



**Board of Certification, Inc.**

# **PRACTICE ANALYSIS, 7<sup>TH</sup> EDITION**

## **Outline: Domains and Tasks**

**Effective for April 2017 Exam and January 1, 2018 Continuing Education**

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This document provides domain and task level information only. The full practice analysis identifies knowledge and skills for each task and an in-depth look at the study and process.

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Henderson, J. The 2015 Athletic Trainer Practice Analysis Study. Omaha, NE: Board of Certification; 2015.

# DOMAIN 1

TITLE		DESCRIPTION
Injury and Illness Prevention and Wellness Promotion		Promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors with effective education and communication to enhance wellness and minimize the risk of injury and illness
<b>SUMMARY</b>		
<p>Injury prevention is arguably one of the most encompassing domains of the athletic training profession. Injury prevention not only reduces morbidity and cost, it increases quality of life. It requires general subject knowledge (anatomy, exercise physiology, biomechanics and health) and specific workplace knowledge (sport requirements, equipment fitting, OSHA regulations and environmental conditions). This domain is often synonymous with injury risk reduction or risk management. In this process risks are identified, interventions or plans are implemented, results are reviewed and the plan is further revised.</p> <p>ATs identify and understand intrinsic (patient history, demographics, education) and extrinsic factors (environmental, social, sport specific) that are relevant to the client, patient or population. While some risk factors are static or unchangeable, such as age or ethnic background, other factors may be within the patient's or client's ability to change, such as diet and exercise.</p> <p>Evidence-based medicine, metrics and research are important to all domains, including injury prevention. Epidemiological studies help identify the prevalence of an injury or disease within a population or group. ATs are proficient in using national and local information to better serve their population and identify trends.</p> <p>This domain also includes concepts of health and wellness promotion. While the definition of wellness is varied, an accepted definition is, "Wellness is a multidimensional state of being describing the existence of positive health in an individual as exemplified by quality of life and a sense of well-being." ATs promote a healthy lifestyle and environment to all clientele and patients. The AT understands the role of nutrition in performance and in the injuries and illnesses associated with deficient nutrition. A holistic approach includes promotion of physical, social, intellectual, emotional, mental and spiritual wellness.</p> <p>ATs influence more than just individuals, patients or a team. Many fill the role of a community advocate involved with promoting public health initiatives. As an example, ATs have been instrumental in educating the public about the consequences of traumatic brain injury (physical, mental, academic, social) beyond the initial injury.</p>		
TASK	DESCRIPTION	
0101	Identify risk factors by administering assessment, pre-participation examination and other screening instruments, and reviewing individual and group history and injury surveillance data.	
0102	Implement plans to aid in risk reduction using currently accepted and applicable guidelines.	
0103	Educate individuals and stakeholders about the appropriate use of personal equipment.	
0104	Minimize the risk of injury and illness by monitoring and implementing plans to comply with regulatory requirements and standard operating procedures for physical environments and equipment.	
0105	Facilitate individual and group safety by monitoring and responding to environmental conditions (e.g., weather, surfaces and client work setting).	
0106	Optimize wellness (e.g., social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, occupational, intellectual, physical) for individuals and groups.	

# DOMAIN 2

TITLE	DESCRIPTION
Examination, Assessment and Diagnosis	Implementing systematic, evidence-based examinations and assessments to formulate valid clinical diagnoses and determine patients' plan of care
<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<p>Following an evidence-based model, the AT conducts examinations and assessments of injuries and illnesses to form relevant related diagnoses. Evidence-based clinical decision-making relies on clinical expertise that integrates athletic training knowledge and skills, clinical experience, current best evidence, clinical circumstances and patient and societal values. As part of the examination, assessment and diagnosis process, the AT, with the understanding of the injury pathology and any comorbidities of the affected individual, utilizes clinical acumen to obtain a thorough patient history, problem-solve through confounding data, exclude and confirm varied presentations of injury and illness, and prioritize relevant examination, assessment and diagnostic techniques.</p> <p>The AT documents clinical findings, diagnoses, counseling and referrals in accordance with established practices and in compliance with federal, state and local laws. The AT continually assesses and reassesses the data required to confirm or exclude the provisional diagnosis; determines if further physical examination and diagnostic testing are required; establishes a final diagnosis with targeted treatment strategies; and refers to other healthcare professionals when necessary.</p>	
TASK	DESCRIPTION
0201	Obtain an individual's history through observation, interview and review of relevant records to assess injuries and illnesses and to identify comorbidities.
0202	Perform a physical examination that includes diagnostic testing to formulate differential diagnoses.
0203	Formulate a clinical diagnosis by interpreting history and the physical examination to determine the appropriate course of action.
0204	Interpret signs and symptoms of injuries, illnesses or other conditions that require referral, utilizing medical history and physical examination to ensure appropriate care.
0205	Educate patients and appropriate stakeholders about clinical findings, prognosis and plan of care to optimize outcomes and encourage compliance.

# DOMAIN 3

TITLE		DESCRIPTION
Immediate and Emergency Care		Integrating best practices in immediate and emergency care for optimal outcomes
SUMMARY		
<p>The profession of athletic training is unique in that the Athletic Trainer is often present at the time of an injury or emergency. ATs have a vast knowledge of medical conditions that can quickly become emergencies, and because ATs are often on-site, they are the primary healthcare professionals qualified to intervene. ATs manage many injuries that are considered relatively minor; however, ATs are frequently challenged to react and respond to a wide variety of unpredictable emergency situations. These immediate and emergency injuries and illnesses can occur during any physical activity, thus requiring knowledge and skill in the preparation, implementation and management of emergency situations.</p> <p>ATs have a responsibility to identify and use evidence-based standards of care in preparation, implementation and management of emergency situations. The preparation begins prior to an immediate and emergency situation through the development of an emergency action plan (EAP) identifying emergency personnel, equipment, transportation and communication. ATs have a vast knowledge of medical conditions that can quickly become emergencies, such as asthma, sickle cell trait, hypertension and diabetes. Additionally, they have extensive knowledge of environmental conditions, such as heat, cold and lightning.</p> <p>ATs practice in various settings, and maintain high level of preparation and proficiency in all aspects of immediate and emergency care. This ability is critical to minimizing risk to the injured participant.</p>		
TASK	DESCRIPTION	
0301	Establish EAPs to guide appropriate and unified response to events and optimize outcomes.	
0302	Triage to determine if conditions, injuries or illnesses are life-threatening.	
0303	Implement appropriate emergency and immediate care procedures to reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality.	
0304	Implement referral strategies to facilitate the timely transfer of care.	

# DOMAIN 4

TITLE	DESCRIPTION
Therapeutic Intervention	Rehabilitating and reconditioning injuries, illnesses and general medical conditions with the goal of achieving optimal activity level based on core concepts (i.e., knowledge and skillsets fundamental to all aspects of therapeutic interventions) using the applications of therapeutic exercise, modality devices and manual techniques
<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<p>ATs routinely provide injury-prevention applications; however, when an injury or illness occurs, the AT's additional responsibilities include restoration of the patient to an optimal level. Achieving this goal requires that the athletic training clinician has a solid knowledge base and has mastered a specific skill set. Some examples of these abilities include examination; assessment; communication; knowledge of injury and common surgical techniques; application of currently acceptable techniques; and planning for and progressing the patient in a treatment, rehabilitation and reconditioning program that achieves the goal of optimal patient restoration.</p>	
<p>ATs possess knowledge of the pathophysiology of systemic illness, communicable diseases, infections and general medical pathology. Furthermore, ATs are able to differentiate pathophysiology from normal physiological function and are aware of appropriate referral and treatments for optimal treatment outcomes for these conditions.</p>	
<p>Working within their state's practice act and <i>BOC Standards of Professional Practice</i>, ATs provide services to patients under the direction of or in collaboration with a physician. ATs are aware of the legal boundaries of these practice regulations and are bound to honor them. The AT provides regular and pertinent communication with the prescribing physician and other healthcare professionals who are involved in the patient's care. The AT examines and assesses the patient to develop a plan of care. This plan of care includes the implementation and use of currently-accepted treatment techniques, practices and procedures to achieve short- and long-term goals that have been developed as part of the treatment plan. Protection from additional insult and appropriate steps toward optimal recovery are included in the AT's plan and execution of care.</p>	
<p>ATs select specific treatment applications based on current evidence of efficacy and benefit, healthcare practice standards and rationale founded on evidence-based concepts. The AT possesses knowledge of manual techniques and orthotic devices, as well as knowledge of the theoretical and evidence-based findings regarding their principles, applications and physiological effects on the various body systems. Within the Therapeutic Intervention domain lie a number of task categories that are integral segments of knowledge and skills involved in returning an injured patient to full, optimal function.</p>	
TASK	DESCRIPTION
0401	Optimize patient outcomes by developing, evaluating and updating the plan of care.
0402	Educate patients and appropriate stakeholders using pertinent information to optimize treatment and rehabilitation outcomes.
0403	Administer therapeutic exercises to patients using appropriate techniques and procedures to aid recovery to optimal function.
0404	Administer therapeutic devices to patients using appropriate techniques and procedures to aid recovery to optimal function.
0405	Administer manual techniques to patients using appropriate methods and procedures to aid recovery to optimal function.
0406	Administer therapeutic interventions for general medical conditions to aid recovery to optimal function.
0407	Determine patients' functional status using appropriate techniques and standards to return to optimal activity level.

# DOMAIN 5

TITLE	DESCRIPTION
Healthcare Administration and Professional Responsibility	Integrating best practices in policy construction and implementation, documentation and basic business practices to promote optimal patient care and employee well-being
<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<p>Healthcare is the largest and most regulated industry within the United States. The medical care of individuals revolves around the concept of teamwork. The AT plays a critical role within the team. The awareness of each medical care professional's roles and responsibilities helps form a patient-centered care team. No single provider, or AT, can provide every care need for a patient.</p> <p>ATs work in a variety of settings that require the management of individuals, various policies, risk, regulations and legislative compliance. ATs, across the various professional settings, understand and collect diverse data and outcomes measures. Before deciding which data and outcomes measure to monitor, the AT determines the key performance indicators for his or her organization (e.g., return to activity days, number of patients seen, revenue generated, changes in production) and identifies personal and stakeholder requisites.</p> <p>Additionally, the AT engages in ongoing professional education to ensure the care provided by the organization and healthcare professionals adheres to best practices. For organizations and professions to maintain financial health, the AT must demonstrate the ability to utilize basic internal business skills including strategic planning, human resource management, budgeting and facility design. ATs must be able to apply external business skills, such as marketing and public relations, to support organizational sustainability, growth and development. ATs require various criteria for documentation of patient care and treatment, depending on setting and state requirements. Using appropriate documentation, no matter the athletic training setting, permits meeting of state, professional and ethical standards of practice.</p>	
TASK	DESCRIPTION
0501	Evaluate organizational, personal and stakeholder outcomes.
0502	Develop policies, procedures and strategies to address risks and organizational needs.
0503	Practice within local, state and national regulations, guidelines, recommendations and professional standards.
0504	Use established documentation procedures to ensure best practice.

# WEIGHTING OF DOMAINS

The PA7 defines the current entry-level knowledge, skills and abilities required for practice in the profession of athletic training. The practice analysis serves as the blueprint for determining the content of the exam. Exam questions represent all five domains of athletic training, with weighting distributed across domains as indicated in the table below.

DOMAIN	PERCENT OF QUESTIONS ON EXAM
Injury and Illness Prevention and Wellness Promotion	19.8
Examination, Assessment and Diagnosis	24.3
Immediate and Emergency Care	15.5
Therapeutic Intervention	27.4
Healthcare Administration and Professional Responsibility	13.0
Sum	100.0