



The CNPE: F/AA is owned by CNA, developed and maintained for CNA by Assessment Strategies Inc. (ASI), and administered by the provincial and territorial regulatory authorities. The purpose of the exam is to protect the public by ensuring that the entry-level nurse practitioner working in a family/all ages context possesses the competencies required to practise safely and effectively.

## BACKGROUND

In developing recommendations for the sustained integration of nurse practitioners in Canada's health system, the Canadian Nurse Practitioner Initiative (CNPI) consulted with federal, provincial and territorial officials, as well as representatives of nursing and other health-care professional organizations, regulators, educators, employers and union officials. The goal of this federally funded initiative, which took place from 2004 to 2006, was to facilitate the sustained integration of the nurse practitioner role in the health system to improve Canadians' access to health services.

Following these consultations, the CNPI developed a national core competency framework for nurse practitioners, which formed the basis of the first Canadian national exam. The first writing of the CNPE: F/AA occurred in November 2005.

Similar to a construction project, the CNPE: F/AA depends on a blueprint that not only guides its development but ensures a solid foundation. The exam is based on a competency study that entails reviewing the know-

## CNPE: F/AA: Historical Overview and Statistics on Writers (2005-2009)

*The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) is pleased to publish this bulletin with information on the Canadian Nurse Practitioner Examination: Family/All Ages (CNPE: F/AA). As the third in this series, this bulletin provides an overview of the development of the CNPE: F/AA, a historical look at the exam's writers, the administration and reporting process, and a look ahead to the future development of the exam.*

ledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and judgments required for a safe and effective nursing practice. These competencies form the basis for developing exam questions, and are validated based on their applicability and importance and how frequently they are required in the practice of nurse practitioners.

A framework, or classification system, was developed to identify and organize the 78 competencies the exam assesses, reflecting a primary health-care nurse practitioner model. There are four categories in the framework, and each category is exemplified by its individual competencies.

CNPE: F/AA competency framework

Competency Category	Number of Competencies
1. Health assessment and diagnosis	23
2. Health-care management and therapeutic intervention	29
3. Health promotion and prevention of illness, injury and complications	10
4. Professional role and responsibility	16



The CNPE: F/AA exam is administered biannually, in May and October, during two 3.5-hour sessions (morning and afternoon) that include both multiple-choice and short-answer questions. To date, there have been seven administrations of the exam, and all provinces – with the exception of British Columbia and Quebec – have signed agreements with CNA to use the CNPE: F/AA.

Manitoba was the only jurisdiction with candidates to write the first administration of the exam in November

2005. The May 2006 administration saw the addition of New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, followed by Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories/Nunavut in October. A year later, in October 2007, Newfoundland and Labrador saw writers participate for the first time, and Ontario writers followed suit in May 2008. More recently, Alberta has required entry-level nurse practitioners to write a licensing exam and joined the above jurisdictions in 2009 in offering the CNPE: F/AA.

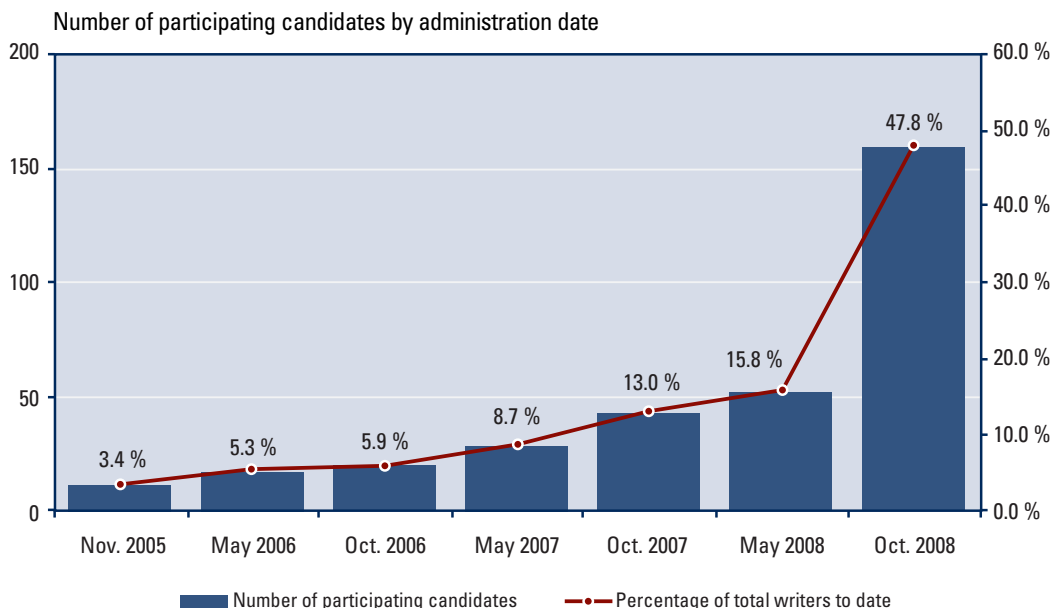
Jurisdictional participation in the CNPE: F/AA

Province / Territory	Candidates Writing by Administration Date								
	Nov.	May	Oct.	May	Oct.	May	Oct.	May	
	2005	2006	2006	2007	2007	2008	2008	2009	
Manitoba	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alberta	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	✓	
British Columbia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
New Brunswick	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nova Scotia	No	No	✓	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Newfoundland & Labrador	No	No	No	No	✓	✓	No	No	
Northwest Territories & Nunavut	No	No	✓	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ontario	No	No	No	No	No	✓	✓	✓	
Prince Edward Island	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	✓	
Quebec	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Saskatchewan	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## NUMBER OF WRITERS PER EXAMINATION SITTING

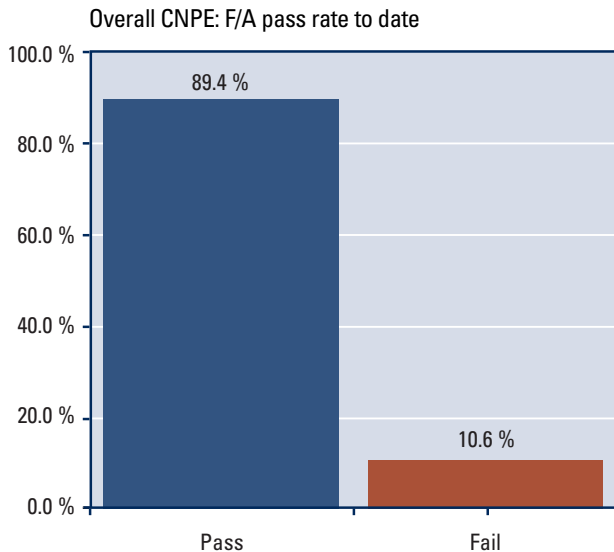
To date, 322 candidates have written the CNPE: F/AA, nearly half of whom (47.8%) wrote it in October 2008. This surge can be attributed to the May 2008

addition of Ontario as a participating jurisdiction. It is anticipated that the total number of writers will swell again with the addition of Alberta nurse practitioners.



## OVERALL PASS RATE

The standard (or pass mark) required to pass the CNPE: F/AA is determined by the content and level of difficulty of the questions in that version of the CNPE: F/AA. The standard-setting procedure is carried out by the CNPE: F/AA Exam Committee, a panel of subject matter experts representing every jurisdiction that uses the exam. To determine the pass mark, the Committee rates the questions on the basis of the expected performance of entry-level nurse practitioners.<sup>1</sup>



## REPORTING PROCESS

Exam results are typically mailed to candidates 6-10 weeks after the exam's administration date. While successful candidates receive a "pass" indication only from their provincial/territorial jurisdiction, those who do not pass receive a detailed profile showing a breakdown of their score according to the exam categories.

Should a candidate want confirmation of their score, they can submit a rescoring request to their jurisdiction, provided they do so within 45 business days of the initial mailing date of their results.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Already underway is the update and revision of the current CNPE: F/AA exam blueprint in preparation for the 2011-2016 exam cycle. As part of this process, a number of development activities will take place, beginning with a review and revision of the CNPE: F/AA competencies, which are required for the safe and effective practice of entry-level nurse practitioners in Canada.

Concurrent review and revision of the CNPE: F/AA Prep Guide is scheduled for release in early 2011. While work has already begun, tasks related to the creation of the new Prep Guide will start once the new competencies and blueprint are finalized.

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<sup>1</sup>Due to the small sample of writers to date, further analysis of pass rates by jurisdiction is neither possible nor appropriate.