

# Genomics and PA Certification

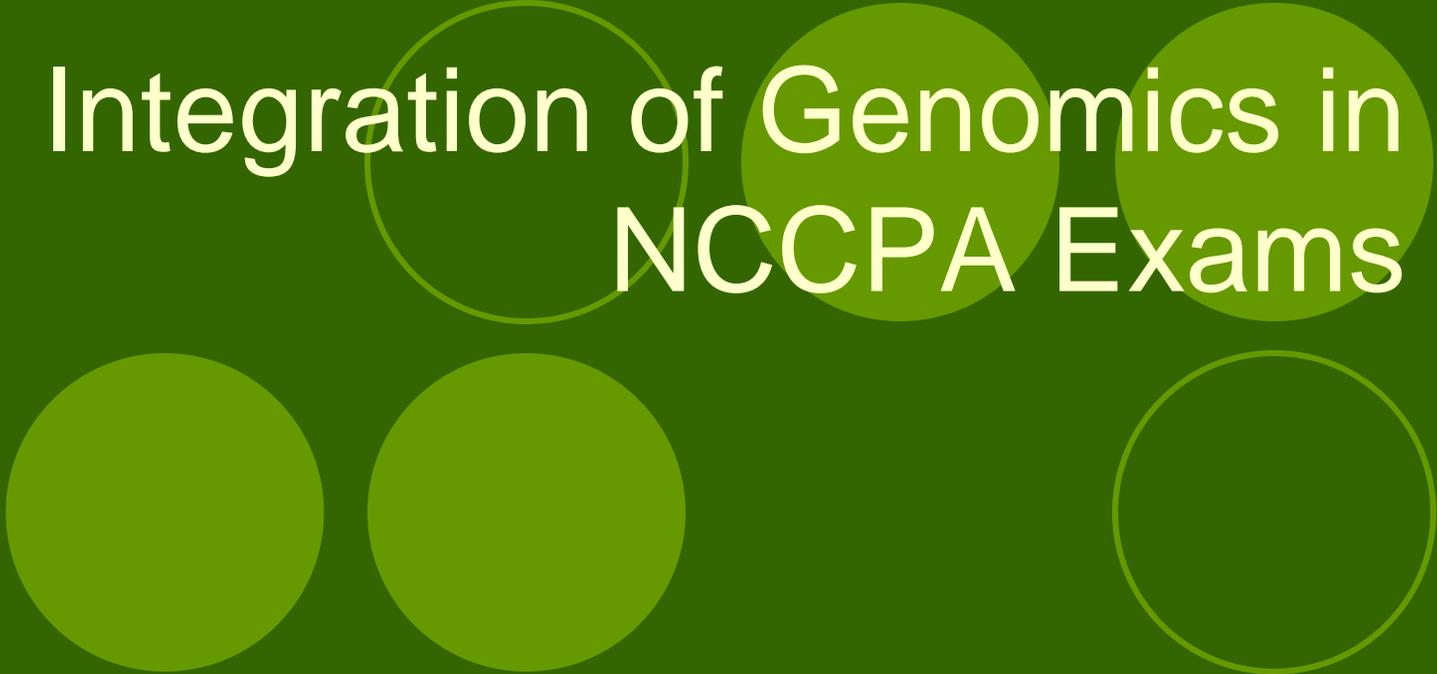
An Update from the  
National Commission on Certification  
of Physician Assistants

William Kohlhepp, MHA, PA-C  
*Immediate Past Chairman*

# Areas of Current or Future Activity

- Exam content
- Promotion
- Research

# Integration of Genomics in NCCPA Exams

A decorative graphic consisting of several circles in various shades of green. One large solid green circle is positioned behind the word 'Genomics'. Another large solid green circle is behind the word 'NCCPA'. A thin green outline circle is behind the word 'Exams'. Below the title, there are three more circles: two solid green circles on the left and one thin green outline circle on the right.

# The Practice Analysis

- Scientific approach to determining the weight of content areas of NCCPA's exams
- Identifies what PAs are actually doing in practice
- Last conducted in 2004; next in 2009-2011
- Opportunity to ask more specific questions to tease out how genomics has been integrated in PA practice

# The Content Blueprint



- Foundation from which exams are constructed
- Application of the information gleaned from the practice analysis
- Two dimensions
  - Organ systems
  - Knowledge, task and skill areas

# Current Genomics Content



Do we have any questions on genetics or genomics?

Yes.

# Current Genomics Content

Mapped content blueprint against GeneTests list of teaching cases.

- Diabetes mellitus
- Postpartum hemorrhage
- Coronary heart disease
- Huntington disease
- Sickle cell anemia
- Breast cancer
- Hearing loss
- Cystic fibrosis
- Renal failure

# Current Genomics Content

Mapped content blueprint against the “Top Dozen.”

1. Breast cancer
2. Colorectal cancer
3. Other cancer
4. Children’s health
5. Family history
6. Making a referral
7. Genetics of common disease
8. Prenatal diagnosis
9. Pharmacogenetics
10. Thrombophilias
11. Psychiatric genetics
12. Nutrigenics

# Current Genomics Content

- To what degree are we covering those areas?
- We don't know...yet.
- Beginning to code new items with a genetics code when applicable.
- Conducting review of item bank and are including this step in that review.
- Will know more next year.

# Further Integration of Genomics in Exams

- Adding a new item writer with experience in genomics in 2008.
  - Generate new items
  - Review existing items
- Will include someone with genomics experience on next practice analysis committee.
  - Ensure that we're asking the right questions to find out what PAs are doing in this area.



# Promotion of Genomics

# Educating the NCCPA Board

- First step for us: Bringing the rest of the organization along.
- Written reports to the NCCPA Board in May and August.
- More in-depth presentation in November.

# Promoting the Family History Project

- Existing Family History Project a natural entry point for PAs.
- Featuring the Web tool in the “Don’t Miss” section of the NCCPA Foundation Web site ([www.paexcellence.org](http://www.paexcellence.org)).
- Willing to do more in this area if it seems appropriate.

# Promotion of Genomics Through Other NCCPA Projects

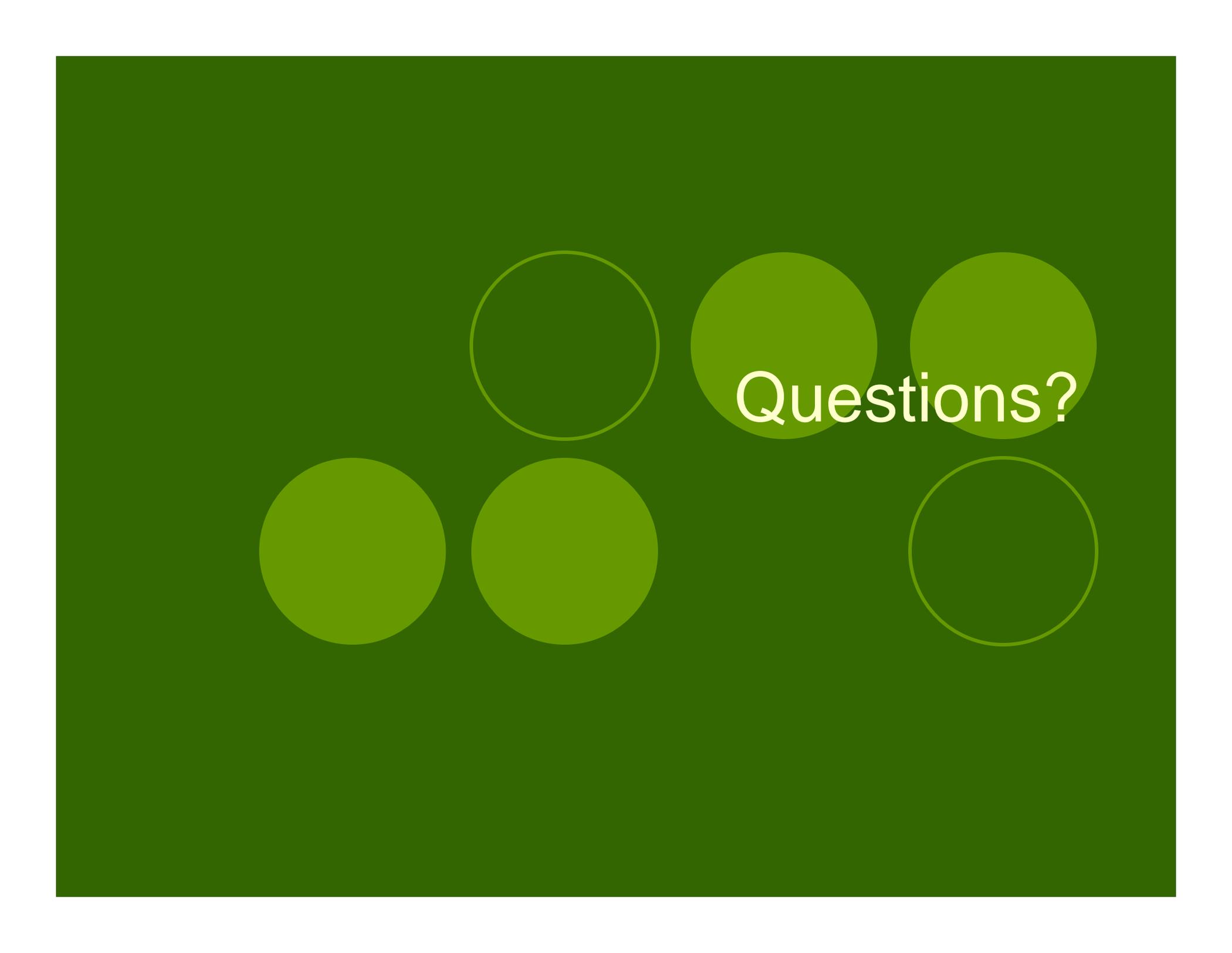
- Procedures logging project in development and will use CPT and ICD9 codes.
- “Pedigree” not among them, but many address taking histories.
- Reviewing definition of PA competencies for gaps.



Research

# New Opportunities in Research

- NCCPA Foundation research grants program
- \$5k-\$10k grants to support research (\$50k total per year)
- This topic could be featured as a “topic of interest” in the next RFP.
- Looking for ideas for research topics while we’re here to seed the RFP.



Questions?