

# 2020 ACC Clinical Competencies for Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants in Adult Cardiovascular Medicine: A Report of the ACC Competency Management Committee

Utilize the tables below for your reference and preparation for the CCKE.

Review Table 3, and the associated Key Points to Remember, to prepare for Core Competencies as found in the blueprint.

**TABLE 3** Core Competencies for Cardiovascular Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants

SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE		All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants
1.	Identify cost, resource utilization, and value when caring for patients with cardiovascular disease.	X
2.	Identify and address socioeconomic barriers impacting cardiovascular care and refer to other team members as needed.	X
3.	Maintain continuity of care with efficient and effective handoffs throughout transitions of care.	X
4.	Collaborate in screening patients for investigational therapies and clinical trials, as applicable.	X
5.	Participate in practice-based and regional systems of care for urgent and emergent cardiovascular conditions.	X
6.	Refer patients who are facing advanced and end-stage cardiovascular disease to appropriate specialists.	X
7.	Collaborate with all team members to reduce preventable hospitalizations for patients with cardiovascular disease.	X
8.	Collaborate with healthcare professionals in other disciplines to optimize the care of patients with complex and multisystem disease.	X
9.	Use information technology and informatics literacy to enhance professional practice.	X
10.	Contribute to the design and implementation of information systems to enhance safety, quality, and cost effectiveness.	X
11.	Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients and families in dealing with system complexities and limited resources.	X
12.	Promote patient and family access to community resources and interdisciplinary care services/providers to enhance effective self-care behaviors and promote well-being.	X
13.	Participate in activities to promote a safe environment for patients, families, and healthcare professionals.	X
14.	Identify barriers to learning and prioritize education for patients with cardiovascular disease.	X
15.	Develop, implement, and evaluate individualized, patient-centered educational strategies.	X
16.	Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.	X
17.	Educate healthcare professionals about diagnosis and management of patients with a condition in one's area of expertise.	X
PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT		All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants
1.	Identify personal knowledge gaps and seek educational training opportunities to improve knowledge, skills, and performance.	X
2.	Utilize clinical practice guidelines, appropriate use criteria, and point-of-care tools to improve clinical decision-making.	X
3.	Conduct literature searches, interpret findings, and apply evidence-based results to clinical care.	X
4.	Participate in clinical conferences and team-based meetings to enhance communication and care of patients with cardiovascular disease.	X
5.	Solicit and incorporate feedback from patients, colleagues, and healthcare professionals to improve clinical performance.	X
6.	Use practice data to assess appropriateness, quality, and safety of cardiovascular care.	X
7.	Participate in practice-based continuous quality improvement and safety initiatives.	X
8.	Develop the practice of lifelong learning, including regular review of journals and practice guidelines, appropriate use criteria, consensus statements, and participation in scientific and continuing professional education meetings.	X
9.	Promote the nurse practitioner or physician assistant profession by participation in interprofessional education and research.	X

**TABLE 3 Core Competencies for Cardiovascular Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants**

<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>		<b>All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants</b>
1.	Demonstrate mutual respect, consideration, and empathy for patients, families, and the healthcare team.	X
2.	Practice within organization bylaws and state and federal regulations governing nurse practitioner and physician assistant practice.	X
3.	Practice within the scope of personal expertise, training, and technical skills.	X
4.	Attain and maintain nurse practitioner and/or physician assistant certification per respective credentialing organizations.	X
5.	Appropriately seek and integrate advice from consultants in a timely manner.	X
6.	Demonstrate critical reasoning skills to promote optimal outcomes for patients with cardiovascular disease.	X
7.	Identify, disclose, and manage relationships with industry and other entities to minimize bias and undue influence on clinical decision-making.	X
8.	Demonstrate high ethical standards in personal and professional conduct.	X
9.	Assume responsibility and follow through on professional commitments and obligations in a timely fashion.	X
10.	Identify potential for impaired professional performance in oneself and colleagues and take action to mitigate in order to ensure a culture of safety.	X
11.	Attend to one's own health, well-being, and abilities in order to maximize personal and professional performance.	X
<b>INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>		<b>All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants</b>
1.	Assess for and manage human responses exhibited by individuals with cardiovascular disease (e.g., depression, spiritual distress, nonadherence, decisional conflict).	X
2.	Communicate with patients, families, and healthcare professionals in an effective, timely, and culturally-competent manner.	X
3.	Engage patients in shared decision-making based upon balanced presentations of risks, benefits, and alternatives, factoring in patients' values and preferences.	X
4.	Utilize the concepts of motivational interviewing when counseling patients.	X
5.	Review medical records, complete documentation, and communicate diagnostic findings and management strategies to patients and collaborating healthcare professionals in a timely manner.	X
6.	Respectfully participate in interdisciplinary care teams and consider opposing viewpoints for management.	X
7.	Discuss sensitive/difficult topics, including end-of-life care and/or palliative care within the confines of the patient's belief system.	X
8.	Provide emotional support to patients, families, and caregivers.	X

Review Table 5, and the associated Key Points to Remember, to prepare for Ambulatory & Consultative Cardiac Care as found in the blueprint.

**TABLE 5 Adult Congenital Heart Disease Competencies for Cardiovascular Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants**

MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE		All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants	Selected CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants Based on Practice Focus
1.	Know the indications for comanagement and referral of adults with congenital heart disease to a congenital heart disease center.	X	
2.	Know basic and pathological cardiac embryology and epidemiological influences on the development of congenital heart disease.		X
3.	Know the physical examination findings of repaired and unrepaired forms of congenital heart disease in adults.		X
4.	Know the genetic syndromes and corresponding pathophysiology associated with congenital heart disease.		X
5.	Know the potential for neurocognitive and psychological issues in adults with congenital heart disease.	X	
6.	Know the risks associated with noncardiac surgery in adults with congenital heart disease.		X
7.	Know the pathophysiology and risks of thrombosis and thromboembolism in adults with congenital heart disease.		X
8.	Know the pharmacological agents and nonpharmacological therapies for preventing and treating thrombotic complications in adults with congenital heart disease.		X
9.	Know the indications for endocarditis prophylaxis in adults with congenital heart disease.	X	
10.	Know the risks, preventive measures, and treatments for acquired heart disease in the congenital heart disease population.		X
<b>Adults with Simple Congenital Heart Disease (Atrial Septal Defects, Ventricular Septal Defects, Patent Ductus Arteriosus, Pulmonary Stenosis, Bicuspid Aortic Valve, Coarctation)</b>			
11.	Know the basic anatomy, pathophysiology, presenting symptoms, and differential diagnosis of simple congenital heart disease in adults.	X	
12.	Know the natural history of simple congenital heart disease.	X	
13.	Know the indications and recommendations for initial testing for known or suspected simple congenital heart disease in adults.	X	
14.	Know the indications for cardiac catheterization for adults with simple congenital heart disease.	X	
15.	Know the pathophysiology and clinical findings of heart failure in adults with simple congenital heart disease.	X	
16.	Know the indications, contraindications, and monitoring implications of medications used in management of adults with simple congenital heart disease.		X
17.	Know the pathophysiology of comorbidities in adults with simple congenital heart disease.		X
18.	Know the risks and benefits of exercise in adults with simple congenital heart disease.	X	
19.	Know the interventions and surgeries generally performed for simple congenital heart defects.	X	
20.	Know the impact of pregnancy in women with simple congenital heart disease.		X
21.	Know the contraceptive methods considered safe and efficacious for women with simple congenital heart disease.		X
22.	Know the arrhythmias common in adults with simple congenital heart disease and referral indications to electrophysiologists with expertise in congenital heart disease.		X
<b>Adults with Complex Congenital Heart Disease (Ebstein's Anomaly, Tetralogy of Fallot, Complex Cyanotic Congenital Heart Disease, Transposition of the Great Arteries, Single-Ventricle Physiology/Fontan)</b>			
23.	Know the anatomy, pathophysiology, and presenting symptoms of adults with complex congenital heart disease.		X
24.	Know the natural history of complex congenital heart disease.		X
25.	Know the indications for diagnostic testing for adults with complex congenital heart disease.		X
26.	Know the indications for hemodynamic catheterization in adults with complex congenital heart disease.		X
27.	Know the pathophysiology and clinical findings of heart failure in adults with complex congenital heart disease.		X

**TABLE 5 Adult Congenital Heart Disease Competencies, continued**

28.	Know the indications, contraindications, and monitoring implications of medications used in adults with complex congenital heart disease.		X
29.	Know the risks and benefits of exercise in adults with complex congenital heart disease, including those with associated pulmonary hypertension.		X
30.	Know the interventions and surgeries performed for complex congenital heart disease.		X
31.	Know the impact of pregnancy in women with complex congenital heart disease, including those with associated pulmonary hypertension.		X
32.	Know the contraceptive methods considered safe and efficacious for women with complex congenital heart disease.		X
33.	Know the arrhythmias common in complex congenital heart disease and indications for referral to electrophysiologists with expertise in congenital heart disease.		X

PATIENT CARE AND PROCEDURAL SKILLS		All CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants	Selected CV Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants Based on Practice Focus
1.	Skill to integrate history and physical findings to develop a differential diagnosis in adults with congenital heart disease.	X	
2.	Skill to identify genetic syndromes in adults with congenital heart disease.		X
3.	Skill to counsel adults with congenital heart disease on exercise modalities.		X
4.	Skill to facilitate shared decision making regarding reproductive options and family planning for men and women with congenital heart disease.		X
5.	Skills to educate patients and family members on congenital heart defect anatomy and physiology and promote lifelong heart healthy self-care behaviors.		X
6.	Skill to perform pre-pregnancy risk assessment and peripartum coordination with obstetric colleagues for women with congenital heart disease.		X
7.	Skills to recognize cardiac arrhythmias in adults with congenital heart disease and refer to electrophysiologists with expertise in congenital heart disease.	X	
8.	Skills to recognize and participate in the management of adults with neurocognitive disorders and congenital heart disease.		X
9.	Skills to identify, evaluate, and participate in the management of cyanosis and associated end-organ hyperviscosity issues associated with congenital heart disease shunting and pulmonary hypertension.		X
10.	Skill to educate adult patients with congenital heart disease on prevention of thrombosis, thromboembolism, endocarditis, and on optimal oral health practices.		X
11.	Skills to assess and participate in the management of adults with infective endocarditis associated with congenital heart disease.		X
12.	Skill to coordinate care transitions across the lifespan for individuals with congenital heart disease.		X
13.	Skill to discuss advance care planning with patients with congenital heart disease and their families.		X