

PESA Blueprint 2009

Introduction

The Canadian Midwifery Registration Examination (CMRE) is a national written examination that assesses internationally educated and Canadian-educated applicants for midwifery registration in Canadian provinces and territories. It is designed to ensure that all applicants meet entry-level competency standards set out in the *Canadian Competencies for Midwives*. Its ultimate goal is to ensure that midwives gaining registration are competent and safe practitioners providing a consistent standard of care across Canada.

The Midwifery Pre-Exam Self- Assessment (PESA) is a set of examination questions that mimic those found on the CMRE. The PESA allows users to get some direct experience with questions that mimic the format, style, language level, and difficulty level of questions on the CMRE. The specific set of questions has been chosen to also demonstrate the range of content and types of questions found on the CMRE. Furthermore, by taking the time-limited PESA Version A, users can also experience the approximate pace of the CMRE. The PESA is available in an online format and can be accessed 24 hours per day, seven days per week by eligible users.

Competencies Tested on the PESA

Like the CMRE, the PESA tests candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities in relation to entry-level competencies set out in the *Canadian Competencies for Midwives*. In creating the PESA, we strove to follow the same weighting of questions per competency area as is found in the CMRE. Due to the complexities involved in attempting to do this with limited funds for writing exam questions, it was impossible to exactly match the CMRE. However, PESA does represent a good cross-section and range of competencies. Users should keep in mind that there are slightly fewer antepartum and intrapartum questions, and slightly more postpartum and newborn questions, on the PESA than there are on the CMRE.

Competency Framework:

Competency Categories	Percentage of Questions on the CMRE	Percentage of Questions on the PESA
I. General Competencies	5-10%	10%
II. Education and Counseling	5-10%	7%
III. Antepartum	25-30%	19%
IV. Intrapartum: Care During Labour, Birth, and the Immediate Postpartum Period	25-30%	22%
V. Care of the Woman during the Postpartum Period, Including Breastfeeding	10-15%	18%
VI. Care of the Newborn and Young Infant	10-15%	18%
VII. Well Woman Care, Sexuality and Gynecology	1-5%	4%
VIII. Professional, Inter-Professional, Legal and Other Aspects of the Profession	1-3%	1%
IX. Professional Development	1-3%	0%
X. Advanced Competencies	0%	0%
TOTAL	100	100

Exam Parameters

The goal with the PESA was to mimic the CMRE as much as is possible with a short practice exam while enhancing the information available about right and wrong answers. Below are the parameters that describe the PESA.

1. Examination Length: The PESA contains 72 questions which is approximately one-third the length of the CMRE.
2. Question Format: Like the CMRE, all questions are in a multiple choice format. Multiple choice questions consist of a stem and four options, only one of which is the best answer.

3. Question Presentation: Like the CMRE, the majority of questions are presented as case-based scenarios where a midwifery situation is described and between two and five questions relate to that situation. Some questions are independent (stand-alone) questions but most of these do also present a short scenario to provide context for the question.
4. Question Domain: Like the CMRE, some questions in the PESA test a user's knowledge, and others test their ability to apply that knowledge and/or to use critical thinking in a midwifery situation.
5. Question Explanations: The PESA includes an explanation of why each response is correct or incorrect. In addition, the reference texts that support the correct answer are listed.
6. CMRE Questions: The PESA includes some questions that have previously been used on the CMRE.
7. Health-Care Setting: Like the CMRE, the PESA includes questions in both hospital and out-of-hospital settings. There are slightly more questions with an out-of-hospital setting (50-60%).
8. Health-Care Situation: Like the CMRE, the PESA includes questions that represent both normal and abnormal situations. There are slightly more questions with a normal situation (50-60%).
9. Standardization: The same standards are used in the PESA as are used in the CMRE (e.g. metric measurements). See CMRE Blueprint for details.

Online Format Guidelines

The PESA is available only in an on-line format. This allows it to be available at no cost to candidates on a 7 day per week, 24 hours per day basis. It also allows users to retake the exam as many times as they wish, to have it marked automatically, and to receive feedback only when they are ready. Finally it provides for the opportunity to take the exam in a time-limited session.