

education has historically emphasized clinical skills and disease management, with less structured focus on communicating about dying and death. Integrating public education resources into curricula could help bridge this gap.

Nurse leaders and educators can use materials from Everyone Dies to support training in communication, advance care planning, and bereavement support. These resources can

also be incorporated into community outreach programs, extending the impact beyond the clinical setting.

A Shared Goal

At its core, the mission of Everyone Dies is aligned with the goals of nursing: to support individuals and families through some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives with clarity, compassion, and respect.

Public education does not replace the nurse's role. It strengthens it. When patients and families come to the bedside with a clearer understanding of serious illness and dying, nurses are better able to do what they do best—provide care that is informed, intentional, and centered on what matters most to the person in front of them. ■

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www.every1dies.org

Maximizing Impact: How Nurse Educators Are Shaping the Future of Care

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Nursing has always been grounded in presence. At the bedside, in the community, and alongside patients during critical moments, nurses deliver skilled and compassionate care. Yet, the influence of nursing extends far beyond direct patient interactions. Increasingly, nurses are shaping outcomes through education, mentorship, community presence, and leadership.

For many nurses early in their careers, the path forward often feels linear: gain experience, pursue certification, and advance within a specialty. While this remains essential, it is not the only avenue for meaningful impact. Serving as faculty in an academic nursing program represents a powerful and often under-recognized career pathway.

Nurse Faculty as a Career Path

The role of the nurse educator has evolved significantly. Today's faculty are responsible not only for delivering content, but for preparing nurses to think critically, navigate complexity, and lead in dynamic healthcare environments. This requires clinical expertise, strong communication skills, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Today's nurse faculty must teach the concepts of sustainable change, as our clinical environments thrive on innovation.

Choosing a path in academia does not mean stepping away from patient care, in fact many of the best educators maintain a close connection to the acute care environment.

For nurses drawn to teaching, mentorship, or system-level impact, faculty roles offer an opportunity to shape our profession at scale. A single educator may influence dozens of students each year, with a ripple effect that reaches countless patients over time.

There is also a growing need to introduce this pathway earlier. Exposure to teaching, precepting, and mentorship can help novice nurses see education as an attainable and meaningful career direction rather than a distant endpoint.

Reflecting on Dual Impact

An often-overlooked contribution to nursing education is the role of clinicians who serve as adjunct faculty. Nurses actively practicing in acute care bring a level of relevance that cannot be replicated through theory alone. As healthcare continues to evolve rapidly, academic programs depend on these perspectives to ensure teaching reflects what is happening in practice today.

The acute care environment is shaped by constant change, including advances in technology, rising patient acuity, and increasing system complexity. Nurses in these settings develop real-time insight into clinical decision-making, teamwork, and operational challenges. When they teach, they bring a practical lens that strengthens learning and keeps it grounded.

This dual role bridges practice and academia, ensuring education remains applicable and aligned with real-world care. Encouraging acute care nurses to engage in adjunct roles strengthens both education and practice. It reinforces a shared responsibility to not only deliver care, but to shape how it evolves.

Looking Ahead

As healthcare continues to evolve, so must the way nurses are prepared. Nurse educators will remain central to this progress by fostering critical thinking, supporting professional growth, and strengthening the nursing workforce in meaningful and measurable ways.

For those in practice today, there is an opportunity to contribute in a powerful way. Consider how serving in an adjunct teaching role could be a meaningful extension of your impact. Sharing your knowledge, experience, and perspective is not only valuable but also a lasting contribution to the profession and to the nurses who will carry it forward. ■

Parker Brigrance is a member of the ANA/FNA/ENA and serves as the Director of the Emergency Service Line at Baptist Health in Jacksonville, Florida. In his role at Baptist Health, he oversees the strategic growth of the ED service line. With over a decade of nursing experience, he is passionate about clinician development, improving healthcare quality, and enhancing the patient experience.

References online:
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