

American Nurse *Today*

Official journal of
ANA
AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

**Is advanced
practice nursing
for you?**

**CONSIDER A CAREER
AS A NURSE EDUCATOR**

**PATHBREAKING
EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS
FOR TODAY'S NURSES**

LANDING YOUR DREAM JOB

**Opportunities
straight ahead**



FUTURE

2017

**EDUCATION
GUIDE**



Online NURSING PROGRAMS

SOME PROGRAMS ARE ALSO OFFERED

Onsite

EDUCATION CENTERS IN

INDIANA

OHIO

KENTUCKY



BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Nursing (RNBSN)

DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Post Master's Certificates

MASTER'S DEGREE

ASN-MSN

MSN MBA

MSN Post MBA

Nursing Administration

Nursing Education

Primary Care Nursing

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing

Not all programs are offered at onsite locations.

866.498.4968 | indwes.edu

INDIANA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

2017 Education Guide

Contents

2 Lifelong learning: Your catalyst for success

By Deborah E. Trautman

Thriving in a contemporary nursing practice setting can hinge on your willingness to return to school to continue your education.

4 Why should you continue your education?

Lifelong education can open new opportunities and help you stay competitive. Learn about the other important benefits it can bring.

6 Pathbreaking educational options for 21st-century nurses

By Janet Boivin

For today's nurses, educational and professional opportunities are greater than ever. Find out how nursing education programs and funding options are changing to suit new nursing roles and career tracks.

10 Career options for nurse educators

Whether they work in an academic or clinical setting, nurse educators must have advanced knowledge of educational theories and principles. But the purpose, practice, roles, and responsibilities of clinical educators differ from those academic educators. Joan I. Warren, Mary G. Harper, and Christine Wilson wrote the **Nursing professional development specialist** section of this article. Deborah Lindell, Debra Hagler, and Kathleen Poindexter wrote the **Academic nurse educator** section.

14 Is advanced practice nursing for you?

By Janet Selway

The author describes the four advanced practice roles, gives current data on each, and offers important points to consider when choosing an APRN education program.

18 Landing your dream job

By Debra Siela, Renee Twibell, and Juanita Brand

Snag the job of a lifetime by writing a stand-out résumé, conducting a focused job search, and sharpening your interview skills. The authors tell how.

21 Education listings



page 4



page 6



page 18

Lifelong learning: Your catalyst for success

Thriving in a contemporary practice setting can hinge on your willingness to continue your education.

By Deborah E. Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN



Today's professional nurses have a wide variety of choices regarding where to practice and how far to advance in their careers. Healthcare reform has sparked development of new care-delivery models that offer opportunities to practice and lead change in both familiar and new arenas. As leaders of nurse-managed health clinics, community health centers, health/medical homes, and other practice sites, nurses are driving improvements in health and enhancing access to health care on many fronts. As more patients enter the system and an aging population increases the demand for care, many more nurses will be needed to serve in primary care, preventive care, and specialty roles, as well as to lead independent practices.

Thriving in a contemporary practice setting can hinge on your willingness to return to school to continue your education. Completing a registered nurse (RN) program and passing the NCLEX licensure exam are only the first steps in your development as a professional nurse. In a 2015 progress report on the future of nursing, the Institute of Medicine found that “for nurses to be prepared to meet increasingly complex patient needs, function as leaders, and advance science, they should achieve higher levels of education.”

Many doors are open to nurses with preparation beyond the entry level. Those with graduate degrees provide direct patient care as advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), conduct research, teach online and in the classroom, influence public policy, lead health systems, consult with corporations, and implement evidence-based solutions that can revolutionize health care. These highly skilled providers are in great demand to fill established and emerging roles that allow nurses to focus on such practice areas as geriatrics, pediatrics, public health, administration, informatics, forensics, systems improvement, and genetics/genomics.

Whenever possible, I encourage students to stay in school beyond their initial licensure, especially if their long-term goal is to practice in an advanced clinical, research, or teaching role. Many new graduates—even those who plan to return to school soon after getting their first job—find that reentering academia after starting clinical practice is hard. Of course, staying in school isn't an option for many nurses who must work to support themselves and their families. Those who work while pursuing a course of study must take care to choose the right kind of educational environment (such as online vs. face-to-face, formal vs. informal, and advanced degree vs. continuing education). Identifying your educational preferences is key to your academic success.

President John F. Kennedy said, “Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.” Nurses in all settings are leaders who champion the needs of the patients and populations they serve. I encourage all nurses to assume leadership roles both within the profession and the larger community. I have found that the best leaders are those who embrace lifelong learning and are open to developing new expertise. ★

Deborah E. Trautman is president and chief executive officer of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER ONLINE

without putting your work on hold.



**"I AM BETTER PREPARED TO
IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OTHERS."
THE REASON IS RADFORD**

Radford University's RN-to-BSN online program is for RNs who **want more.**

Radford University's online program is customized to help a nursing professional meet the soaring demand in today's dynamic healthcare industry.

A Radford University BSN degree will strengthen your foundation of nursing education and work experience with clinical, community, technological and interprofessional skills.

Your success will be anchored by Radford's sterling reputation of academics and service dedicated to the best in patient care and professional preparation.

Learn more at www.radford.edu/rn-bsn or contact Assistant Professor of Nursing, Katie Katz, at 540-831-7653.

RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Radford, Virginia

Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cancer killer in the U.S.

But it can be prevented.

Screening helps find precancerous polyps so they can be removed before they turn into cancer.

Screening can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is most effective.

**If you're 50 or older—don't wait.
Talk to your doctor
and get screened.**



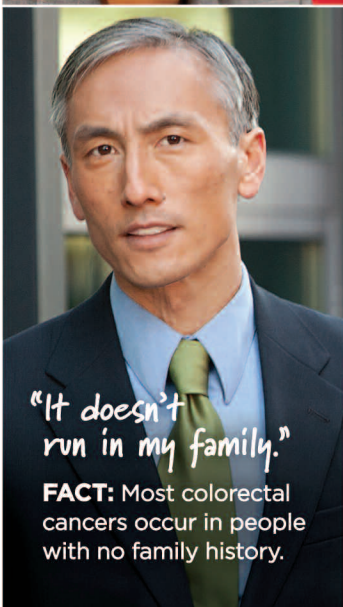
www.cdc.gov/screenforlife
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



"I don't have symptoms."

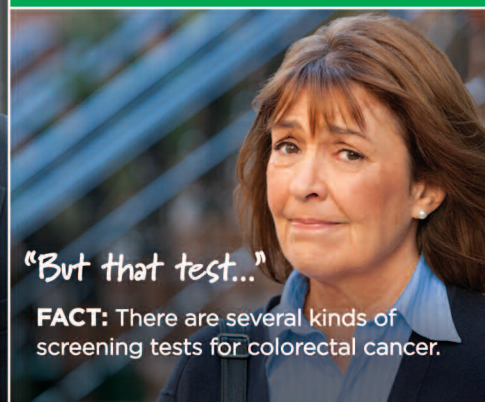
FACT: Colorectal cancer doesn't always cause symptoms, especially early on.



"It doesn't run in my family."

FACT: Most colorectal cancers occur in people with no family history.

"Why Should I Get Screened?"



"But that test..."

FACT: There are several kinds of screening tests for colorectal cancer.

Why should you continue your education?

For nurses, education should be a lifelong pursuit. It will help you do the following:

Open new opportunities

- Advanced degrees open new job opportunities, such as advanced practice nursing and nurse educator.
- Schools are turning away students due to lack of adequate faculty. From 2012 to 2022, projected job growth for nursing instructors will increase 35% (much faster than average).

Stay competitive

- The Institute of Medicine set a goal of 80% of nurses having BSNs by 2020.
- 44% of hospitals and other health-care setting now require new nurse hires to have a BSN.
- Nurses with BSNs are more likely to be hired.

Earn more

- Nurses with BSNs can earn as much as \$9,000 per year more than those with ADN.

Give the best care possible

Studies show a BSN increases quality of care. For instance:

- A 10% higher proportion of BSN-prepared nurses on hospital units was linked to a 10.9% drop in patient mortality.
- A 10% increase in hospital nurses with BSNs was linked to an average reduction of 2.12 deaths per 1,000 patients—and for a subset of patients with complications, an average reduction of 7.47 deaths per 1,000 patients.



Sources

American Association of Colleges of Nursing: aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/impact-of-education

Bureau of Labor Statistics: bls.gov/careeroutlook/2014/interview/nursing-instructor.htm

Institute of Medicine: nationalacademies.org/hmd/~media/Files/Report%20Files/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing/Future%20of%20Nursing%202010%20Recommendations.pdf

National League for Nursing: nln.org/newsroom/nursing-education-statistics/admissions-to-nursing-programs

PayScale payscale.com/college-salary-report/majors-that-pay-you-back/associate?page=10 and payscale.com/college-salary-report/majors-that-pay-you-back/bachelors?page=22

LEAD YOUR ORGANIZATION

ONLINE DNP IN SYSTEMS-LEVEL LEADERSHIP

W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing Program Highlights

- > Online classes available 24/7
- > 36-credit program completed in 18 months
- > Competitive tuition
- > Quarterly terms
- > Up to 9 credits may transfer toward the DNP
- > 12-week online courses

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!



**THOMAS EDISON
STATE UNIVERSITY**

LEARN MORE:

www.tesu.edu/nursingdegree
(609) 633-6460

Thomas Edison State University is one of the 11 senior public colleges and universities in New Jersey, and is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (267) 284-5000. All nursing programs are accredited. For specific accreditation information, please visit the nursing Web page at www.tesu.edu/nursing.



Kimberly Rindt, MSN '14

PURDUE GRADUATE NURSING

BUILDING A NEW FUTURE FOR HEALTH

Our **ONLINE*** post master's Doctor of Nursing Practice program allows you to learn from content experts throughout the Purdue University System.

APRN and non-APRN students are welcome!

*Requires 9 on campus days

UNIQUE CONCENTRATIONS AT THE FOLLOWING CAMPUSES

TRANSITIONS & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

West Lafayette

765-494-9248 gradnursing@purdue.edu

TRANSLATION SCIENCE

Northwest Calumet

219-989-2815 onlineDNP@pnw.edu

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

Indiana University - Purdue University

Fort Wayne

260-481-6276 nur@ipfw.edu

"There is a level of respect that comes with being a Purdue graduate. Choosing Purdue was one of my best life decisions."



Learn more at: <http://www.purdue.edu/cdnp/>

Pathbreaking educational options for 21st-century nurses

Nursing programs and funding options are changing to suit new nursing roles and tracks.

By Janet Boivin, BSN, BS, RN

It's a good time to be a nurse. Not since Florence Nightingale defined modern nursing by reducing infection during the Crimean War have nurses been so valued—and sought after—for their expanding knowledge and skills.

"I consider nursing to be your gold card to the world," says Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN, chief executive officer of the National League for Nursing. "An RN license has prestige. It means you can go almost anywhere you want in the world and find a meaningful job."



Beverly Malone

For men and women entering the nursing profession or advancing their nursing careers, today's educational and professional opportunities are greater than ever. They can:

- create educational and career paths to suit their professional, personal, and financial needs
- enter nursing after high school or at mid-life after working in a completely different profession and obtaining a different degree
- steer their career paths by continuing their education without leaving their home in Alaska (or anywhere else) even if the nursing program itself is thousands of miles away.

And they have more ways to fund their nursing education, too, from undergraduate to master's degrees and doctoral programs. Funding options include scholarships, private foundations, grants,



government funds, and traditional school loans. (See *How to fund your nursing education*.)

Evolving state of nursing education

The Affordable Care Act, cutting-edge healthcare technology, and medical advances are carving out new roles for nurses that transcend traditional boundaries of who nurses are and what they do. Nursing education is changing to suit these roles.

"We're at a different point in history," states Carol Toussie Weingarten, PhD, RN, ANEF, associate professor at Villanova University in Pennsylvania. "The body of nursing science grows by the minute, and nursing education has evolved accordingly." Weingarten is president of the board of trustees of the Foundation of the National Student Nurses Association.

Nursing is unusual in that you can enter the profession in multiple ways and new career paths are created



Carol Toussie Weingarten

continually. No longer are all nursing students youthful 18-year-olds. Many are older second-career individuals who hold bachelor's degrees in disciplines other than nursing.

Leading nursing organizations, along with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, are designing new nursing tracks that provide seamless academic progression. The most promising models are based on strong partnerships and collaboration between community colleges and other colleges and universities, according to Donna Meyer, MSN, RN, ANEF, chief executive officer of the Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN).



Donna Meyer

Choosing your first nursing degree

One of the first questions you need to ask yourself when deciding if nursing should be your first career is whether to start with an associate degree in nursing (ADN) or a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN). Is a BSN necessary to practice nursing? Not yet. But nurses with BSNs have more job opportunities and greater career mobility and advancement. That's why ADN nurses already in practice might want to consider going back to school for a BSN.

The 2015 progress report on the Institute of Medicine's "Future of Nursing" calls for the continued goal of achieving an 80% BSN-educated workforce by 2020. "For the first time in history, there are now more nurses with BSNs than with

How to fund your nursing education

If you're looking for ways to fund your nursing education, don't expect money to arrive on your doorstep. You need to do the hard work of searching for scholarships, grants, government loans, and other potential funding sources. Here are some websites where you can start looking.

Johnson and Johnson's The Campaign for Nursing's Future

 discovernursing.com/how-pay-nursing-school#.V5FDCKKLvso

Visit this webpage for information about scholarships; financial assistance programs; loan repayment programs; individual healthcare facility programs; tuition reimbursement; residency programs; career ladder programs; and student, federal, and private loans. You can even check for options based on the specific nursing degree you're seeking.

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)

 aacn.nche.edu/students/financial-aid

Here you'll find resources on funding options (including AACN's student scholarship programs); scholarships; resources for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate nursing students; financial aid; and loan repayment or forgiveness programs.

Foundation of the National League for Nursing

 nln.org/foundation/overview/foundation-programs/foundation-for-nursing-education-scholarship-awards

This organization awards scholarships for nurses pursuing advanced degrees to become full-time academic nurse educators.

National Student Nurses Association (NSNA)

 nsna.org

NSNA's Foundation awards scholarships to qualified nursing students. And when you join NSNA, you can network with other students as well as groups that give scholarships, especially at the annual convention.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

 hrsa.gov/loanscholarships/index.html

On this webpage, you can find out about health professions loan repayment, scholarships, and loan programs that encourage and enable clinicians to work in underserved areas.

Tips on funding

- Find out if your employer has a tuition-reimbursement program.
- Investigate whether your state government makes scholarships available.
- Ask the nursing education program you'd like to attend about its funding resources.
- Make sure to meet deadlines for submitting scholarship applications and to include all requested information.
- Beware of phony scholarships. Verify that the scholarship comes from a reputable organization.

other nursing degrees," says Susan B. Hassmiller, PhD, RN, FAAN, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's senior adviser for nursing. About 55% of the nursing workforce now hold a BSN. "People are seeing the handwriting on the wall and getting the message that nurses need more

education because of the complexity of health care."

Hospital positions for ADN nurses are dwindling as healthcare organizations strive for the 80% BSN goal. Hospitals with Magnet Recognition® rarely hire nurses without BSNs, largely because studies link

better patient outcomes to a greater BSN workforce.

"When I talk to employers who are hiring nurses, they say they're looking for nurses who have the big picture of the healthcare system and competencies that align with work across the continuum of care, including in the community," says Hassmiller. "Those are the competencies you develop with a BSN education and beyond."

The American Association of College of Nursing's (AACN) website offers valuable resources for people seeking a BSN in nursing. It allows potential nursing students and RNs pursuing higher degrees to easily search for the types of schools and programs they're interested in. AACN also operates NursingCAS, the nation's only centralized application service for nursing programs, which enables students to apply to multiple schools at once using a single application, says Juliann Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN, dean and professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing. Sebastian is chair of AACN's board of directors.

Sebastian urges anyone planning to enter a nursing program to find out if it's accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, such as the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Other factors to consider include the program's size, NCLEX pass rates, whether it's private or public, and degree of faculty involvement with students. Villanova's Weingarten recommends finding a respected, credentialed nursing program that's a good match for the student—and one the student can afford.

Building on an ADN

Despite the push for more BSNs, ADN schools aren't going out of business. "We can't get to an 80% workforce without community col-



Susan Hassmiller



Juliann Sebastian

leges,” says OADN’s Meyer. For many people, an ADN program is the most feasible way to start their nursing education, especially if they lack the funds or time for a BSN program or live in a rural area with limited access to a BSN program, Meyer points out. Many students can’t easily leave their community.

Jessica Williamson, BSN, RN, knew as a child that she wanted to be a nurse. But she wasn’t ready to pursue a nursing career until she was in her 30s and was married with three children. “Once my girls started elementary school, I knew I needed to do something for me,” says Williamson, who lives in Chicago’s northwest suburbs. She chose nearby Elgin Community College, where in 2 years she obtained an ADN and passed the NCLEX exam. Her decision to go to a community college was based on cost, location, and program duration.

Williamson says her instructors stressed the importance of getting a BSN degree. So within 2 years of passing the NCLEX exam, she entered a BSN program at Benedictine University, a private Catholic college in Illinois. She graduated in 2015 with honors.

Patricia Smart, MN, RN-BC, CNE, president of OADN, says nursing programs are making it as easy as possible for nurses to obtain higher degrees. “There is more collaboration between community colleges and four-year programs than ever,” she says. Smart is a professor of nursing at Delgado Community College in New Orleans.

AACN’s Sebastian agrees. More BSN and ADN programs are working together to ensure ADN students can progress seamlessly to a BSN program.

Online vs. traditional nursing programs

“The growth of online nursing pro-



Jessica Williamson



Patricia Smart

grams is one of the biggest changes in nursing education in recent years,” says NLN’s Malone. “Physical location no longer poses an obstacle for anyone who wants to enter a nursing program and is disciplined enough to study at home.”

Laurie Sabol, BSN, RN, an experienced critical-care nurse who lives near Chicago, had a degree in journalism and was working as a freelance writer when she decided to enter nursing. When her two daughters reached their late teens, she enrolled in a local nurse practitioner program because it would give her more autonomy as a nurse. The program offers both online and traditional face-to-face classes. “I was leery of an all-online program at first,” Sabol states. But she’s finding she enjoys and learns from both online and face-to-face classes.

Accredited online programs can provide an excellent nursing education, but students should research the program they’re interested in before applying to the school or accepting an offer, the educators interviewed say. “Online programs must meet the same standards as brick-and-mortar schools,” AACN’s Sebastian emphasizes.

Other factors to consider are how an online program fits into the student’s lifestyle and whether the student is self-directed and can communicate and learn in an online community, she says.

Fast track to a graduate degree

Today, a lawyer who wants to be a nurse doesn’t have to start from scratch. She or he can enter an accelerated nursing program and earn a BSN in 2 years or even sooner, depending on the program—or can apply to an even more accelerated program that bypasses the BSN and goes directly to a master’s degree. And some fledgling nursing programs would even let that person bypass both the BSN and MSN programs to obtain a doctorate (PhD) in nursing.

Hassmiller would like to see



Laurie Sabol

many more nurses take the fast track straight to an MSN, doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree, or PhD without stopping to gain clinical experience (as many do) if they intend to pursue higher degrees eventually. Once a nurse enters the workforce, returning to school can be hard. “Don’t step out,” she says. “There are different ways to get clinical experience other than having a full-time job if you truly want that advanced degree.”

Weingarten points out that many nurses may not want to gain higher degrees and that clinical practice is a career goal many nurses find satisfying. Many hospitals offer clinical ladders or shared governance models as avenues for nurses to continue to learn and advance in their roles.

Advanced practice degrees (master’s, post-master’s, and doctoral degrees) in a nursing specialty are the most common types of advanced degrees. Nurses with these degrees work as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, nurse-midwives, and nurse anesthetists. As their roles change along with healthcare delivery, they’re more in demand, particularly as primary care providers. The newest advanced nursing degree, the DNP, has been extremely successful—to the point where many more nurses now are enrolling in DNP programs than PhD programs.

“One of our benchmarks from the Institute of Medicine is the need to double PhDs by 20/20,” Hassmiller states. “At the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we’re looking at funding nurses who want to be PhD scientists and academic leaders. We need scientists who are on a par with those in other health disciplines.”

Although Hassmiller encourages nurses to gain advanced degrees quickly, she recognizes this isn’t possible for everyone. But that doesn’t mean they can’t eventually obtain an MSN or DNP. “Go ahead and start,” she recommends, “even if it’s with baby steps.” ★

Janet Boivin is a freelance writer in Illinois.

Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences *Fully Online* Graduate Nursing Programs



- MSN for Clinical Nurse Leader, Nursing Administration and Leadership, and Nurse Educator
- Post-master's DNP for APRNs and Nurse Administrators
- BSN to DNP for Family Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Post-master's certificates for all programs
- Oncology specialization available

Why TCU?

- Outstanding faculty credentialed specifically for online education
- Largest Nurse Faculty Loan Program participant in Texas
- A Collaborating Center of the Joanna Briggs Institute
- The Master's and DNP programs at Texas Christian University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, 202-887-6791)

TCU

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

<https://nursing.tcu.edu/graduate>



FRONTIER NURSING
UNIVERSITY

When your dedication to wellness grows...

Answer the call.

Become a Nurse-Midwife or
Nurse Practitioner



Earn an **MSN** or
DNP through our
innovative
Distance Education
Programs

Learn more about
FNU's programs at
frontier.edu/ana

**ENROLLING NOW
for our NEW**

Psychiatric-Mental Health
Nurse Practitioner program

**COLLEGE
OF NURSING**



Your RN to BSN
degree is closer
than you think.

**University of Illinois at Chicago's
online program is one of the best in
the U.S.**

- **90 percent** graduation rate
- **Top 4 rated** online bachelor's degree program
- **Guaranteed tuition and admission** available

**Start learning from the best at
go.uic.edu/ANA**

Career options for nurse educators

Learn about educators' roles in both the clinical and academic setting.



Teaching nurses is an exciting and challenging career, and the nurse educator role offers a wealth of opportunities. But don't assume all nurse educators work in the academic setting; some work in the clinical setting.

In both settings, knowledge of educational theories and principles underpins the role of educator. However, the purpose, practice, roles, and responsibilities of a nursing professional development (NPD) specialist (the correct title for the role previously known as clinical nurse educator) differ fundamentally from those of an academic nurse educator (ANE). (See *Comparing clinical and academic nurse educators*.) This article describes both roles, including qualifications and responsibilities.

Nursing professional development specialist

By Joan I. Warren, PhD, RN-BC, NEA-BC, FAAN; Mary G. Harper, PhD, RN-BC; and Christine Wilson, MSN, RN-BC

THE NPD specialist is an often overlooked and undervalued role. Unlike ANEs, NPD specialists work in the clinical setting to educate nurses and other healthcare providers.

As healthcare organizations transition to population-health and value-based purchasing, the NPD specialist role can prove highly rewarding—and crucial in clinical settings. By providing high-quality educational programs, NPD specialists support high-reliability, patient-centric organizations based on evidence and expertise.

In all healthcare settings, the

rapid pace of change creates knowledge gaps for healthcare professionals. NPD specialists bridge this gap by educating staff using multiple modalities, such as simulations, online education, and traditional face-to-face education. They also serve as mentors, role models, and preceptors for learners and educate interprofessional groups to incorporate evidence-based practice (EBP), which promotes optimal patient outcomes.

Recognized by the American Nurses Association (ANA), the NPD specialty has its own scope and standards of practice. It promotes the professional role development and growth of nurses and other healthcare personnel along the continuum from novice to expert. By ensuring the competency of practicing nurses and other healthcare providers, NPDs contribute to quality and patient safety, promoting optimal care.

Job titles

Titles for NPD specialists sometimes vary from one organization to the next, which may cause confusion. Alternate terms for NPD specialist include clinical nurse educator, clinical education specialist, nurse educator, program coordinator, orientation specialist, and clinical practice and education specialist. Qualifications also vary among organizations and care settings. (See *Qualifications for NPD specialists*.)

Role and responsibilities

The NPD role requires unique competencies and skillsets. NPD specialists must have a deep knowledge of clinical care and expertise in educa-

tional principles and knowledge translation—two diverse yet complementary skillsets. They use these skills to function in seven distinct yet overlapping roles.

- **Partners for practice transitions.** NPD specialists prepare both new and experienced nursing staff to move into new or different practice roles. They help newly licensed nurses transition to the professional practice setting and help experienced nurses move from one organization, specialty, or role to another. In all of these situations, the goal is to help nurses gain competence and confidence in their practice and to foster their continual growth and development.
- **Learning facilitators.** NPD specialists create and implement cost-effective, efficient, and timely education using innovative teaching methods and technology to promote knowledge retention and competence. They're accountable for improving patient and organizational outcomes as a result of their educational activities.
- **Change agents.** NPD specialists translate new knowledge into practice and motivate and educate staff to adopt new practice changes. As adaptive experts, they possess knowledge about change management so they can implement sustainable change that promotes positive patient outcomes.
- **Mentors.** Besides influencing patient outcomes, NPD specialists serve as mentors to influence staff nurses' professional development, helping them achieve their personal and professional

Comparing clinical and academic nurse educators

The chart compares the role of nursing professional development (NPD) specialist with that of academic nurse educator (ANE).

ASPECT	NPDs	ANEs
Assessment of educational needs and requirements	Practice gap analysis	Compliance with accrediting standards; stakeholder needs
Population served	Practicing professionals (individuals and teams)	Students
Short-term goal	Closing of practice gap for individual or team	Students' success in course
Long-term goal	Improved patient outcomes	Degree and, if appropriate, success on licensure or certification exam
Setting	Varies: practice setting (hospital, community health department, clinic), professional association, continuing education program	Academic: college and university undergraduate (prelicensure and postlicensure) programs and graduate programs

© Patsy Maloney, EdD, MSN, RN-BC, CEN, NEA-BC

goals. Mentoring is perhaps one of the most rewarding roles of NPD specialists.

- **Leadership.** This role stems from the NPD specialist's influence as an organizational leader—leading teams, managing programs and projects, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, and evaluating outcomes. At any given time, the NPD specialist may be managing orientation, maintaining staff competence, or leading an interprofessional team to improve healthcare quality or patient safety and satisfaction. As leaders, these educators must be well-informed about the healthcare environment and agile enough to adapt quickly to change. Necessary skills include the ability to manage multiple tasks and achieve outcomes while meeting deadlines.
- **Champions of scientific inquiry.** NPD specialists review research, translate knowledge into practice, and integrate evidence into practice to improve patient outcomes.
- **Advocates for the specialty.** The Association for Nursing Profes-

sional Development (ANPD) was founded in 1989 to “advance the specialty of nursing professional development for the enhancement of healthcare outcomes.”

With 4,000 members, it serves as a resource for aspiring, novice, and experienced NPD specialists.

Helping others learn is highly gratifying. Helping others learn, grow, and develop in a rapidly changing healthcare environment while helping to improve patient outcomes and contributing to a healthier community is transformative. ★

Joan I. Warren is past president of ANPD in Chicago, Illinois, and an associate professor at the University of Maryland School of Nursing in Baltimore. Mary G. Harper is director of nursing professional development at APND. Christine Wilson is president of ANPD and director of nursing education and professional development at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

Academic nurse educator

By Deborah Lindell, DNP, RN, CNE; Debra Hagler, PhD, RN, ACNS-BC, CNE, CHSE, ANEF, FAAN; and Kathleen Poindexter, PhD, RN, CNE

WHY SHOULD YOU consider becoming a nurse educator in the ac-

ademic setting? For one thing, educating the next generation of nurses can be highly rewarding. Seeing the nurses you've taught helping to improve patient care and lead the profession is exciting.

What's more, the ANE role offers variety and flexibility, with each day bringing different activities and challenges. Additional advantages include flexibility in the types of positions available and the variety of education programs, roles, and settings.

Qualifications

Educational institutions set faculty requirements based on their own expectations as well as those of regulatory agencies and accrediting organizations. However, some general qualifications exist. An ANE must hold a current, active nursing license and, depending on the position, may need other state credentials for advanced practice.

Academic preparation

Generally, ANEs must have at least a master's degree; doctoral preparation is preferred. Although most employers require a graduate degree in nursing, some accept a

Qualifications for NPD specialists

The scope and standards of practice for nursing professional development (NPD) specialists define minimal qualifications as an active registered nurse (RN) license with a master's degree in nursing or a related field. Some organizations, though, accept a bachelor's degree in nursing. Because the NPD role is a combined education and practice role, it typically also requires demonstrated patient-care expertise.

As hospitals aspire to advance their professional nursing workforce, some may require certification. NPD specialists can obtain certification through the American Nurses Credentialing Center and display the RN-BC credentials. NPD certification eligibility requirements include an active RN license in the United States, a bachelor's or higher degree in nursing, practice as an NPD specialist for at least 4,000 hours over the last 5 years, and 30 hours of NPD-related continuing education within the last 3 years.

non-nursing graduate degree or major if nursing is the applicant's first degree. Applicants with a PhD (a research-focused doctorate) are attractive to nursing schools with a research mission. Some schools accept applicants who are doctors of nursing practice (DNP, a practice-focused doctorate); check with the nursing program you're interested in to be sure. Some may accept applicants who are doctors of education (EdD) or doctors of nursing science (DNSc). Having completed academic courses in educational theory and practice is a plus.

Expertise

Educational programs seek ANEs with expertise in a clinical specialty or content area, such as EBP, management, nursing education, health policy, ethics, pharmacology, or pathophysiology. They may also require several years of registered nurse (RN) experience as well as specialty certification. If you hold a doctoral degree, you may be expected to have research experience.

Types of positions

ANEs may teach full-time or part-time. Some positions are year-round; others are 9-month academic appointments. Many ANEs start as part-time clinical instructors or specialty course lecturers.

Most academic institutions appoint full-time faculty to a certain rank, such as instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. The rank at hiring de-

pends on clinical practice experience, academic preparation, and type of educational institution. ANEs may work toward a higher rank by achieving organizational requirements.

ANEs are appointed to one of two tracks.

- *Tenure-track ANEs* are expected to meet certain academic standards within a specific number of years to achieve tenure status. Once tenured, they have more academic autonomy and greater permanency in the organization.
- *Nontenured ANEs* typically have contracts that cover a certain period.

Roles and responsibilities

ANE roles in academia include teaching, advising, service, practice, research, and scholarship. Within each category, performance expectations depend on the type of appointment, rank, and institution. Roles also may vary with the mission of the college or university.

ANEs may teach in one or more settings, such as classroom, distance learning (including online), laboratory or simulation settings, and healthcare organizations. As advisors, they support students' progress and may mentor other nurse educators.

ANEs engage in professional service by participating in their institution's programs or committees as well as in professional organizations and perhaps community programs. They also may serve in

leadership positions to advance nursing education and practice through program management, curriculum development and evaluation, influencing policy, or consulting with external organizations.

Professional scholarship may involve engaging in activities to advance educational theory and practice, translating evidence to nursing practice, conducting research to create new knowledge, and disseminating information through national presentations and publications. The focus and extent of expectations for research or scholarly work vary significantly with the type of academic institution, educational program, and specific position or appointment.

Resources

Resources for ANEs include the websites of nursing schools, national nursing education organizations, journals (including the *Journal of Nursing Education*, *Nurse Educator*, and *Nursing Education Perspectives*), and such organizations such as the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, National League for Nursing, and Organization for Associate Degree Nursing.

Are you interested?

If you're considering becoming an ANE, update your résumé or curriculum vitae and search for positions advertised in newspapers or journals or posted on Internet career websites or the websites of nursing education programs, colleges, and universities. If you need more education to prepare yourself, you may want to contact nursing programs that offer educational programs in this exciting role. ★

Deborah Lindell is director of the graduate-entry nursing program and assistant professor of nursing at Case Western Reserve University's Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing in Cleveland, Ohio. Debra Hagler is a clinical professor in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation and a Teaching Excellence Coordinator, Health Solutions, at Arizona State University in Phoenix. Kathleen Poindexter is an assistant professor and CNS Education Concentration program coordinator at Michigan State University's College of Nursing in East Lansing.

Advance Your Nursing Career Online

As a leader in the education of health professionals, Rivier University offers rolling admissions, partnerships with area hospitals, competitively priced tuition, and dynamic faculty with real-world experience.

Choose from:

- **B.S. Nursing: RN-BS**
- **M.S. Nursing: Family Nurse Practitioner**
- **M.S. Nursing: Leadership in Health Systems Management**
- **M.S. Nursing: Nursing Education**
- **Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Visit us at **online.rivier.edu/NURSETODAY**

TRANSFORMING HEARTS AND MINDS TO SERVE THE WORLD



Is advanced practice nursing for you?

Advice to steer you in the right direction

By Janet Selway, DNSc, ANP-BC, CPNP-PC, FAANP



Are you considering becoming an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN)? Healthcare provider shortages, our rapidly aging population, and increasing incidence of chronic diseases have put APRNs in the spotlight for their ability to deliver preventive, acute, and chronic disease care. Recent workforce surveys indicate licensed APRNs now

account for 7% of the 4 million RNs in the United States.

If you're thinking of joining their ranks, you'll need to do thorough research to make an informed decision on which APRN role and education program are right for you. This article describes the four APRN roles, gives current data on each, and offers important points to consider when choosing an

APRN education program.

Roles, population foci, and responsibilities

The landmark document *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education* delineates APRN roles and gives recommendations about APRN licensure, accreditation, certification, and education. Accord-

A look at each APRN role

Read what follows for a description of each advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) role and the education programs that prepare nurses for each one.

Nurse practitioner

Nurse practitioners (NPs) are the largest group of APRNs—and the group that has experienced the most growth.

Founded 5 decades ago, the NP role grew out of an unmet public health need—primary care for underserved children. The first NP education program was a pediatric one started in 1965 by public health nurse and educator Dr. Loretta Ford and pediatrician Dr. Henry Silver.

NPs provide care across the wellness-illness continuum and are prepared to diagnose and treat patients with undifferentiated symptoms and established diagnoses. Most NPs (83%) are prepared in primary-care focused programs; 7% are educated in acute-care programs. Acute- and primary-care NP programs differ in competencies and certification examinations. In 2016, *U.S. News & World Report* named NP sixth on its “Best 100 Jobs” list.

The most common population foci for NPs are family (55%) and adult gerontology (22%). National certification for entry-level NPs is based on the six population foci and acute-care or primary-care competencies. Various certification boards offer this certification.

Data from the 2008 (and final) National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses (NSSRN) indicated that an estimated 138,600 RNs were prepared solely as NPs; 16,400 as both NPs and clinical nurse specialists (CNSs); and 2,400 prepared dually as both NPs and nurse-midwives. The 2012 National Sample Survey of Nurse Practitioners estimated that the number of licensed NPs had risen to 154,000. Recent data from the American Association of Nurse Practitioners show an unprecedented increase of 68,000. NPs now number approximately 222,000, with a projected addition of 22,000 by 2025. NPs have prescriptive authority in all 50 states and the District of Columbia; half have hospital privileges. An estimated 20,000 new NPs completed their academic programs in 2014-2015.

Clinical nurse specialist

Conceived in 1954, the CNS role was first developed in acute-care and mental-health settings. The APRN Consensus Model describes the CNS as a “unique APRN role to integrate care across the continuum and through three spheres of influence: patient, nurse, system.” The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) describes the CNS as an expert in a particular specialty, such as a population, type of problem, disease, or setting.

The CNS role encompasses diagnosis and development of plans of care for and management of complex patients. CNSs practice across the lifespan and in all settings, and provide support and expertise to other nurses, physicians, hospital systems, and patients. They serve as patient advocates who provide evidence-based care to improve healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

The 2008 NSSRN survey found certified CNSs were the second largest APRN group, with 59,242 nurses reporting they were prepared in the CNS role. In 2012, NACNS estimated the number of CNSs at approximately 70,000. In 2014, NACNS and other groups conducted the first National Census of Clinical Nurse Specialists. This online survey collected 3,370 responses from RNs who had either completed or were enrolled in a CNS program; 60% reported an MSN as their highest degree; 13% said they billed independently for their services; and one in four had prescriptive authority. The most common population foci were adult-gerontology (71%) and psychiatric/mental health (10%).

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing reported that as of fall 2013, 2,020 students were enrolled in master's-degree CNS programs in 148 schools. Eighteen schools offered a post-BSN doctor-of-nursing practice (DNP) degree for CNSs, for a total enrollment of 187 students.

Nurse anesthetist

Nurses have been administering anesthesia in this country since the Civil War. The certified RN anesthetist (CRNA) credential was established in 1956.

(continued on page 15)

ing to the consensus model, to become an APRN, you must complete an accredited master's or doctorate program that prepares you to function in one of four roles:

- nurse practitioner (NP)
 - clinical nurse specialist (CNS)
 - certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA)
 - certified nurse-midwife (CNM).
- (See *A look at each APRN role*.)

Once you've chosen a role, you must select a population focus applicable to that role. This ensures that you have a foundation of broad-based education before seeking additional expertise in a narrower specialty. Population foci include:

- family
- women's health/gender-related
- pediatric
- neonatal

- adult-gerontology
- psychiatric-mental health.

These foci are most relevant to the NP role, which is divided into acute care and primary care.

APRNs need to have sufficient depth and breadth of clinical experience as RNs, and their APRN education must build on their RN competencies. They must be prepared to assume responsibility for health promotion and maintenance as well as assessment, diagnosis, and management of patient problems, including use and prescription of nonpharmacologic and pharmacologic interventions. APRN competencies are defined by patient-care needs, not practice setting.

APRNs must maintain national certification and practice with a significant focus on direct patient

care. This focus differentiates APRNs from RNs with other types of graduate education (such as master's degrees in nursing education or research or clinical doctorates). Many APRNs have clinical doctorates, but at this time a doctor-of-nursing practice (DNP) degree isn't a requirement for APRN licensure or certification.

How to choose an APRN education program

Completing an APRN program takes a great deal of time and resources, so be sure about your decision before enrolling in a program. Even if you're certain about which APRN role and population focus you want, you may find greater clarity if you spend some time shadowing an APRN who practices in your pre-

(continued from page 14)

CRNAs practice in every state and provide every type of anesthesia in all settings. According to the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA), CRNAs provide anesthesia no differently than physician anesthesiologists. They also provide pain management modalities. More than 49,000 CRNAs administer approximately 40 million anesthetics per year. They continue to serve as primary providers of anesthesia for U.S. servicemen and women and are the sole anesthesia providers in two-thirds of rural hospitals.

In the 2008 NSSRN survey, 34,821 nurses reported they were prepared as nurse anesthetists. CRNAs are the third-largest APRN group—and the highest-paid. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2015 the annual mean CRNA wage was \$160,250. In its 2016 "Best 100 Jobs" lists, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked nurse anesthetist fourth, outranking anesthesiologist (ninth).

As of 2015, the United States had about 115 accredited CRNA programs. Program requirements include at least 1 year of RN practice in an acute-care setting and a BSN degree or other appropriate bachelor's degree. Most program requirements include two or three rigorous in-person interviews and a grade point average of 3.0, a Graduate Record Exam score above 300, or both. Applicants should provide evidence of excellent performance, usually in an adult acute-care setting.

CRNA program length ranges from 24 to 36 months. Today, the entry-level requirement for CRNAs is the master's degree, but by 2025 it will be the DNP. No population focus limitations exist for CRNAs. Students gain clinical experience with patients of all ages in settings that include pediatrics, obstetrics, medical-surgical, and dentistry.

Requirements for entry into CRNA practice include successful completion of a nurse anesthesia program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs and passing a certification exam from the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists.

Nurse-midwife

The first nurse-midwifery program was the Frontier Nursing Serv-

ice in Kentucky, established in 1925. The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) was established in 1955 and national certification of nurse-midwives began in 1970.

Midwives can be either certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) or certified midwives (CMs). CNMs are educated in both nursing and midwifery. Both CNMs and CMs are licensed independent health-care providers who provide primary care to women throughout the lifespan. They attend about 8% of all US births.

CNMs have prescriptive authority and are recognized in all states, the District of Columbia, and some U.S. territories. CMs are authorized to practice in five states—Delaware, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island. CNMs and CMs have the same educational standards and must pass the same certification test from the American Midwifery Certification Board.

Services provided by midwives include contraception, preconception care, pregnancy care (including childbirth and postpartum), and newborn care during the first 28 days. Midwives also may treat male partners for sexually transmitted infections and reproductive health.

Midwives work in various settings, such as birth centers, private offices, clinics, and the home. They are prepared to perform comprehensive health assessment, health promotion, wellness education, and disease prevention.

The 2008 NSSRN found CNMs were the smallest APRN group, numbering about 18,492. Approximately 21% CNMs reported being prepared in an additional APRN role, such as NP. More recent data obtained by the American Midwifery Board showed 11,194 CNMs and 97 CMs in the United States as of March 2015.

The United States has 39 accredited midwifery programs. Since 2010, a master's degree has been the entry-level requirement for both CNMs and CMs. Approximately 82% of CNMs have master's degrees. ACNM supports the DNP as an option for entry-level midwifery practice but opposes requiring the DNP as the entry-level degree.

A list of accredited CNM programs is available on the ACNM website. About one-third offer the option of a DNP CNM program. Most offer the MSN and a post-graduate certificate option. Several provide the option of completing requirements for dual roles—CNM and women's health NP.

ferred role and population. (See *Online information sources*.)

Academic ability is crucial. APRN programs seek students who stand a good chance of handling the rigors of a tough graduate program. Program directors look at undergraduate nursing course grades, particularly in the sciences, such as anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology. Many won't consider applicants with grade point averages (GPA) below 3.0. But GPA isn't the whole story. If you had a less-than-stellar GPA in your BSN program, be prepared to explain why in your admission essay.

All APRN programs require students to complete the "3 P's": advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, and advanced physical/health assessment. These foundational courses for advanced clinical courses require new critical-thinking skills. If you didn't do well in the undergraduate versions of these courses, think about why you didn't and what you could do differently to succeed in the advanced versions. (Keep in mind that many programs have a provisional admission option.)

Find out about prerequisites for the program you wish to apply to. For example, CRNA programs require 1 year of acute-care nursing experience and a BSN or other appropriate bachelor's degree. What's considered an appropriate acute-care setting or an alternate bachelor's degree may vary across CRNA programs. Be aware that some APRN programs may be open to direct-entry BSN-to-MSN degrees or some variation, whereas others require at least 1 or 2 years of RN experience.

Whichever program you choose, know that good computer skills are a must. You'll be expected to navigate course web software, search library databases, watch online lectures, and use word processing, PowerPoint®, email, and statistical software. If your computer skills are marginal, consider taking a course to improve them.

Clinical preceptors

Find out if the APRN program

Online information sources

Visit the links below for more information on advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) education programs and the four APRN roles.

American Association of Colleges of Nursing: Your Guide to Graduate Nursing Programs

 aacn.nche.edu/publications/brochures/GradStudentsBrochure.pdf

American Association of Nurse Anesthetists: Become a CRNA

 aana.com/ceandeducation/becomeacrna/Pages/default.aspx

American College of Nurse Midwives: Become a Midwife

 midwife.org/Become-a-Midwife

American Association of Nurse Practitioners: Planning Your NP Education

 aanp.org/education/student-resource-center/planning-your-np-education

National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists: Key Findings from the 2014 Clinical Nurse Specialists Census

 nacns.org/docs/CensusInfographic.pdf

you're interested in can help you find a clinical preceptor. Some programs may expect you to find one on your own. Good clinical preceptors are in short supply and great demand; getting a commitment from a preceptor can take months.

Can you afford the program?

Does the program you're interested in offer scholarships or other financial assistance options? Could you work full time while going to school? In many cases, managing a full-time job while attending school full time isn't realistic and could be self-defeating. Many APRN students work part time and do well, but some programs discourage students from working while enrolled.

If you'd have to work a grueling schedule to pay the tuition at an expensive school, consider whether going to that school is worth it. Be realistic; sleep deprivation from a heavy work schedule can make the critical thinking required in APRN courses difficult. A less expensive school may be a better fit for you.

Interviews and admission forms

Many APRN programs require a written admission essay. To gauge your writing skills, some may require you to write an essay on the spot. Your admission essay should demonstrate excellent writing skills and convey not just your best qualities but also your passion for nursing

and your desired APRN role. So be sure to convey your passion. If you seem lukewarm about your decision, it's probably not the right decision for you.

Expect to interview in person or through electronic communication. For an in-person interview, be punctual, dress appropriately, and articulate exactly why you want to become an APRN. Explain why you think you're capable of doing this and describe your goals. Program directors are looking for leadership qualities, excellent interpersonal skills, the ability to speak well, and an appropriate level of self-assurance.

A challenging and gratifying choice

APRNs are passionate about their roles and enjoy the added knowledge and responsibility that comes with the territory. They enjoy using new skills to help people while still maintaining a core nursing perspective. Generally, their job satisfaction is high and compensation is good. Administering anesthesia, managing a patient's diabetes, making a tough medical diagnosis, or delivering a healthy baby can be terrifying at times—yet profoundly gratifying. ★

Janet Selway is an assistant professor in the School of Nursing at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

PhD in Leadership and Change for Healthcare



Interprofessional Collaboration

Reflective Practice

Rigorous Inquiry

**LIVE
ANYWHERE,
WORK
FULL TIME**



ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY
**Graduate School of
Leadership and Change**

ANTIOCH.EDU/PHD/HEALTHCARE-LEADERSHIP

TOLL FREE: 877-800-9466

ADMISSIONS.PHDL@ANTIOCH.EDU

APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED



UNIVERSITY
of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF NURSING

**NO MATTER
WHERE YOU
ARE IN YOUR
NURSING
CAREER, OUR
PROGRAMS FIT
YOUR NEEDS.**



- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- RN-to-BSN
- RN-to-MS
- Clinical Nurse Leader (ranked No. 1 in the nation, *U.S. News & World Report*)
- Master of Science (2 specialties ranked in top 10, *U.S. News*)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (5 specialties ranked in top 10, *U.S. News*)
- PhD

Some programs are offered online and in person at multiple locations.

Find out how you can excel as a nurse leader:

***nursing.umaryland.edu/
americannurse***

Landing your dream job

A stand-out résumé, focused job search, and excellent interview skills can lead you to the job of a lifetime.

By Debra Siela, PhD, RN, CCNS, ACNS-BC, CCRN-K, CNE, RRT; Renee Twibell, PhD, RN, CNE; and Juanita Brand, EdD, RN, WHNP-BC

You've just reached a new milestone—your first nursing degree after completing your first nursing education program. Now you're ready to land that dream job. Sounds simple, doesn't it? You know a great job is out there, available and waiting for you. It's just a matter of having a strategic plan to find—and snag—it. This article describes important steps for helping you do that:

- writing your résumé
- finding job openings
- completing the job application
- sailing through the job interview.

As you pursue your dream job, you need to build a professional network of colleagues from previous workplaces, peers from your nursing-degree program, nursing faculty and mentors, your college alumni association or university career center, and fellow members of professional nursing organizations. Also, you may benefit from sessions with a certified life coach who can guide you in making important career decisions and support you in designing a career map.

Putting a sparkle in your résumé

To apply for a nursing position, you'll need to provide a current résumé. To prepare it, consider what you can offer an employer. What will make it sparkle and stand out? To help you decide what to include, reflect on the following questions.

- Have you published in a nursing journal or on a professional website?



instructor
supervisor
clinical specialist
nurse attorney
researcher

- Are you a volunteer or an officer of a professional nursing organization?
- Have you been a preceptor or mentor for new orientees?
- Have you helped organize an association's conference?
- Have you been educated as a cardiopulmonary resuscitation instructor?
- Have you participated in clinical projects or quality-improvement initiatives?
- What have you accomplished outside your direct job responsibilities?
- Have you received awards?
- Do you have a list of your continuing education courses?
- How have you implemented lifelong learning?
- Can you describe your communication and problem-solving abilities?

Make sure your résumé is absolutely accurate and current. For each position you plan to apply for, adapt your résumé (including skills, competencies, and interests) as needed. Make sure to keep copies for yourself and take one with you to the interview. You also may find it helpful to prepare a portfolio that includes your résumé, completed projects, awards, reports and papers you've written, and samples of your committee work. Visit livecareer.com/quintessential/how-to-write-resume

and livecareer.com/quintessential/resume-mistakes for help in writing your résumé.

Finding job openings

You can find nursing job openings in many places and formats.

Online listings

Many nursing jobs are advertised online and in newspapers and nursing journals. Look for openings in specialties that interest you. Don't forget to look for job descriptions posted on websites of hospitals, clinics, community health organizations, and professional nursing organizations. Also check out LinkedIn as well as job websites like Monster (monster.com/jobs/q-registered-nurse-jobs.aspx) and Maxim Nurses (maximnurses.com/jobs/homecare/search).

On some organizations' websites, you may be able to take a virtual tour and read the organization's mission and vision statements. Learn as much as you can about the job and employer from the website. If you see a position you're interested in, follow up with an email or phone call to the contact listed. Keep in mind that some of the most innovative nursing positions may not be in traditional healthcare settings, so don't overlook community-based opportunities.

Print newspaper and journal ads

Check out leads in job ads in your local and regional print newspapers, as well as in nursing print journals (and the online versions of these publications).

Common behavioral interview questions

To help prepare for a behavioral job interview, learn what types of questions (or statements requesting a response) you should expect. Typically, they fall into the categories below.

Personality and temperament

- Think about the position you hold now (or perhaps one you've held in the past). How do you know when you've done a good job? Can you give an example of a time when you went above and beyond?
- Tell me about a time you were under a lot of stress at work. What was going on, and how did you get through it?
- Describe a time you saw a problem at work and took the initiative to correct it, rather than waiting for someone else to do it.

Teamwork

- Describe a situation when you worked with a difficult person. How did you deal with it?
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with your direct boss. What steps did you take to resolve it?
- We all make mistakes we wish we could take back. Can you describe a time you wish you'd handled a situation with a colleague differently?

Communication

- Think about a time when trust was broken in a work relationship or your communication was misunderstood. State briefly what happened. What specific thoughts did you have and what actions did you take?

Clinical skills

- When you're working with a large number of patients, delivering excellent care to them all can be tricky. How do you go about prioritizing your patients' needs?
- Tell me about a time your clinical assessment and actions benefited a patient or the patient's family.
- Describe a lesson you learned recently from a clinical situation that didn't go well.
- Tell me about a time you delegated effectively.

Newsletters and bulletin boards

Before starting an external search, look at openings posted in your organization's employee newsletters and human resources bulletin boards (unless, of course, you want to change employers).

Job fairs and conferences

At job fairs and conferences, you can meet healthcare employers and network with other job seekers. Sponsored by hospitals, medical centers, universities, and nursing publications, these events typically are advertised online, in newspapers, and through professional organizations and journals. Review the list of exhibitors and checkmark those you plan to visit during the event.

Be sure to take copies of your résumé to pass out. Wear professional business attire and present

yourself as a compassionate, caring, competent nursing professional. Keep in mind that you may be interviewed at the event, so be prepared and give yourself time for interviews.

Focus on your preferred jobs

Once you've found job openings, you may have trouble narrowing down your options. Choose only five job openings before starting the next step—submitting your job application.

If you're beginning a new nursing role, consider how a potential job could affect your professional growth. Using your networking skills, try to speak with currently employed nurses at your unit of interest in that workplace. Until you get more experience in the new job, be prepared to accept a work schedule that may not seem ideal.

Completing the job application

Once you decide to apply for a position, you'll need to complete an application. You may be able to complete it online and submit it electronically. Otherwise, you may have to travel to the site to fill it out.

Regardless of how you submit it, expect to list your contact information, type of nursing license(s) with the state, license number with expiration date, educational background with attendance dates, and degrees earned. You'll also need to provide your employment history, with the address, telephone number, job title, and job duties for each employer.

Usually, you'll be asked for at least one professional reference and perhaps also a personal reference. Former clinical instructors or faculty can be good choices for professional references; just be sure to get permission from everyone you list as a reference. You'll probably need to give phone numbers or email addresses for them so the hiring manager can contact them. They may need to submit their comments about you through a weblink or phone call.

Preparing for—and sailing through—the interview

Once you land an interview, start preparing for it well ahead of time. Preparation can energize you, boost your confidence, and turn that confidence into a positive performance. Anticipate the types of questions you'll be asked and practice your answers. Consider having friends ask you interview questions to practice. Be prepared for the age-old question, "Why should we hire you?" by developing talking points—three bullet points relevant to the job description and the organization's priorities, such as customer service, quality work, and interpersonal skills.

Many organizations use behavioral interviewing—a technique that elicits information about your past behavior in a specific situation, instead of having you speculate

Job interview topics

During a job interview, you may be asked about these topics:

- why you're leaving your current job
- why you want this job
- your career goals
- how you fit in with the organization's mission and philosophy
- your strengths and weaknesses relative to the job you're applying for
- benefits and challenges of your current job
- how well you handle stress and conflict
- how well you solve complex nursing problems
- your ability to work as part of a team
- your interpersonal and communication skills
- why you became a nurse.

Also, be prepared to give an example of how you've handled interpersonal conflict.

about how you'd act in a hypothetical situation. Start well ahead of time to prepare for this type of interview. (See *Common behavioral interview questions*.)

Prepare six or eight examples from your work experience that illustrate how you meet the employment criteria. Strive to become an effective storyteller. Without rambling or giving excessive details, describe the situation from your past, the action you took, and the result. Don't lapse into hypotheticals. Instead, state what you actually did—not what you would do. Rehearse the stories aloud. Think about how you could adapt your stories to fit the questions you may be asked. (For examples of behavioral interview questions, visit livecareer.com/quintessential/sample-behavioral, livecareer.com/quintessential/behavioral-interviewing, and college.usatoday.com/2015/04/22/30-behavioral-interview-questions-you-should-be-ready-to-answer/.)

The night before your interview, get plenty of rest. On interview day, dress professionally in relatively conservative business attire. Some organizations post their dress codes online, which you should review to ensure you meet the criteria. Dressing appropriately shows you're able to fit into the organization. Arrive earlier than the designated time, and check your appearance one last time. Don't chew gum or carry a drink.

Expect to be interviewed by

more than one person—perhaps by a panel of interviewers. If you're meeting with one interviewer, shake his or her hand, use this person's title and surname, and introduce yourself. Make appropriate eye contact and use open body posture. Although you want to be relaxed and conversational, remember that this is a professional encounter, not coffee with a friend. Don't offer personal information about yourself or

Focus your response narrowly on the specific question during the interview.

family members or ask the interviewer about personal topics.

When you answer questions, focus your response narrowly on the specific question. (See *Job interview topics*.) Convey enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Don't criticize former managers, faculty, or peers. If asked about the drawbacks of your present job or a previous position, answer in an upbeat way; for example, "I wish I'd had more time to work with X type of patient or an opportunity to chair a clinical practice team to enhance my leadership skills."

Be ready with two questions to ask the interviewer when invited to do so. You might ask a manager to

share his or her vision for the workplace 5 years from now, or ask why employees like to work on this unit. Frame your questions positively; don't, for instance, ask why the last 10 employees left. If desired, explore the option of job-shadowing or meeting with nurses who would be your peers. You might also want to ask about nurse retention and work-environment issues, again framing the question positively and listening carefully to the response.

Following up after the interview

After the interview, write a brief thank-you note to everyone you met at the organization, expressing your gratitude for their time and emphasizing that you're interested in working there (if this is true). Send the note by email or snail mail as soon as possible. Write thank-you notes even if you've decided you don't want to work at that facility—simply because it's an opportunity to brand yourself as a nursing professional.

Creating a dream-job chart

Say you've interviewed at three organizations—and two of them (or even all three) offer you a job. To help you decide which one to accept, create a chart that encompasses important aspects of the job and the benefits of working at each organization. Include such items such as working conditions, quality of work life, career opportunities, loan repayment and tuition reimbursement policies, orientation or residency programs, and cross-training and shift requirements. Then use the list to compare the three job offers. Your preparation and careful analysis of the pros and cons of each organization and position can help you land that dream job. ★

Debra Siela is a clinical nurse specialist consultant at Siela Nurse Consultants in Bluffton, Indiana, and an associate professor at Ball State University School of Nursing in Muncie, Indiana. Renee Twibell is an associate professor of nursing at Ball State and a nurse researcher for IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie. Juanita Brand is an assistant professor at Ball State.



ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY Graduate School of Leadership and Change

Antioch University Graduate School of Leadership and Change (GSLC) • Dayton, OH

Our program focuses on understanding, researching and leading change in organizations, workplaces, and the professions involved in the healthcare field. Students in the healthcare concentration of the PhD in Leadership and Change program bring the lens of leadership and change to such topics as relationship-centered care, community access, education and advocacy, socially responsible and ethical decision making, and values-based change strategies in environments of high complexity.

877-800-9466 • laalexandre@antioch.edu
Antioch.edu/PhD



FRONTIER NURSING UNIVERSITY

Frontier Nursing University Lexington, KY

Frontier Nursing University offers community-based distance education programs to nurses who wish to become nurse-midwives and nurse practitioners. FNU offers Doctor of Nursing Practice and Master of Science in Nursing degrees as well as post-master's certificates in advanced practice nursing specialties including nurse-midwifery, family nursing, women's health and psychiatric-mental health.

606-672-2312
frontier.edu



Indiana Wesleyan University Marion, IN

Indiana Wesleyan University offers a superior educational experience, combining expertise with hands-on learning; our nursing school is consistently ranked and recognized as one of the best in the country. IWU offers a Christ-centered education with a wide variety of degrees offered both at education centers around the Midwest and online.

866-498-4968
lisa.rittenhouse@indwes.edu
indwes.edu



Purdue University School of Nursing West Lafayette, IN

Purdue School of Nursing graduates impact health and influence health care delivery around the world. By working alongside experts from multiple disciplines within the College of Health and Human Sciences and across Purdue, students and faculty benefit from a collaborative environment that further distinguishes Purdue's School of Nursing.

765-494-4004
www.purdue.edu/hhs/nur



Radford University School of Nursing Radford, VA

Radford University's School of Nursing (SON)'s elite faculty and evolving curriculum prepare nursing professionals to excel in a challenging field. At the undergraduate level, Radford University's offerings include a selective Bachelor of Science in Nursing program and an online RN-to-BSN program. At the graduate level, Radford University offers a Doctorate program in Nursing Practice with concentrations in Nurse Executive Leadership, FNP and PMHNP, and certifications in Psychiatric Mental Health Post NP.

aramsey@radford.edu
<http://www.radford.edu/content/wchs/home/nursing.html>



Rivier University Online • Nashua, NH
Advance your nursing career online at Rivier University. Gain the knowledge and skills you need for success in a flexible, convenient online learning environment. Choose from undergraduate and graduate programs accredited by the ACEN and taught by faculty with experience at the region's top healthcare facilities. Find your program today by visiting <http://online.rivier.edu/my/nursing-degree/>

888-204-7695
online@rivier.edu
<http://online.rivier.edu/my/nursing-degree/>



Strayer University School of Nursing Washington, DC

Strayer University's RN to BSN online program is focused, relevant and affordable. Our generous transfer credit policy allows up to 135 quarter credit hours to be transferred into the program. And ADN graduates receive a minimum of 90 quarter credit transfer hours for their ADN degree. No prerequisites required!

866-314-2145
corliss.keller@strayer.edu
www.strayer.edu/nursing



TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Texas Christian University Fort Worth, TX

Texas Christian University offers online MSN, post-master's DNP, and BSN to DNP FNP and CNS degrees. The practice doctorate in nursing is designed for nurses seeking a terminal degree in nursing practice and offers an alternative to research-focused doctoral programs. Fully accredited by the CCNE.

nursing.tcu.edu/graduate.asp



W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing of Thomas Edison State University Trenton, NJ

Innovative Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) programs for busy RNs have been our hallmark for 33 years. Our online RN-to-BSN, MSN and newly launched Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree programs feature generous credit transfer policies and flexible course completion options. Contact Dr. Filomela Marshall, Dean (609) 633-6460

nursinginfo@tesu.edu
www.tesu.edu/nursing

**COLLEGE
OF NURSING**

The University of Illinois at Chicago
RN to BSN Degree Completion Program
Chicago, IL

U.S. News & World Report consistently ranks the University of Illinois at Chicago's online bachelor's programs among the best in the nation, overall and for student engagement.

At UIC you will receive a superb RN to BSN nursing education with a responsive support system that ensures your greatest possible success.

(866) 772-2268, option 1
www.go.uic.edu/bsn



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF NURSING

University of Maryland School of Nursing
Baltimore, MD

Whether you're starting or advancing your career, UMSON will prepare you to make a positive impact and to become a leader in the field. Offering BSN, RN-to-BSN, RN-to-MS, CNL, MS, DNP and PhD options, we develop professionals who are in high demand by health systems, universities, government agencies, and more.

410-706-0501 (option #2)
admissions@son.umaryland.edu
www.nursing.umaryland.edu



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Baltimore, MD

In addition to other master's programs in public health, the Bloomberg School and the School of Nursing of Johns Hopkins University offers a joint Master of Science in Nursing-Public Health Nursing and Master of Public Health (MSN-PHN/MPH). The program can be completed in 18 months full-time or part-time options are available.

410-955-3543
jhsph.admiss@jhu.edu
www.jhsph.edu

**I WILL EARN MY
DEGREE SO I CAN**
advance my nursing skills.

RN to BSN Program
Designed by nurses, for nurses
Flexible | Affordable | Supported | Focused

REGISTER TODAY

Call 1.888.514.3639 or visit strayer.edu



STRAYER
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF NURSING

A NOTE ABOUT OUR ACCREDITATION STATUS: The RN to BSN Program at Strayer University is a new applicant pursuing initial accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 887-6791.

New applicant status is neither a status of accreditation nor a guarantee that accreditation will be granted. Please be advised that without programmatic accreditation, Strayer RN to BSN Program students and graduates may not be able to transfer credits to an outside institution in the pursuit of a Master's degree or other higher education in nursing, apply for federal scholarships or grants, obtain federal employment or join the military in an RN capacity until that accreditation is obtained.