



National Center for
Competency Testing

**Patient Care Technician
National Standard Setting Study**

Final Report

**James L. Hellrung, M.A.
National Center for Competency Testing,
Psychometrician
April, 2021**



National Center for
Competency Testing

7007 College Boulevard, Suite 385
Overland Park, KS 66211

telephone: 800.875.4404
www.ncctinc.com

Executive Summary

Scores on the National Certified Patient Care Technician (NCPCT) are intended to be interpreted as a measure of candidate knowledge associated with the performance of job tasks required for entry level practice as a patient care technician. The intended use of NCPCT test scores is to assure the public and employers that those who pass the examination and achieve certification have demonstrated the necessary job-related knowledge to practice safely as an entry level patient care technician. Scores on the NCPCT are not intended to predict the degree of success the candidate will achieve as a patient care technician. The only statement made about a passing score is that the candidate has met the established performance standard for demonstrating entry level competence, regardless of how far above the examination passing score the candidate performed. Furthermore, candidates who fail to meet the passing score are not judged incompetent; they can only be said to have not yet demonstrated sufficient knowledge to be judged competent for certification by the NCCT.

A criterion-referenced passing score was set to establish what constitutes competency for the NCPCT examination. The standard setting method presented by Angoff (1971) was used to establish this passing score. In the body of his work, Angoff (1971) suggested that a passing score be produced by a panel of judges deciding whether a minimally qualified candidate would correctly respond to each item on an instrument. Each judge estimates the percentage likely a minimally competent practitioner is to answer an item correctly. This is known as the percent Angoff method.

Five patient care technician subject matter experts served as the panel for the study. The Angoff standard setting process used in this study was conducted in ten main sequential steps: 1) taking the exam; 2) introducing the standard setting process; 3) developing the minimally competent practitioner (MCP) definition; 4) rating each job task on the detailed test plan as easy or hard for minimally competent practitioner; 5) conducting a practice round of ratings on 30 items from a practice test; 6) conducting the first round of ratings; 7) reviewing impact data in relation to the Round One ratings; 8) conducting the second round of ratings, 9) reviewing impact data in relation to the Round Two ratings, and 10) finalizing the passing score.

In order to finalize the cut score, NCCT and the cut score panel considered the reasonableness of the pass rate in relation to their expectations for the level of knowledge and skill necessary for competent practice and their knowledge of entry level patient care technicians. They also considered the historical pass rate for the NCCT NCPCT. After completing two rounds of ratings, a panel-recommended cut score was sent to the NCCT Board of Testing. On April 21st, 2021 the NCCT Board of Testing formally approved the panel's decision. On April 26th, 2021 scores were released for the new National Certified Patient Care Technician examination.