

FOCUS ON CRA



CRA Domains and the Recertification Process

If you've taken even a quick browse through CRA materials, you probably already know that the CRA exam focuses on 5 content areas called domains: human resource management, asset resource management, fiscal management, operations management, and communication and information management.

And, you probably have discovered that the CRA program is all about these domains, as are the test questions. One prerequisite to apply to take the CRA exam is having management experience in at least 3 of those 5 domains. And, when CRAs renew their credential, their CEUs must relate to these domains.

Clearly, the 5 domains are an important aspect of the CRA exam!

Where the Domains Came From

Determining the domains was the crucial first step in determining content for an exam testing imaging administration.

Before the CRA exam could be developed, there had to be an accurate study to determine what, exactly, the exam should test. You would require a plumber to be knowledgeable in joining pipes and running drains, but not require a full understanding of the molecular structure of a water molecule or the factory procedure for nickel-plating a faucet. In the same way, there is a skill set required of excellent imaging administrators that is different from the skills required of techs, radiologists, or managers in other fields. There is some overlap between related fields, to be sure, but the total set of skills is unique to the imaging management profession.

The domain process began with a 10-member panel of imaging management professionals intentionally selected to represent a wide range of backgrounds, facility types, practice settings, and geographic regions. Guided by test preparation specialists, this group spent several days discussing imaging administration. When they were finished, they had distilled the profession into discrete tasks and domains and detailed the skills and knowledge required to perform each task.

Next, the results of their work were used to create a 15 page survey that was distributed to approximately 1000 imaging administrators. The responses from these administrators, which were carefully analyzed by the test preparation statisticians, served to test and fine tune the panel's work and provide a solid set of tasks, knowledge, and domains for the CRA exam.

The final list of 5 domains is the shorthand version of these tasks and knowledge sets. A click of the mouse on the CRA Web site, www.CRAinfo.org, will get you to the "Exam Content" page, where you can download the full 12 page breakdown of the

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FAQ on Domains & CRA Recertification

Q: I have credits from a non-AHRA source. What domain should I list them under?

A: If the domain isn't clear, check out the detailed list of domain topics by going to www.CRAinfo.org and click the "CRA Renewal" tab and select the "Exam Content" download at the left. That list will tell you which domain or domains your course content falls under. Still not sure? Contact the CRA coordinator Kathryn Keeler at kkeeler@crainfo.org or 800 334-2472. She'll be glad to help you out!

Q: I have a 3 credit course that falls into 2 different domains. Can I use it in either domain?

A: You can use the course in either domain or you can split the credits between the 2 domains.

Q: How many credits do I need in each domain to renew my CRA status?

A: There is no minimum number of credits per domain, nor is there any required distribution. Your courses must all relate to a CRA domain, but beyond that, the only domain requirement in the recertification process is that you can't use more than 18 out of the total 36 credits in any single domain.

MEMBER TALK



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tasks, knowledge, and skills that form each of those 5 domains—the specific skill set you use as an excellent imaging administrator.

Domains, Validation, and What it Means to the CRA Program

The validation process explains why CRA candidates must have management experience in at least 3 of the 5 domains—these domains constitute the knowledge and skills the CRA is certifying.

The validation process also explains why the CRA exam covers all of the 5 domains and only the 5 domains—the CRA credential certifies a standard of excellence in imaging administration, and skill and knowledge in the 5 domains is the standard examinees are measured against.

Finally, the validation explains why renewing CRAs must renew with credits that relate to the CRA domains—credits that don't relate to one of the domains simply don't relate to the body of knowledge certified by the CRA program!

The fact that the domains are carefully studied and tested is very important for the CRA credential and for those who hold it. CRA certification is meaningful because it is based on sound research of the profession of imaging management.

When employers are seeking a professional with the specific skill set they need in their imaging management team, they can look to the CRA credential as a proven, validated means of ensuring a candidate meets that standard.

And, when administrators seek to prove that the unique combination of experience, education, and understanding they have gained in the field of imaging administration has given them the knowledge and skills they need to attain excellence in imaging administration, the CRA credential gives them a proven, validated means to demonstrate that indeed it has.

In test development terms, the CRA is a content-valid examination—it has been tested and documented to appropriately evaluate the knowledge and skills required for excellence in imaging administration. In short, the CRA credential is backed by a validated standard represented by the domains. When an individual attains the CRA certification, that individual has attained more than just a set of initials to put after a name—the CRA credential stands for a tested measure of knowledge and skill in the field of imaging administration. ■

Lucky Members Win Free 2009 Annual Meeting Registrations

Congratulations to these 3 AHRA members, each of whom has won a complimentary registration for the AHRA 2009 Annual Meeting and Exposition in Las Vegas:

Anna M. Balsley
Dawn McNeil, MS, CRA
Marjorie Chinnock, CRA

These winners were selected at random from a pool of 2008 Annual Meeting attendees who completed all their session evaluations.

Thanks to all attendees who completed their session evaluations. Your input is essential for AHRA's educational program development. ■

GE Healthcare's TiP-TV & the AHRA

The AHRA, in conjunction with GE Healthcare's TiP-TV, present a 2-part video series providing an overview of many of the issues discussed at AHRA's 36th Annual Meeting and Exposition in Denver, CO.

The program, entitled "Issues in Radiology Management – Part I" begins at 2 pm (CST) on November 6, 2008.

Included are discussions and interviews with presenters and AHRA members who focus attention on issues pertaining to fiscal management, reimbursement/revenue, performance enhancement, and customer service. It will be available for viewing online for a 3-month period and is available free of charge to all AHRA members. Look for viewing information in subsequent issues of *Link*, as well as AHRA email communications. ■