National Healthcareer Association

Certified Billing and Coding Specialist (CBCS)

Preparation Suite Edition 3.0 Implementation Guide

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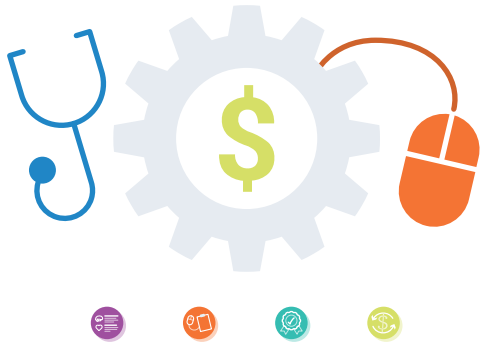

In 2020, NHA completed an extensive Job Task Analysis, which resulted in the revised CBCS Test Plan. As a result of these important updates, three coding manuals are required to take the updated certification exam (CPT Professional Edition, ICD-10-CM, and HCPCS Level II) as of September 28, 2021. Candidates must bring the hard copy of the three Coding Manuals to the exam to answer coding related questions. Handwritten notes in the coding manual margins, highlighting and/or module/section tabs are acceptable; however, no loose notes or papers are allowed and must be removed before sitting for the exam.

Refer to the Addendum in the Candidate Handbook for CBCS specific information on the requirements on the coding manual and exam requirements. It is important to review this information in detail to ensure the candidate has the correct manuals as they will not be allowed to take the exam and will forfeit their fee if they do not meet these requirements.

About This Guide

This guide is a companion to the Certified Billing and Coding Specialist (CBCS) Preparation Suite 3.0, and is to provide directed preparation for the CBCS certification exam and to instill the knowledge and standards needed for excellence in the practice of medical billing and coding. We incorporated information such as how many hours you will need to incorporate the training, numerous tips to make implementation seamless, and detailed information on what content is included.

LEGEND

Learner: Student, Employee, or Apprentice | Facilitator: Educator, Instructor, Trainer, or Employer

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Description

Preparation materials include an online or printed Study Guide, one Baseline Practice Test, Practice Tests (four attempts), and one Final Practice Test. These materials may be purchased separately, but this implementation guide refers to using the study guide in conjunction with the practice tests as a suite of preparation resources.

While certification is important, certification candidates are often anxious to sit for exams. The CBCS study guide provides the best insight on the type of content that will be included on the certification exam and can be an invaluable resource for exam preparation. It is, however, a study guide. It should not be the only resource used to prepare, and it will not necessarily cover the specific construct of every question on the certification examination. Rather, it will provide the map to success by presenting overviews of each topic included in the test plan. These materials are not meant as replacement for career training and education in field.

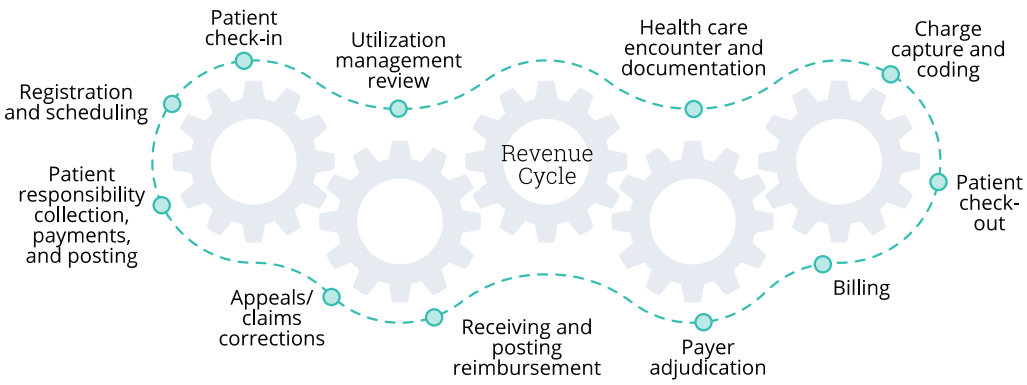
The module quizzes and Practice Tests provide opportunities to practice answering the types of questions that may appear on the certification exam. Although some of the answers to the questions on these Practice Tests will be found in the study guide, many will not. This provides additional learning opportunities and helps ensure that learners are not just memorizing information in the study guide, but rather using all learning resources so that they are better prepared for testing. All questions will be relevant to the certification test plan.

Features

The study guide, available in both printed and online formats, focuses on The Revenue Cycle, Regulations, Insurance, Coding and Coding Guidelines, and Billing, aligned with the CBCS test plan.

BOTH THE ONLINE VERSION AND PRINTED STUDY GUIDES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING FEATURES:

- Illustrations, images, and tables help to explain and clarify concepts.
- Glossary terms allow certification candidates to review definitions of selected terms.
- Module quizzes assess candidates' knowledge of module/module content and other relevant subject matter related to the test plan.
- Case studies in the printed and online version of the study guide that provide real world critical-thinking practice. These are found in each module. Learners read a scenario and then answer critical thinking questions following.
- Additional Coding and Billing Practice Activities (not graded) for learner to enhance proficiency. These provide additional coding practice and billing practice, including a fillable CMS-1500 form. These can be found by clicking on the Documentation icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES in the online version of the Study Guide.



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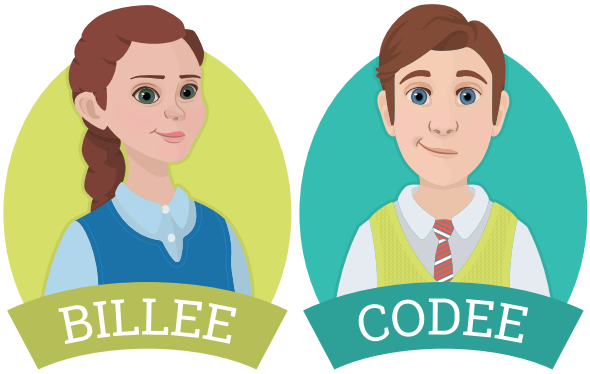
FEATURES ONLY AVAILABLE IN THE ONLINE VERSION INCLUDE:

- The Online Certification Study Guide offers a dynamic learning environment to give facilitators and learners the control to use and adapt both in and outside the classroom (virtual, hybrid, or in-person).
- Loaded with practice questions to build confidence and identify areas needing remediation in preparation for the certification exam.
- Electronic gaming-style activities, flashcards, and EHR Simulations that help reinforce learning throughout module sections.
- The EHR Simulations are embedded in each module where the learner will be asked to enter scenario-based information specific to billing and coding into data entry fields emulating an electronic health record, assessing candidates' ability to think, perform data entry, and respond to real-world scenarios.

Billing and Coding Mentors



- The Digital flashcards allow learner to mark terms as "Study" or "Know" and the ability to shuffle the order they are presented.
- Animated Video Mentors embedded in each module provide additional context to important billing and coding concepts.
- Audio pronunciation of glossary terms assist learners in knowing how to pronounce terms correctly.
- Centralized Quiz Scoring includes both Individual and cohort results.
- Professionalism tips videos provide insight on important essential soft skills specific to Billing and Coding Specialists and include: Communication, Confidence, Customer Service, Professionalism, Dependability, Prioritization, Work Ethic and Ethical Integrity, and Ethics Applied to Revenue Cycle Management. These can be found by clicking on the nurse's cap icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES.

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ONLINE PRACTICE TEST FEATURES

- The Online Practice Tests align to the CBCS test plan and will require the same three coding manuals as the certification exam.
  - Note: There are three types of practice tests, the **baseline** practice test, the four **practice** tests, and the **final** practice test. Note: The **baseline** and **final** practice tests are available as a default, or when the facilitator makes them available to learners. As a default, only the first of the four **practice** tests is available. Practice tests two, three, and four become available when the previous **practice** test is completed. The facilitator may also set "available on" dates, however, the learner cannot take any of these four **practice** tests until they have completed the previous **practice** test.
- The **Baseline Practice Test** should be administered just prior to starting review of the Study Guide, is timed (3 hours), without rationales.
- There are four additional **Practice Tests** that are not timed (but have a maximum of 500 minutes) and provide rationales. Each of these can be taken twice for additional practice. Specific item remediation is provided in the rationales in each attempt of these **practice** Tests.
- The Final Practice Test is timed (3 hours), without rationales, to provide the "experience" of sitting for the National Exam.
- Focused Review© is remediation provided after the completion of each test (Baseline, Practice, and Final). Focused Review© is generated based on the items missed after each of the test(s). The learner is presented with the objective/task from the certification exam blueprint with the related study material. With every practice test attempt, a report is generated based on the performance on the practice test. This report is called Focused Review® and it shows what topic areas covered in the practice test you may need to spend more time studying.

PRACTICE TESTS

Practice Tests	*Number of Attempts*	*Timed*	*Rationales Provided*	*Focused Review© (remediation)*	*Number of Items*
Baseline Practice Test	1	Yes (3 hours)	No	Yes	100 +25 pretest items
Practice Tests	4	Not timed, but maximum of 500 minutes	Yes	Yes	100
Final Practice Test	1	Yes (3 hours)	No	Yes	100 +25 pretest items

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Using the Certification Prep/Study Guide

WHY USE THE MATERIALS

Promote certification candidate's success in the application and knowledge of medical billing and coding.

- Facilitate content mastery.
- Help certification candidate improve confidence.
- Supports certification candidate understanding and review of core competencies of medical billing and coding.
- Advocate certification candidate self-learning.

Provide review materials to assist with preparation for CBCS exam.

- Study guide can be viewed in printed or online format for customized learning.
- Online practice tests provide questions and answers to assess learning.
- Glossary reinforces vocabulary.

Support faculty facilitation practices.

- Assign selected textbook modules and/or study guide modules as an adjunct to lecture in an aligning course.
- Assess and reinforce the effectiveness of course (in-class, hybrid, or online) presentations.

FACILITATOR TOOL KIT

- CBCS 3.0 contains a Facilitator Tool Kit (FTK). This tool kit will assist facilitators in customizing the course to meet their needs.
- The FTK provides a set of optional resources that can be used with other sections to reinforce the key concepts.
- The following tools are contained in the FTK:
  - This Implementation Guide
  - Answer Keys (quizzes, coding and billing practice activities, reflection activities for video features)
  - CBCS Product Training Video (Overview)
  - Fillable CMS-1500 From
  - What Industry Experts Have to Say (PowerPoint)
  - CBCS FAQs
- In order to access the files from the FTK, you should have received an email from your NHA representative with the materials attached or a link to where to find these. If you haven't received these, reach out to your NHA representative and let them know you would like access.

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Implementation Strategies

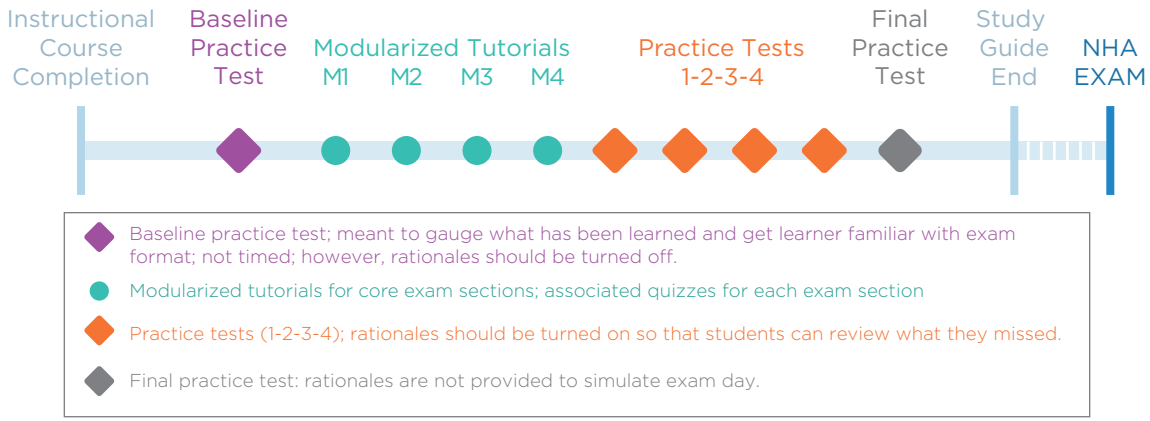
WHERE TO START

Mapping the national certification exam to course curriculum

Course curriculum extends beyond the national certification test plan, but this can help to ensure all certification exam content will be covered throughout the duration of the course.

Certification preparation materials (study guide, module quizzes, and Practice Tests) should be used in addition to existing course curriculum, but never as a replacement for course curriculum.

CBCS Implementation Timeline



Baseline Practice Test

The Baseline Practice Test should be assigned after course/program completion, or near end, and before Study Guide review is started. It is designed and timed (3 hours) to mimic the certification exam in structure and timing and gauge the learner's knowledge prior to beginning the Modularized Tutorials of the Study Guide to give a baseline on where your learner is at. To obtain the most meaningful data, rationales are not included.

Modularized Tutorials

Modularized tutorials cover core exam domains; associated quizzes for each exam domain and Study Guide module are included.

Practice Tests (1 to 4)

Gauge what has been learned and get learners familiar with exam format; rationales are included, and these are not timed (but have a maximum of 500 minutes). Instructors will have the option to turn off the rationales and set a time limit of 3-hours (to mimic the final practice test).

Final Practice Test

Gauge what has been learned and get learners familiar with exam format - timed (3 hours). To obtain the most meaningful data, rationales are not included for the Final Practice Test.

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STUDY GUIDE IMPLEMENTATION

1. Read the study guide Table of Contents to know exactly what topics are covered and in what order. Prior to assigning the study guide content, administer the Baseline Practice Test.
   - The study guide provides a review of core subjects on the national certification test plan.
   - The study guide may be used as supplementary material throughout the course, and again during the last part of training. Leveraging these resources again, closer to the proximity of the exam date (data suggests within two (2) weeks) can help keep tutorial content fresh in the certification candidate's mind.
2. Match module content to related courses and build into lesson plans.
3. Assign related module content for each course.
4. Direct certification candidates to complete all your course assigned textbook/workbook assignments first, then move to the study guide assignment(s).
5. Assign the study guide "module quiz due date" at the completion of each module, before starting the next module. Instructors also have the option to assign the module quizzes as a pre-test before the start of each module as well as at completion of the module.
6. Review module quiz scores in Program Reports to determine if there are any gaps in overall learner learning. Review common deficiency areas with the learners, before moving on to next module.

RECOMMENDED TIME

Content	*Time*
Entire Study Guide Learning Content	10.85 hours
Practice Test Implementation • Baseline Practice Test • Practice Tests 1 to 4 • Final Practice Test	18 hours total
Total Study Guide Hours	**28.85 hours**

RECOMMENDED TIME PER MODULE BREAKDOWN

Module Name	*Study Guide Learning Content*[1]	*Recommended Quiz Attempts*
The Revenue Cycle and Regulatory Compliance	115 min	1
Insurance Eligibility and Other Payer Requirements	150 min	1
Coding and coding Guidelines	200 min	1
Billing and Reimbursement	185 min	1

1. Entire Study Guide Learning Content includes the module content, extra features, module introduction videos, gaming-style activities, Case Studies, EHR Simulations, Animated Video Mentors, and end-of-module Quizzes

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BASELINE PRACTICE TEST – TIMED (3 HOURS); ONE (1) ATTEMPT

Administer the Baseline Practice Test prior to assigning the Study Guide.

- The Baseline Practice Test has 100 scored items + 25 Pretest Questions (evaluates the learners' baseline knowledge and mimics the National Exam).
- The Baseline Practice Test is timed to match the National Exam; 180 minutes (3 hours) is allowed.

ADMINISTER THE NEXT PRACTICE TESTS (1 TO 4) – NOT TIMED (BUT MAXIMUM OF 500 MINUTES) FOR EACH ATTEMPT; MAXIMUM 4 ATTEMPTS TOTAL

Administer these Practice Tests (after completing the Study Guide/Modularized Tutorials)

General Recommendations applicable to the Second and Third Practice Tests.

- A certification candidate's first attempt on the Second and Third Practice Tests should be attempted after all domains of the CBCS test plan have been presented and learners have completed all four (4) modules in the study guide.
- Give certification candidates ample time to review any content areas that provided challenges on the Second and Third Practice Tests before taking the Third and Fourth Practice Tests.
- Facilitators have the option to disable the rationales for a certification candidate's first attempt and to set a timer for 3 hours (which mimics the Final Practice Test); however these are not timed (maximum 500 minutes allowed).
- Candidates should have sufficient time to spend in Focused Review© before moving to additional practice tests (suggested one (1) minute in Focused Review© for every question missed).

Administer the Second Attempt of the Second and Third Practice Tests.

- Direct learners to take the second attempts for the Second and Third Practice Tests. Instructors have the option of turning rationales off and setting a timer for 3 hours (which mimics the Final Practice Test); however, these are not timed (with a maximum of 500 minutes).
- NHA recommends that all learners take each Second and Third Practice Test twice.

FINAL PRACTICE TEST – 3 HOURS (ONE ATTEMPT)

- There is one Final Practice Test that has 100 scored items + 25 Pretest Questions (which mimics the national exam). The Final Practice Test is timed to match the National Exam; 180 minutes (3 hours) is allowed.
- The Final Practice Test should be administered in close proximity to the NHA certification exam date (data suggest within five (5) days.) Administering the Final Practice Test close to the NHA certification exam can keep the candidate more engaged, as well as reduce test anxiety through increased familiarity with the exam format.
- To best prepare candidates for the "certification exam day," review with or assign the Certification Candidates' Preparing for the Exam Best Practices PowerPoint prior to assigning the Final Practice Test and again after. This can be found by clicking on the Documentation icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES in the online version of the Study Guide.

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Analytics

BEST PRACTICES

The following is a review of some practices that may help learners get the most out of the CBCS preparation materials (study guide, quizzes, and Practice Tests).

- Align individual modules in the study guide with your related course(s).
- Administer the Baseline Practice Test prior to assigning the study guide.
- Assign learners related study guide modules for the courses in which they align.
- Encourage learners to spend a minimum of the recommended time listed on the chart in this Implementation Guide (IG) to complete all assignments in the study guide.
- Direct learners to take individual module quizzes after completing each related course and module materials.
- Direct learners to take all modules quizzes a second time after completing all program courses and study guide assignments.
- Review all quiz reporting tools after administering and address any common learning gaps.
- Administer the Second Practice Test after learners have completed all modules and taken each module quiz twice. Consider turning rationales off and setting a timer for three hours to mimic what will occur on test day; however, they are not timed, but have a maximum of 500 minutes.
- Have certification candidates go into Focused Review© and review what they missed on the Practice Test. Learners should spend a minimum of one minute in Focused Review© for each question they miss. It is also a good idea for learners to go back to their textbooks in those same areas in which they struggled for a deeper dive into related content.
- Have learners repeat the same instructions that they followed for the previous Practice Test for the additional Practice Tests.
- These can be taken with rationales turned on or off and timed or not timed, according to the facilitator's preferences.

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATORS

- Supplement the study guide with handouts that explain the rules and regulations of your state.
- Review case studies, Professionalism Tips videos, Animated Video Mentors, and EHR Simulations together as a class.
- Assign learners to watch two Professionalism Tips per module and have them complete the Reflection Activities (located in the Documents section under RESOURCES in the online study guide). You may also have learners journal their thoughts about the characteristic or skill presented, and state whether or not they need to improve in the area presented, in order to be successful in their health career journey.
- Assign learners Animated Video Mentors in each module and have them complete the related Reflection Activities (located in the Documents section under RESOURCES in the online study guide). You may also have learners journal their thoughts about the characteristic or skill presented, and state whether or not they need to improve in the area presented, in order to be successful in their health career journey.
- Highlight real-world application of knowledge and skills from your experiences as a Billing and Coding Specialist (or invite a field expert).
- Conduct assessments of material mastered and as opportunities for setting goals for improvement.
- Assign a project that pertains to news stories or current events. If new legislation is in the news, ask certification candidates to research the topic.
- Encourage questions from certification candidates.
- Meet one-on-one to talk about progress and challenges.
- Invite a past certification candidate who recently passed the exam to visit the class and talk about their experience and best practice for preparation.
- Review/assign the Certification Candidates' Preparing for the Exam Best Practices PowerPoint. This PowerPoint provides Best Practice for the certification candidates' best practices in preparing to sit for the CBCS Exam. This PowerPoint can be found by clicking on the Documentation icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES in the online version of the Study Guide.
- Invite field experts (providers, clinical supervisors, office managers) to come and talk about the importance of essential soft skills on a regular basis.
- Review/assign the What Industry Experts Have to Say PowerPoint. This PowerPoint provides information regarding the Certified Billing and Coding Profession, including quotes from Facilitators and Employers. This can be found by clicking on the Documentation icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES in the online version of the Study Guide.
- Assign the Supplemental Coding and Billing Practice activities. These can be found by clicking on the Documentation icon the lower left-hand corner of any module page, under RESOURCES in the online version of the Study Guide.

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ACTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATORS

- Have certification candidates teach the new concepts to the class.
- Assign readings and follow up the next day with tasks that relate to the subject matter of the module.
- Create index cards with questions from the module and have each certification candidate read the question and teach the content to the class. After each module, request that the group provide feedback.
- Whenever possible, break facts into segments. Larger modules/lessons become more manageable when broken into segments.

Frequently Asked Questions — CBCS 3.0

Question	*Answer*
How can I access the FAQs?	FAQs are available in the Facilitator's Tool Kit. Click here to view the FAQs for CBCS 3.0.
Who would benefit from the CBCS Certification?	CBCS is a certification that validates a learner/employees' foundational knowledge in multiple aspects of revenue cycle management (billing, coding, insurance/payer requirements, regulations). This comprehensive foundational certification is a signal of competence for employers of personnel with billing and coding related responsibilities. The knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed through the CBCS are essential for entry-level billing and coding roles in various practice settings including Physician's offices, surgery centers, hospitals, nursing homes, home healthcare agencies, mental health facilities and even insurance companies and consulting firms. The CBCS has value to those looking to enter the billing and coding profession as well as persons working in the Medical Assisting (Clinical and Administrative) professions, and Electronic Health Records roles.
Definitions	Baseline Practice Test: Take ahead of Study Guide use or other practice assessments/materials to give you a baseline on where your learner is at in their knowledge and understanding of Billing and Coding. This practice test is timed to mimic the time allowed to take the CBCS Certification Exam. • Practice Tests: Take anytime during exam preparation for practice (total of 4). • Final Practice Test: Replicates the exam experience, is timed, and does not provide rationales. Assign right before they take their certification exam.

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Product Support

At NHA, we pride ourselves on timely, effective support to meet your needs. Please contact us at 800-499-9092 if you need assistance with this product.

Technical Requirements

To learn more about technical requirements for this offering, refer to the following links.

- Requirements for the module package: https://info.nhanow.com/technical-requirements

ISBN and Copyright Information:

- Printed study guide: 978-1-56533-235-5
- Online study guide: 978-1-56533-236-2
- Practice Tests: 978-1-56533-237-9

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