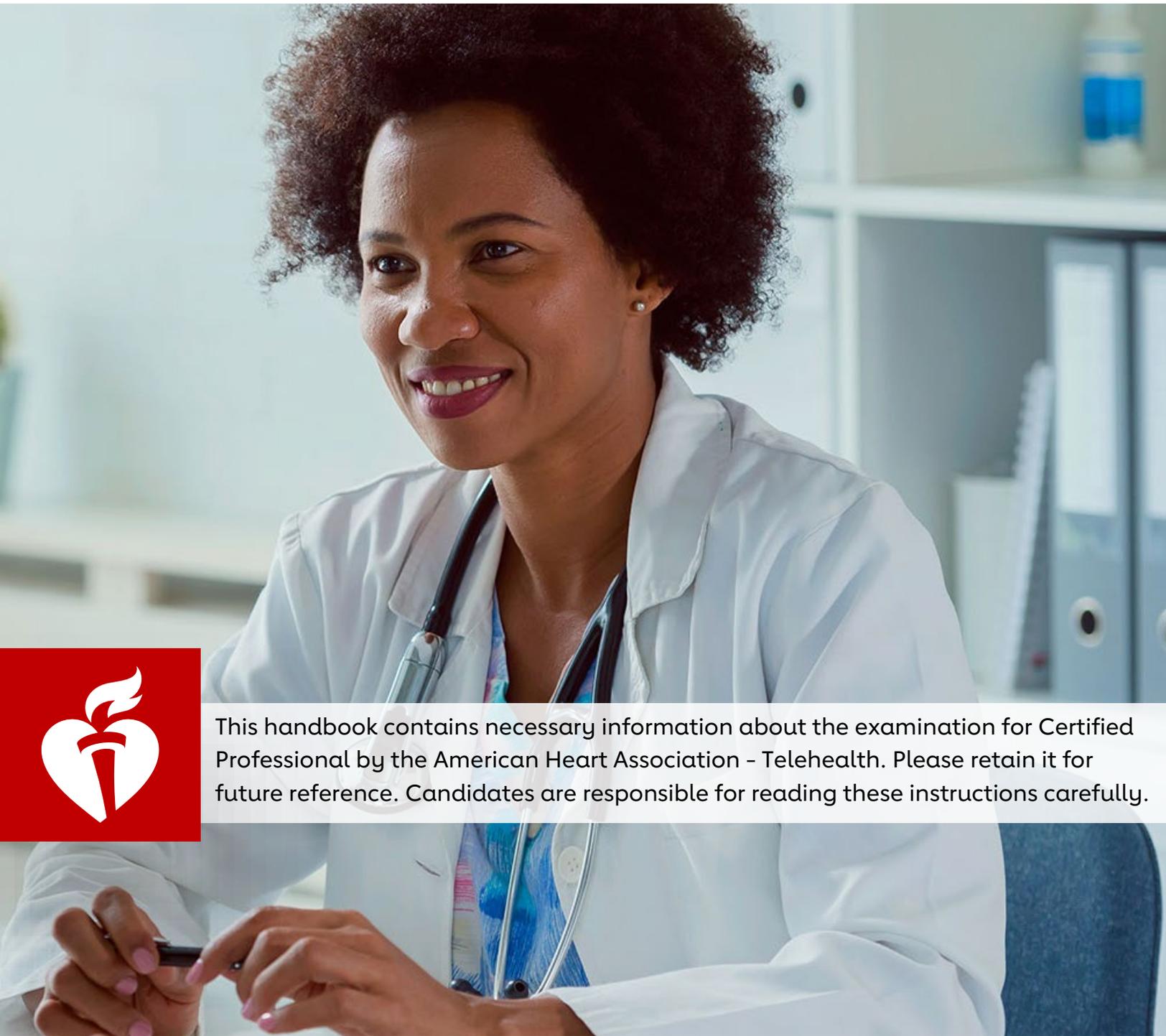# Certified Professional by the American Heart Association - Telehealth

American Heart Association Healthcare Certification

Candidate Handbook

Healthcare Certification provided by
American Heart Association®

This handbook contains necessary information about the examination for Certified Professional by the American Heart Association – Telehealth. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Certified Professional by the American Heart Association – Telehealth examination was developed by the American Heart Association with guidance and input from the American Heart Association Telehealth Advisory Workgroup, Telehealth Exam Review Committee, and Science Committee.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Certified Professional by the American Heart Association - Telehealth (CPAHA-Telehealth) program was developed by the American Heart Association (AHA) in 2023, in response to the rapidly growing utilization of telehealth post COVID-19 pandemic to standardize the care being delivered by health care providers via telehealth care platforms. The AHA developed the CPAHA-Telehealth program to identify and recognize health care providers with proficient skills and knowledge in the delivery of telehealth care.

What are the benefits of holding this certification?

- ✓ Access to the Association's advocacy and policy resources and updates.
- ✓ Validation of a level of expertise that only the American Heart Association can offer.
- ✓ Assurance that patient care is at the heart of the certification.
- ✓ Knowledge that the health care professional can provide expert services using evaluation criteria supported by American Heart Association science.
- ✓ Opportunity for more effective, accessible and efficient care, particularly for those who otherwise lack access to quality health care.
- ✓ Possibility of more patient referrals, professional recognition and increased salary.
- ✓ Enhanced credibility and the personal satisfaction of providing your patients with the best possible care via telehealth.
- ✓ Branding guidelines provided by the Association to help you promote that you hold the credential.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

The CPAHA-Telehealth should be able to:

- Define and discuss the applications, benefits, challenges, future needs, and patient and provider safety implications associated with telehealth.
- Demonstrate effective interpretation of legal and professional regulatory standards, operational and strategic practices, application of clinical practice, application of quality of care, and data collection and assessment in telehealth.
- Conduct an assessment interview to obtain comprehensive and accurate data needed for treatment planning.
- Explain basic telehealth coverage and reimbursement guidelines, differences in state and federal regulations, the private payer role, reimbursement parities, and reimbursement in the context of a barrier to telehealth services.

- Provide clear and accurate information about the role of technology in telehealth, including implementation, downtime, upgrades, data privacy and security, and practice benefits and challenges.
- Offer methods for visit preparations to ensure meaningful encounters, smooth visit workflow, patient-provider relationship skills, and improve clinical engagement.
- Apply ethical standards, dilemmas, and considerations to telehealth.
- Examine diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on clinical decision making, health equity, interprofessional education, and social determinants of health in relation to telehealth.

EXAMINATION

- The content of the CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination has been defined by a national job analysis study. The study involved surveying medical professionals in the field to identify tasks that are performed routinely and considered essential to competent practice. The examination has been developed through combined efforts of qualified subject matter experts and testing professionals.

- The CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination consists of 175 multiple-choice and multiple select questions in English. 150 of the questions will be scored with an additional 20-25 pretest (non-scored) items. Pre-test items are distributed randomly throughout the examination to collect item level statistics for possible use as scored items on future examinations. Candidates will be permitted 180 minutes to complete the examination. Those who meet the eligibility requirements and achieve a passing score will be awarded a certificate indicating that they have achieved certification status as an CPAHA-Telehealth.

EXAMINATION POLICIES

Eligibility Requirements
1. Complete 5.25 CE (continuing education) credits in telehealth within the past 12 months
2. Candidate must be a telehealth professional including medical professional, allied health professional, administrative personnel, research personnel or student.
3. Complete and file the online application for the CPAHA-Telehealth certification exam.
4. Pay the required fee(s).

Language
The CPAHA-Telehealth examination is offered in English only.

Examination Administration
The CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination will be offered via Live Remote Proctored (LRP) Test Administration by Meazure Learning. Candidates must schedule their testing appointment at least 24 hours in advance of the requested testing appointment. Examination for the CPAHA-Telehealth certification will be done remotely through live proctored exam monitoring. Meazure Learning is the professional testing agency contracted by the American Heart Association to assist in the development, administration, proctoring, scoring, score reporting, and analysis of the CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination.

Statement of Nondiscrimination
AHA and Meazure Learning do not discriminate among candidates on the basis of age, gender, race, color, region, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

Examination Fees
Please note that the examination and administration fees are <u>NOT</u> refundable.

Examination Fee for CPAHA-Telehealth... $400

Fees must be submitted in U.S. dollars. Visa, Mastercard, Discover Card and American Express are accepted.

Scheduling Your Exam
- To schedule your exam, submit your application for examination through the AHA Professional Educational Education Hub. You will receive an email from Meazure Learning to schedule an LRP testing appointment.

- Once the candidate has scheduled an LRP testing appointment, the candidate will receive email confirmation notices from both Proctor U and Meazure Learning.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their computer meets technical requirements as outlined in the confirmation email.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring their testing environment needs meets the minimum requirements to take the exam as outlined in the confirmation email.
- The confirmation notices will provide the following information:
  - o The date and time of the testing appointment
  - o The URL to access the scheduled, online proctored tests
  - o The URL for the system check
  - o Computer specifications required to take the exam via live, online-proctored testing
  - o A list of items that candidates may and may not have access to during the testing sessions; and
  - o Information regarding an online tutorial for candidates to familiarize themselves with Meazure Leanings internet-based test delivery system prior to the scheduled test date. Candidates may access the online demonstration free of charge.

> For any additional questions about logistics to complete the exam, please contact Meazure Learning at:
>
> PO Box 570, Morrisville, NC 27560
> Phone: (919) 582-6880 Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM EST
> Email: CANDIDATESUPPORT@MEAZURELEARNING.COM

Testing Cancellations, Rescheduling, Refunds, and No-shows

- Candidates must cancel a scheduled testing appointment no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment. The candidate must cancel their testing session by returning to the Meazure Learning online scheduling system to access the live online proctoring portal.
- Candidates may reschedule their testing appointment, provided the candidate is within their eligibility period. The candidate must reschedule the testing appointment no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment.
- A candidate who schedules a testing appointment but does not appear for their testing appointment will be considered a no-show. Applications and fees for no-shows are forfeited and a new application and fee must be submitted to schedule for another testing appointment.

- Candidates who do not schedule a testing appointment within their eligibility window are not eligible for refunds.
- AHA understands that unforeseen circumstances occur. If you miss your testing appointment and are still within the testing window, please contact customer service. No-shows may be eligible to reschedule on a case-by-case basis.

System Requirements for Live Remote Proctoring

Candidates are required to have a webcam installed on their exam workstation and reliable access to the internet. An internet connection disruption will suspend the test session.

The following are the minimum technical requirements:

- A well-working computer with 4 GB of RAM or higher. *Tablets and Chromebooks are **not** supported.*
- A high-speed internet connection of 1 mbps upload and 1 mbps download. Wireless is acceptable; however, a wired connection is preferred
- A webcam with 640x480 video pixel resolution (a laptop camera is acceptable)
- Working speakers connected to the computer
- A microphone connected to the computer (consider a webcam with a built-in microphone)
- Browser compatibility: Firefox, Chrome
- Candidates must use a computer with admin access

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Accommodations for Disabilities

The American Heart Association and Meazure Learning comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will ensure that persons with disabilities are not deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely because of a disability, as required and defined by relevant provisions of the law.

Special testing arrangements may be made for these persons, provided that an appropriate request for accommodation is submitted to AHA with their application. Professional documentation of the submitted disability may be required.

If you need a special accommodation, please contact the American Heart Association by telephone at 1-877-340-9899 or by email at education.help@email.education.heart.org.

POST-EXAMINATION

Results Reporting

Candidates will not be notified of their results at the end of the exam delivered by Meazure Learning. The candidate's results will be made available in the AHA Professional Education Hub 24-48 hours after completion. Any issues or questions in regard to accessing your results, should be directed to education.help@email.education.heart.org.

Examination Scores

Examination scores are reported as raw scores and scaled scores. A raw score is the number of correctly answered questions; a scaled score is statistically derived from the raw score. One's total score determines whether they pass or fail; it is reported as a scaled score ranging from 0 to 99.

The passing score was determined through a criterion-reference passing-point study in which subject matter experts determined the level of competence indicative of an appropriate level of expertise deserving of certification as a CPAHA-Telehealth.

The minimum scaled score needed to pass the examination has been set at 93 scaled units. The reason for reporting scaled scores is that different versions ("forms") of the examination may vary in difficulty. As new forms of the examination are introduced, a certain number of questions in each content area are updated/replaced. These changes may cause one form of the examination to be slightly easier or more difficult than another form. To adjust for these differences, a procedure called "equating" is used. The goal of equating is to ensure fairness to all candidates.

Recognition of Certification

Candidates who pass the CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination will receive a certificate and digital seal suitable for display from AHA indicating that they have received certification status. For guidance on displaying your certification, seal, and CPAHA-Telehealth credentials, please refer to the AHA Branding and Communication Guide for Individuals.

Re-Examination

The CPAHA-Telehealth certification examination may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

Option 1: Continuing Education Credit

15 hours of continuing education must be earned and submitted to the AHA. The cost associated with this option is $175 for re-certification.

Option 2: Re-Examination

If the candidate elects not to renew certification through option 1, the alternative is retaking the examination. The cost association with this option is the full certification cost of $585 for renewal.

Continuing Education

To maintain certification status through continuing education, one must meet the eligibility requirements and provide proof that they have earned a total of 15 credit hours of continuing education between the date certification (exam date) is earned and the renewal date.

CE must be awarded from an accredited organization. The candidate must meet the requirement of 15 hours of continuing education pertaining to telehealth completed during the 3-year certification period.

There will be an additional opportunity to earn 2.5 continuing education credits for completion of the Professional Assessment available in the CORE Concepts in Telehealth Certificate Program course [Product Number:28-3004] upon maintenance of certification.

After the certification expiration date, this option will no longer be available. Reexamination is the only way to maintain the certification once it has expired.

REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Admittance to the examination will be denied or the certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

• Falsification of an application or documentation provided with the application

• Failure to pay the required fee

• Misrepresentation of certification status

AHA provides the appeal opportunity for challenging denial of eligibility to the examination or revocation of the certification. Failure of the examination is not a circumstance for review and appeal. It is the responsibility of the candidate to initiate the appeal process by written request to AHA within 30 days of the circumstance leading to the appeal.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Am I eligible to sit for the CPAHA-Telehealth exam?
All health care professionals and students are invited to sit for the exam.

How much does it cost to take the exam?
The fee to sit the AHA Certified Telehealth Professional exam is $400.

What is the expiration date of the CPAHA-Telehealth credential?
The credential is valid for 3 full years after passing the examination. The expiration date will be indicated on your certificate.

How can I prepare for the exam?
Candidates are required to take 5 hours of telehealth education ahead of the exam. Additional study materials may be available at an additional cost.

Does the American Heart Association offer education to meet the telehealth education prerequisite?
Yes, the AHA recommends the CORE Concepts in Telehealth Certificate Program course [Product Number: 28-3004] to meet the CPAHA-Telehealth education prerequisite. This course, however, is not required and the candidate may take other telehealth offerings and use the Exam Guide to successfully prepare for the exam.

Where do I apply to take the CPAHA-Telehealth exam?
Applications can be submitted online on the AHA Professional Education Hub.

Where do I find the requirements for live Remote Proctored Exams?
The requirements can be found at on this webpage or at https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/categories/115001818507-Test-Taker.

How do I maintain the certification beyond the initial 3-year period?
To maintain certification status, there are two options:

> 1) Submit 15 total CE credits between the date of your exam and the expiration date of your certification, or

> 2) Re-examination.

When do I receive my certificate and digital seal to promote my certification.
You will be able to access the certificate and AHA Certified Professional digital seal on the AHA Professional Education Hub under the My Library tab within 24-48 hours of completing your exam.

Can I share my achievement via social media or in my practice?
The AHA encourages certified professionals to publicize their achievement. It's important for your community to understand how your involvement benefits patients and supports your commitment to quality improvement. Promotional ideas and messaging can be found in the **Branding and Communications Guide** which you will receive with the certificate and AHA Certified Professional digital seal on the AHA Professional Education Hub.

Are there rules on how I can promote my certification?
Yes, you should review the **AHA's Branding and Communications Guide for Individual certification.**

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

To be eligible for certification, individuals must complete 5.25 continuing education credits specific to telehealth. Although not required, the AHA recommends the **CORE Concepts in Telehealth Certificate Program course [Product Number: 28-3004]** to meet the CPAHA-Telehealth education prerequisite.

Examination Content Outline and Knowledge Statements

The following is the outline of the examination, with an indication of the percentage of questions that come from each section.

1. Introduction to Telehealth (16%)

    a. Discuss telehealth modalities including asynchronous, synchronous, remote patient monitoring and mobile health.

    b. Explain the evolution of telehealth and the resulting current business models.

    c. Assess the impact of telehealth on continuity of care, patient convenience, economic burden, patient access and care disparities, and patient support systems/family involvement.

    d. Discuss telehealth challenges related to facility workflow, patient and provider implementation, technology roadblocks, access and utilization considerations, and patient and provider education and training.

    e. Recognize drivers of change and strategies for gaining leadership support for telehealth initiatives.

    f. Examine wearable technology and mobile applications and the impact on patient access to care.

    g. Understand the appropriate use of telehealth services.

    h. Assess patient, provider, and facility readiness for telehealth services.

    i. Articulate telehealth adverse event impacts and processes.

2. Legal, Regulatory, and Quality (13%)

    a. Interpret basic legal state individual requirements regarding telehealth.

    b. Understand the types and differences between service agreements.

    c. Summarize protected health information and patient informed consent.

    d. Describe federal policies and regulations specific to telehealth, as well as prescribing policies and regulations.

    e. Identify operational and strategic practices in telehealth, including practice standards, legal and regulatory variances leading to telehealth challenges.

    f. Apply clinical practice to telehealth through examples and the discussion of adoption of telehealth in emergency situations and research.

g. Describe the impact of telehealth on quality of care and the patient experience.
h. Describe appropriate patient examinations via telehealth and the necessary clinical support for a differential diagnosis.
i. Identify relevant data collection procedures to ensure appropriate information is obtained on the presenting patient.

3. Licensing, Credentialing, and Privileging (13%)

a. Describe licensure processes and renewals specific to telemedicine, explain the role of states in licensing, and the role of the state medical board.
b. Examine licensing compacts, including the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) and Advance Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Compact.
c. Outline a basic credentialing and documentation process for telehealth providers.
d. Discuss telehealth privileging process, scope of practice, and explain traditional and proxy approaches to privileging.
e. Describe the peer-review and re-appointment processes, and barriers as they relate to privileging.

4. Reimbursement (10%)

a. Identify basic telehealth payment sources, coverage, and situations where emergency waivers would be used.
b. Recognize commonly Medicare and Medicaid requirements and coverage and differentiate Qualified Health Professional vs Clinical Member.
c. Understand common reimbursement restrictions.
d. Discuss the influence of major private payers on payment policies for telehealth and associated barriers related to reimbursement.
e. Explain reimbursement parity, associated policies, and overuse implications.
f. Discuss billing and coding for telehealth providers.

5. Technology (15%)

a. Identify the basic components of a technology set up, a basic telehealth workflow, and necessary ongoing resources and support.
b. Explain technology downtime, upgrades, change management processes, and functionality testing related to telehealth.
c. Discuss the role of support agreements with a technology vendor for telehealth.
d. Discuss legal and regulatory constraints in relation to data privacy and security.

e. Describe common methods used to prevent security breaches and remediate security threats once detected.
f. Summarize security standards for remote practitioners.
g. Identify barriers to access and patterns of comfort with technology for patients and providers.
h. Discuss patient and provider frustrations around poor technology implementation.
i. Describe improved care coordination due to telehealth.

6. Telepresence Skills (14%)

a. Ensure provider background is appropriate, technology is in working order, provider is skilled using peripherals, logins are not expired, and camera position is adequate.
b. Identify proper visit workflow, including a virtual visit agenda incorporating patient priorities and goals, a provider that conveys professionalism and understanding, adequate introductions, proper time for patient questions, and allow time for provider recap of visit, review of needed follow-up, and feedback from patient.
c. Describe verbal and non-verbal communication between the patient and the provider to grow and establish trust.
d. Discuss strategies to convey empathy as a practitioner using virtual mediums.
e. Identify ways to express cultural competency, awareness, and preferences using virtual mediums as a practitioner.
f. Identify ways the practitioner can engage with the patient's home environment and social support.
g. Discuss strategies for providers to connect with patient's emotions and avoid use of medical jargon or other terms patients may not understand.

7. Ethics (11%)

a. Describe the guiding principles of medical ethics as the foundation of the patient-provider relationship.
b. Enumerate patient consent and provider conflict of interest.
c. Discuss important considerations when navigating ethical dilemmas as providers, the role of an ethics committee, and identify common avenues for reporting unethical behavior.
d. Describe ethical dilemmas unique to telehealth and explain ethical complexities in the patient-provider relationship, in patient rights, in collaboration and continuity of care, and healthcare practitioner privileges and responsibilities.
e. Examine equitable access to telehealth care including patterns in clinician recruitment, retention, shortages, and burnout.

8. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (8%)

a. Examine the effects of personal bias in clinical decision making and delivery of telehealth and identify ways that telehealth can assist in improving health equity efforts.

b. Discuss telehealth and interprofessional collaboration.

c. Examine strategies to mitigate explicit and implicit biases that may negatively affect clinical decision making in telehealth.

d. Understand the impact of telehealth on social determinants of health efforts, as a resource effort, and utilization of screening and service tools.
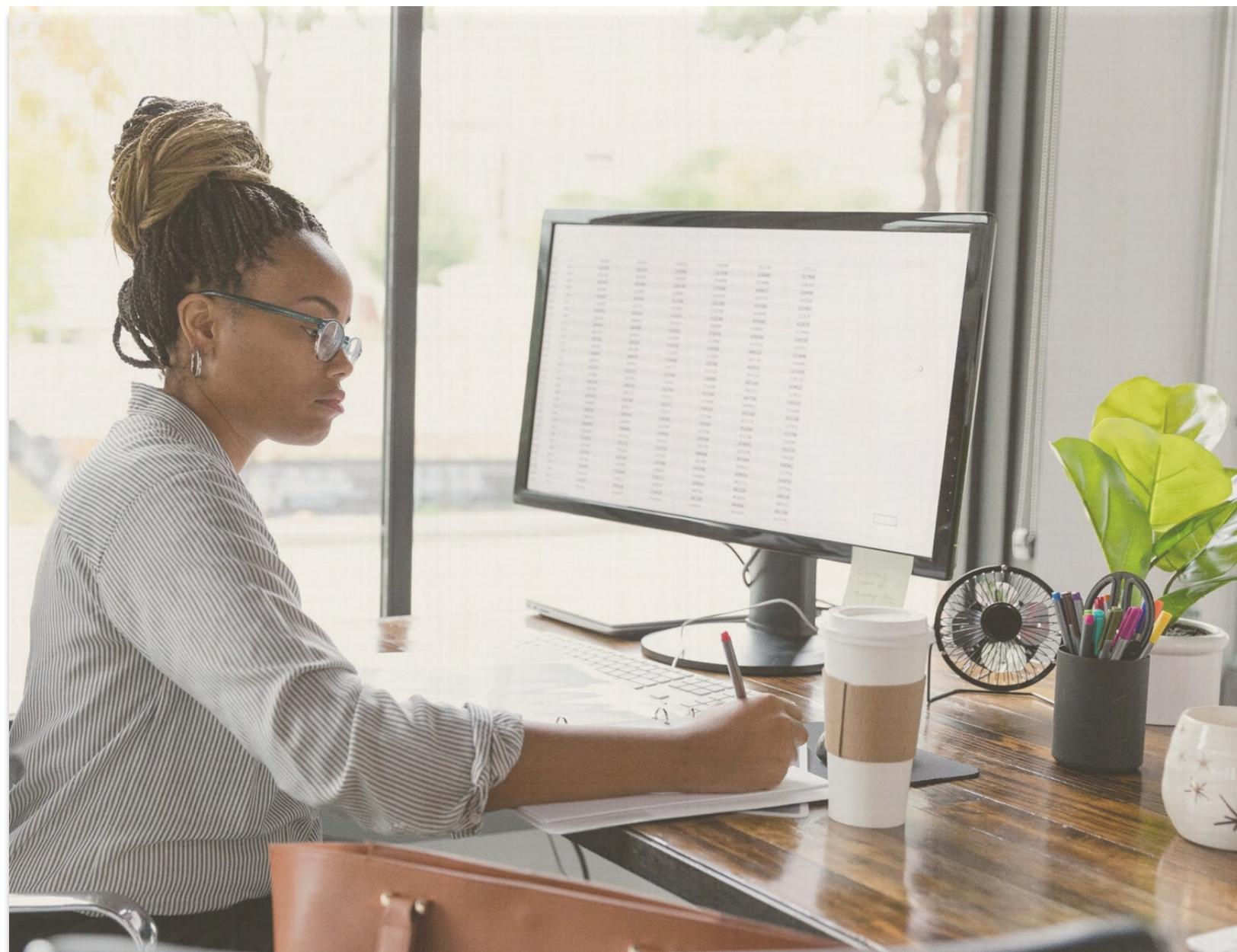
Sample Questions

1. What is NOT part of a typical telehealth visit workflow?
   a. Patient H&P is discussed
   b. Provider logs on to televisit
   c. Labs are drawn
   d. Patient identifiers confirmed

2. Telehealth can be leveraged to address health disparities and _____.
   a. Societal determinants of health
   b. Social determinants of health
   c. Health philanthropy
   d. Health literacy

3. Licensure rules and procedures vary by _____?
   a. Type of Services Provide
   b. Type of License
   c. State Regulations
   d. Type of Technology Used

4. When measuring quality while utilizing telehealth, it is important to consider _____?
   a. Appointment timing
   b. Patient insurance
   c. Patient experience
   d. Internet usage agreements

5. What is an example of an outsourced telemedicine service?
   a. Teleradiology
   b. Cardiac Care Contract Nursing
   c. Electronic Health Record Billing
   d. Quality Improvement Surveying

Key: 1. – c 2. – b 3. – c 4. – c 5. – a