
- 4. CPHQ Review Course Online. The presentation was recorded at a live CPHQ Review Course and contains four modules that follow the content outline, including two to three practice questions with answers to help you prepare. www.nahq.org
- 5. Journal of Healthcare Quality CEU activities.
- 6. The Janet A. Brown Healthcare Quality Handbook: A Professional Resource and Study Guide 30th Edition, Brown, Janet A. and Mellott, Susan (2018)
- 7. Essentials of Managed Health Care (6th ed, 2013), edited by Peter R. Kongstvedt.
- 8. Facilitating with Ease -Ingrid Bens (2018)
- 9. Preventing Medication Errors, Institute of Medicine. (2007).
- 10. Understanding Patient Safety, Robert Wachter. (2017).
- 11. Storytelling with Data Cole N. Knaflic (2015)
- 12. The Quality Toolbox, Nancy Tague. (2010).
- 13. *Lean Six Sigma Pocket Toolbook*, Michael George, David Rowlans, Mark Price, & John Maxey. (2005).
- 14. The Memory Jogger™ 2, 2nd edition. Michael Brassard, (2010). www.goalqpc.com
- 15. *The Healthcare Quality Book: Vision, Strategy, and Tools (*3rd ed.) Maulik S Joshi, and Elizabeth R. Ransom (2014) ISBN-13: 978-1567935905; Publisher Health Administration Press.
- 16. Quality Chasm Series: Patient Safety—Achieving a New Standard for Care, Institute of Medicine. (2004).
- 17. The Team Handbook, 3rd edition, Peter Scholtes, Brian Joiner, & Barbara Streibel. (2004).
- 18. The Lean Enterprises Memory Jogger, Richard L. Macinnes & Carolann Scherer (2011).
- 19. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: www.ahrq.gov
- 20. Institute for Healthcare Improvement: www.ihi.org/Pages/default.aspx
- 21. Institute for Safe Medication Practices: www.ismp.org

CPHQ EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

The content validity of the CPHQ examination is based on a practice analysis which surveyed healthcare quality professionals on the tasks they perform. Each question on the examination is linked directly to one of the tasks listed on the following pages. In other words, each question is designed to test whether the candidate possesses the knowledge necessary to perform the task or has the ability to apply it to a job situation.

Each of the tasks on the following pages was rated as significant to practice by healthcare quality professionals who responded to the survey. One rule used by the exam committee requires that a task be significant to practice in the major types and sizes of healthcare facilities, including those employed in managed care. Thus the examination content is valid for this segment of healthcare quality professionals and those employed in hospital, clinic, home care, behavioral and mental health, or other care settings.

The following is a list of tasks that forms the content outline of the CPHQ examination and to which the examination questions are linked.







Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality Detailed Content Outline¹

1. Organizational Leadership (35 items)

A. Structure and Integration

- 1. Support organizational commitment to quality
- 2. Participate in organization-wide strategic planning related to quality
- 3. Align quality and safety activities with strategic goals
- 4. Engage stakeholders to promote quality and safety (e.g., emergency preparedness, corporate compliance, infection prevention, case management, patient experience, provider network, vendors)
- 5. Provide consultative support to the governing body and clinical staff regarding their roles and responsibilities (e.g., credentialing, privileging, quality oversight, risk management)
- 6. Facilitate development of the quality structure (e.g., councils and committees)
- 7. Assist in evaluating or developing data management systems (e.g., data bases, registries)
- 8. Evaluate and integrate external best practices (e.g., resources from AHRQ, IHI, NQF, WHO, HEDIS, outcome measures)
- 9. Participate in activities to identify and evaluate innovative solutions and practices
- 10. Lead and facilitate change (e.g., change theories, diffusion, spread)
- 11. Participate in population health promotion and continuum of care activities (e.g., handoffs, transitions of care, episode of care, outcomes, healthcare utilization)
- 12. Communicate resource needs to leadership to improve quality (e.g., staffing, equipment, technology)
- 13. Recognize quality initiatives impacting reimbursement (e.g., pay for performance, value-based contracts)

B. Regulatory, Accreditation, and External Recognition

- 1. Assist the organization in maintaining awareness of statutory and regulatory requirements (e.g., CMS, HIPAA, OSHA, PPACA)
- 2. Identify appropriate accreditation, certification, and recognition options (e.g., AAAHC, CARF, DNV GL, ISO, NCQA, TJC, Baldrige, Magnet)
- 3. Assist with survey or accreditation readiness
- 4. Participate in the process for evaluating compliance with internal and external requirements for:
 - a. clinical practice guidelines and pathways (e.g., medication use, infection prevention)
 - b. service quality
 - c. documentation
 - d. practitioner performance evaluation (e.g., peer review, credentialing, privileging)
 - e. gaps in patient experience outcomes (e.g., surveys, focus groups, teams, grievance, complaints)
 - f. identification of reportable events for accreditation and regulatory bodies
- 5. Facilitate communication with accrediting and regulatory bodies







Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality Detailed Content Outline¹

C. Education, Training, and Communication

- 1. Design performance, process, and quality improvement training
- 2. Provide education and training on performance, process, and quality improvement (e.g., including improvement methods, culture change, project and meeting management)
- 3. Evaluate effectiveness of performance/quality improvement training
- 4. Develop/provide survey preparation training (e.g., accreditation, licensure, or equivalent)
- 5. Disseminate performance, process, and quality improvement information within the organization

2. Health Data Analytics (30 items)

A. Design and Data Management

- 1. Maintain confidentiality of performance/quality improvement records and reports
- 2. Design data collection plans:
 - a. measure development (e.g., definitions, goals, and thresholds)
 - b. tools and techniques
 - c. sampling methodology
- 3. Participate in identifying or selecting measures (e.g., structure, process, outcome)
- 4. Assist in developing scorecards and dashboards
- 5. Identify external data sources for comparison (e.g., benchmarking)
- 6. Collect and validate data

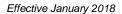
B. Measurement and Analysis

- 1. Use data management systems (e.g., organize data for analysis and reporting)
- 2. Use tools to display data or evaluate a process (e.g., Pareto chart, run chart, scattergram, control chart)
- 3. Use statistics to describe data (e.g., mean, standard deviation, correlation, t-test)
- 4. Use statistical process control (e.g., common and special cause variation, random variation, trend analysis)
- 5. Interpret data to support decision-making
- 6. Compare data sources to establish benchmarks
- 7. Participate in external reporting (e.g., core measures, patient safety indicators, HEDIS bundled payments)

3. Performance and Process Improvement (40 items)

A. Identifying Opportunities for Improvement

- 1. Facilitate discussion about quality improvement opportunities
- 2. Assist with establishing priorities
- 3. Facilitate development of action plans or projects
- 4. Facilitate implementation of performance improvement methods (e.g., Lean, PDCA, Six Sigma)
- 5. Identify process champions







Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality Detailed Content Outline¹

B. Implementation and Evaluation

- 1. Establish teams, roles, responsibilities, and scope
- 2. Use a range of quality tools and techniques (e.g., fishbone diagram, FMEA, process map)
- 3. Participate in monitoring of project timelines and deliverables
- 4. Evaluate team effectiveness (e.g., dynamics, outcomes)
- 5. Evaluate the success of performance improvement projects
- 6. Document performance and process improvement results

4. Patient Safety (20 items)

A. Assessment and Planning

- 1. Assess the organization's culture of safety
- 2. Determine how technology can enhance the patient safety program (e.g., electronic health record (EHR), abduction/elopement security systems, smart pumps, alerts)
- 3. Participate in risk management assessment activities (e.g., identification and analysis)

B. Implementation and Evaluation

- 1. Facilitate the ongoing evaluation of safety activities
- 2. Integrate safety concepts throughout the organization
- 3. Use safety principles:
 - a. human factors engineering
 - b. high reliability
 - c. systems thinking
- 4. Participate in safety and risk management activities related to:
 - a. incident report review (e.g., near miss and actual events)
 - b. sentinel/unexpected event review (e.g., never events)
 - c. root cause analysis
 - d. failure mode and effects analysis

Approximately 23% of the items will require recall on the part of the candidate, 57% will require application of knowledge, and 20% will require analysis. Each test form will include 15 unscored pretest items in addition to the 125 scored items.



If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, please complete this form and the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs on the reverse side and submit it with your application at least 45 days prior to your requested examination date. The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality.

candidate information		
Candidate ID #	Requested Test Center:	
Name (Last, First, Middle Initial, Former Name)		
Mailing Address		
City	State	Zip Code
Daytime Telephone Number	Email Address	
Special Accommodations		
I request special accommodations for the		examination.
Please provide (check all that apply): Reader Extended testing time (time Reduced distraction enviro Please specify below if oth		l.
Comments:		
PLEASE READ AND SIGN: I give my permission for my diagnosing professional requested accommodation.	al to discuss with PSI staff my records	and history as they relate to the
Signature:	Date:	

Return this form to:
PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543



Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that PSI is able to provide the required accommodations.

Professional Documentation					
I have knownCandidate Name	since	/	Date	/	_ in my capacity as a
My Professional Title					
The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test disability described below, he/she should be accommoside.					
Description of Disability:					
Signed:	Title:				
Printed Name:					
Address:					
Telephone Number:	Email Address:				
Date:	License # (if applicable):				

Return this form to:
PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543
If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 913-895-4600.

REQUEST FOR DUPLICATE CPHQ EXAMINATION SCORE REPORT

Directions: You may use this form to ask PSI/AMP, the testing agency, to send you a duplicate copy of your score report. This request must be postmarked no later than one year after the examination administration. Proper fees and information must be included with the request. Please print or type all information in the form below. Be sure to provide all information and include the correct fee, or the request will be returned.

Fees: \$25 U.S. Dollars per copy. Please enclose a check or money order payable in U.S. Dollars to PSI/AMP. Do not send cash. Write your candidate identification number on the face of your payment.

	Amount enclosed: \$	
1-7543, USA	Examination Date:	
nd address:		
	Candidate ID	
	City	
Zip/Postal Code	Country	
))	Fax ()	
vas different at the time you t	ested, please write the original information below:	
	Candidate ID	
	City	
Zip/Postal Code	Country	
)	Fax ()	
IP to send a duplicate copy	of my score report to the first address shown above.	
	Date	
	Zip/Postal Code) was different at the time you toZip/Postal Code) IP to send a duplicate copy	Street 1-7543, USA Examination Date:

REQUEST TO CHANGE MAILING OR E-MAIL ADDRESS

All address and e-mail changes must be submitted in writing, either by mail or fax, including an authorization signature and candidate ID number.

You may use this form to request that HQCC enter a change of address, including e-mail address, into our database once you have registered for the examination. To protect your confidential record and ensure that no unauthorized person is able to alter your record, we require that all address changes be submitted in writing and include your authorizing signature.

HQCC will forward your address change to the testing agency PSI/AMP. If you have questions, please contact HQCC at 847.375.4720 or info@cphq.org.

Mail or fax your request to: HQCC Headquarters 8600 West Bryn Mawr Ave, Suite 710N Chicago, IL 60631, USA Fax: 847.375.6320

Print your NEW name and address (home address is recommended):

Name		Candida	ate ID
Street		City	
State/Prov	Zip/Postal Code	Country	
Work Telephone ()	Home Telephone ()
E-Mail			
Print your OLD infor	mation as it appeared on y	our application form:	
Name			(if different from above)
Street		City	
State/Prov	Zip/Postal Code	Country	
Work Telephone ()	Home Telephone ()
E-Mail			
Examination Date		Test Site	
I hereby authorize H	QCC and PSI/AMP to char	nge my address in the examination databas	se as shown above.
Candidate's Signature	e		Date