



Nursing

Education

To achieve the RN title, an individual must graduate from a state-approved school of nursing—either a four-year university program, a two-year associate degree program, or a three-year diploma program—and pass a state RN licensing examination called the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) is an umbrella term given to a registered nurse who has met advanced educational and clinical practice requirements, at a minimum of a Master's level. (nursingworld.org) Jefferson offers the following nursing degrees: the associate degree, baccalaureate degree, master's degree, and doctor of nursing practice.

A licensed practical nurse is not a registered nurse. Also called a licensed vocational nurse (LVN) in some states, an LPN has taken a 12- to 14-month post-high school educational course that focuses on basic nursing care. LPNs also must pass a licensing exam (the NCLEX-PN). (nursingworld.org)

Certifications

NCLEX-RN must be passed to practice as an RN. Advanced practice registered nurses may also be required to pass a certification exam (nursecredentialing.org).

Roles and functions

Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations. (ANA *Nursing's Social Policy Statement, Second Edition, 2003, p. 6 & Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, 2004, p. 7*). Nurses practice as members of health care teams. Certified

nurse assistants work with nurses to provide basic hygiene to patients. Administrator, researcher and educator are additional potential roles.

Practice settings

As members of the nation's largest health care profession, registered nurses practice wherever people need nursing care, including such common sites as hospitals, homes, schools, workplaces, and community centers, and uncommon areas such as children's camps, homeless shelters, and tourist sites. About 56 percent of nurses currently work in hospitals. Hospital unit settings include intensive care, operating/recovery room, stepdown, emergency room, labor and delivery, and outpatient units. Other settings where registered nurses work include: Community/public health 14.9%; Ambulatory care 11.5%; Nursing homes 6.3%; Nursing education 2.6% (nursingworld.org)

Advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) is an umbrella term given to a registered nurse who has met advanced educational and clinical practice requirements, at a minimum of a Master's level, beyond the basic nursing education and licensing required of all RNs and who provides at least some level of direct care to patient populations. Examples:

1. Nurse practitioner (NP) – Working in clinics, nursing homes, hospitals, or private offices, more than 141,000 nurse practitioners are qualified to provide a wide range of primary and preventive health care services, prescribe medication, and diagnose and treat common minor illnesses and injuries.
2. Certified nurse-midwife (CNM) – Almost 14,000 CNMs provide well-woman gynecological and low-risk obstetrical care.

3. Clinical nurse specialist (CNS) – Working in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, private offices, and community-based settings, some 72,000 CNSs handle a wide range of physical and mental health problems, and also work in consultation, research, education, and administration.
4. Certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA) – The oldest of the advanced nursing specialties, CRNAs administer more than 65 percent of anesthetics given to patients each year. There were about 32,000 CRNAs in practice in 2004.
5. A move in nursing is currently underway to shift the standard for qualification to be an APRN to that of a Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) by 2015. While still providing the direct care to patient populations, the shift demonstrates the comparability of the APRN with other such advanced roles, i.e. Doctorate in Physical Therapy, Doctorate in Pharmacy.
6. There are other nursing roles that are usually filled by master's prepared registered nurses as well, including nursing administration, nursing education, patient and staff education. Yet another master's level role currently being introduced into educational programs is the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) role. This role expects to act as a system facilitator for nursing care delivery. (nursingworld.org)

Professional association links for further info on the profession:

www.nursingworld.org

Link to TJU education program:

<http://www.jefferson.edu/jchp/nursing/>