



Registered Nurses

Other Titles: Addictions Nurses (Specialty), Advanced Practice Nurses - APRN (Specialty), Advice Nurses (Specialty), Aging Life Care Professionals (Specialty), Ambulatory Care Nurses, Breastfeeding Counselors and Educators, Cardiac Vascular Nurses, Case Management Nurses (Specialty), Clinical Nurse Specialists - CNS (Specialty), Community Health Nurses, Critical Care Nurses (Specialty), Environmental Health Nurses, Forensic Nurses (Specialty), Geriatric Case Managers (Specialty), Geriatric Nurses (Specialty), Gerontological Nurse Practitioners (Specialty), Industrial Health Nurses, Informatics Nurses (Specialty), Lactation Consultants (Specialty), Lactation Educators, Legal Nurse Consultants (Specialty), Maternal Newborn Nurses, Medical Surgical Nurses, Neonatal Nurses (Specialty), Nurses (Registered), Obstetric Nurses, Occupational Health Nurses (Specialty), Pain Management Nurses, Pediatric Nurses, Perinatal Nurses, Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurses, RN's, Ship's Nurses, Telephone Triage Nurses, Travel Nurses



About this Career

Education Required (or equivalent):

2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent

Holland Code:

SIR - Social, Investigative, Realistic

Inner Hero:

Helper and Thinker

True Color:

Blue and Green

Duties and Responsibilities

Duties and Responsibilities

Registered Nurses use a scientific process to plan care for people in acute illnesses and teach them how to stay healthy or cope with their illness. They may give medicine, treatments, tests, injections, or draw blood as prescribed by the **Physician**; observe patients for physical, mental, social and or emotional changes and record changes or reactions to illness and/or drugs; take temperature, pulse, blood pressure or other vital signs; and maintain health records.

Work Environment and Physical Demands

These are the physical activities and demands required during a typical workday.

- Nurses who work in hospitals or clinics are usually assigned a day, weekend, holiday, evening, or night shift. Other Nurses work days or on-call.
- Nurses work in different specialties such as geriatrics, maternity, intensive care, oncology, surgery, psychiatric, pediatric, or emergency.
- Must reach, bend, and move patients and equipment.
- Use computers to monitor patients' condition and to keep records.
- May frequently be required to lift objects weighing from 10-20 pounds and 20-50 pounds occasionally.
- Some Nurses say they enjoy having a positive effect on a patient during a stressful time.
- Nurses may be exposed to communicable diseases.
- Some work on board ships and in natural disasters or war zones.

Occupations can often be performed by those with disabilities. To find adaptations used for specific disabilities, go to the **Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR)**.

Related Occupations

Specialties

What is a Specialty?

- An occupation where some tasks of the main occupation may be performed.
- An entry-level position for the main occupation.
- An occupation that may require experience in the main occupation as a qualification.

Addictions Nurses specialize in the treatment of patients who have been diagnosed with an addictive disorder, such as alcohol and other drug dependencies, nicotine dependency, eating disorders, and process addictions such as gambling. They often work with dual diagnosis patients, who have mental health conditions in addition to their addictions. Like many other nurses, they work as part of a team in assessing and treating the patient as well as providing nursing care for other medical problems. They may be involved in detoxification programs and prevention activities. They may become certified through the International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA) to qualify for higher-paying jobs.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) are nurses who have completed advanced training beyond that required to be licensed as a Registered Nurse and have experience in their specialty. They are often known by the name of their specialty, such as **Ambulatory Care Nurses**, **Cardiac Vascular Nurses**, **Case Management Nurses**, **Community/Public Health Nurses**, **Gerontological Nurses**, **Informatics Nurses**, **Medical-Surgical Nurses**, **Pain Management Nurses**, **Pediatric Nurses**, **Perinatal Nurses**, and **Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurses**. They usually obtain voluntary certification through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), an arm of the American Nurses Association (ANA).

Advice Nurses (Telephone Triage Nurses) are nurses who talk with new or ongoing patients, physicians, and others by phone and email regarding healthcare decisions. They assist them in determining the urgency of care needed and refer patients to providers or schedule appointments when needed. They provide health information and advice to callers regarding self-care and symptom management. Advice Nurses need considerable nursing experience along with speaking, listening, crisis intervention, critical thinking, teaching, clinical, assessment, and computer skills. Many of them work for hospitals, clinics, insurance companies, or health management organizations (HMOs). They must be willing to help people without ever seeing them in person.

Case Management Nurses actively participate with their patients to identify and prioritize needs and coordinate efforts of various healthcare and social service workers to meet those needs. They evaluate the results of the team efforts and make adjustments or recommendations for continued care. They usually specialize in working with a specific patient population, such as elderly, adolescent, low-income, pregnant, or diabetic. They may be employed by hospitals, clinics, or health management organizations (HMOs).

Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) are nurses who have completed a Bachelor's plus a Master's, post-Master's, or Doctor of Nursing Practice after completion of the requirements to become a Registered Nurse. They obtain voluntary certification through the American Nurses Credentialing Center, an arm of the American Nurses Association (ANA), and are known by their specialty title, such as **Clinical Nurse Specialists in Adult Health**, **Clinical Nurse Specialists in Child/Adolescent Psychiatric and Mental Health**, **Clinical Nurse Specialists in Gerontology**, and **Clinical Nurse Specialists in Pediatrics**, and **Clinical Nurse Specialists in Public/Community Health**.

Critical Care Nurses specialize in hospital care of seriously ill or injured adult, child, and infant patients. Many of them become certified through the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Certification Corporation.

Forensic Nurses provide services in a variety of settings, such as hospital emergency rooms, coroner's offices, prisons, and psychiatric hospitals. They collect evidence in cases of elder abuse, rape, assault, murder, and other crimes. They provide treatment to crime victims, prisoners, and psychiatric patients. They serve as expert witnesses in criminal trials. To become a Forensic Nurse, Registered Nurses need at least two years experience in general nursing and to take courses in Forensic Sciences. Many belong to the International Association of Forensic Nurses and achieve voluntary professional certification through its national board exam.

Geriatric Case Managers, also known as **Aging Life Care Professional** is a health and human services specialist who acts as a guide and advocate for families who care for older and aging adults. They are trained in care management, and also in nursing, social work, gerontology, and psychology. The patients they assist may be suffering from Parkinsons, Alzheimers dementia, or may have other chronic needs or disabilities.

Geriatric Nurses or Gerontology Nurse Practitioners focus on the ongoing physical, emotional and mental health needs of elderly patients. Their work includes preventative, as well as ongoing care. Older adults face higher risk of accidental injuries, loss of physical abilities, and are more likely to have special needs regarding mental health. Geriatric Nurses also educate patients and their families regarding ways to cope with medical conditions that develop later in life.

Informatics Nurses direct or coordinate information activities in a nursing department or facility in order to manage data wisely. They work closely with the computer information systems director as well as physicians and other clinical staff to make sure the collection, analysis, and distribution of patient and health data is conducted effectively and ethically. They need strong analytical and statistical skills to make recommendations for improvements.

Lactation Consultants (Breastfeeding Counselors, Lactation Educators, and Breastfeeding Educators) provide counseling and education to breastfeeding mothers regarding feeding techniques and in solving lactation problems. They teach medical providers regarding breastfeeding in a hospital, clinic, or university setting. Most Lactation Consultants are Registered Nurses, but some of them are Physicians, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Dieticians, or Social Workers. Many are self-employed. Voluntary certification is available from the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE). The IBLCE reports more than 9,500 certified professionals in the United States and 17,000 worldwide. Wages are comparable to those of Registered Nurses with advanced training and specialization.

Legal Nurse Consultants provide research and advice on legal cases involving medical malpractice, medical negligence, insurance claims, or other medical and nursing-related issues. They may work for attorneys, insurance companies, or be self-employed as consultants. They use their knowledge and experience as a Registered Nurse to evaluate medical records and other evidence and screen potential legal cases. They educate lawyers and insurance staff regarding medical issues and serve as expert witnesses in court. To become a Legal Nurse Consultant, several years of experience as a Registered Nurse is recommended, as well as classes in the legal aspects of nursing. Many Legal Nurse Consultants are members of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants and obtain voluntary professional certification through its national board exam.

Neonatal Nurses specialize in care of newborn infants in hospitals. Many of them obtain certification through the National Certification Corporation (NCC), which has experience and exam requirements. The NCC also certifies **Obstetric Nurses** and **Maternal Newborn Nurses** and issues certificates in Electronic Fetal Monitoring.

Nurse Anesthetists

Nurse Midwives

Nurse Practitioners

Nursing Educators

Occupational Health Nurses (Environmental Health Nurses, Industrial Health Nurses) provide services to employees who become ill or suffer an accident on the job. They administer first aid, refer workers to outside medical care, prepare reports for compensation, and maintain records of the patients treated. They may instruct employees about health promotion issues and accident or illness prevention. They may provide case management in referrals to health services, rehabilitation, and return-to-work issues. They may provide counseling, crisis intervention, workplace hazard detection, and management of safety and health regulations in the workplace. Many Occupational Health Nurses belong to the American Association of Occupational Health Nurses and obtain voluntary professional certification through the American Board of Occupational Health Nurses.

Public Health Nurses

School Nurses

Ship's Nurses travel aboard cruise ships to treat passengers, mostly in case of emergencies but sometimes to treat non-emergency diseases and conditions. These nurses need experience in emergency room or critical care nursing and must be willing to be away from home for the length of the cruise. Some Ship's Nurses work aboard floating hospitals that offer care to people in countries that don't have sufficient hospital care available.

Travel Nurses work for nursing agencies that place them in jobs in various parts of the country that are experiencing shortages of qualified nurses. Jobs may last a few weeks to a few months and pay very well.

Related Occupation(s)

Careers	Education Required (or equivalent)
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Electrocardiograph Technicians	Up to 2 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Electroencephalograph (EEG) Technicians	HS diploma/GED/apprenticeship
Emergency Medical Technicians	Up to 2 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Home Health Aides	Less than HS diploma
Interns	2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Licensed Vocational Nurses	Up to 2 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Medical Technologists	4 yr. college degree or equivalent
Military Officers	4 yr. college degree or equivalent

Nurse Anesthetists	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Nurse Midwives	2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Nurse Practitioners	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Nursing Assistants	HS diploma/GED/apprenticeship
Nursing Directors	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Nursing Educators	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Occupational Therapists	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Physician Assistants	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Physicians	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Public Health Educators	4 yr. college + graduate/professional school
Public Health Nurses	2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Radiologic Technologists	2-3 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
Respiratory Therapists	Up to 2 yr. education/apprenticeship or equivalent
School Nurses	4 yr. college degree or equivalent

Does It Match Me?

Personal Characteristics

Personal characteristics will aid you in being successful. These abilities may be natural and can be improved by using them.

Above average ability to:

- Read, learn, and understand instructions and procedures
- Communicate both verbally and in writing
- Work accurately

Average ability to:

- Use numbers and basic math skills
- See and have near acuity
- Pay attention to detail
- Use physical coordination
- Use manual and finger dexterity

Ability to:

- Compile information

- Manipulate objects, tools, or machinery
- Write effectively and legibly
- Visualize objects in pictures, drawings, and descriptions
- See slight differences in objects
- Use hands to reach
- Use hearing when conversing with others
- Work well with people and work as a member of a team
- Make decisions using data and facts
- Make judgments using experience
- Remain calm in critical situations
- Work according to set standards
- Perform effectively under stressful conditions
- Use transferring techniques
- Work independently
- Plan and organize the work of others

An interest in:

- Science
- Psychology

How Should I Prepare/Education Required

Preparation

A High School diploma or equivalent is required for admission to any school of Nursing. Most schools have competitive selection procedures. There are 2 major ways of obtaining education to become a Registered Nurse:

- Bachelors degree - requires 4 to 5 years of study at a University or College
- Associate degree - requires 2 years of study after completion of 1-2 years of prerequisites in Community Colleges

While a few diploma programs exist, they are being phased out. In addition preparation requirements might include:

- Medical corps experience in the **Military**.
- First aid course experience.
- Volunteer work in Nursing homes, hospitals, or the Red Cross.

Licensed Vocational Nurses can take additional training and become **Registered Nurses**. This can be done prior to admission into Nursing program.

Suggested Majors/Instructional Program(s)

- **Nursing**

You may find the field(s) of study below helpful in pursuing this career:

- **Emergency Medical Care**
- **Health Science**
- **Health Technologies, Other**
- **Medicine**
- **Public Health**
- **Rehabilitation Services**

Skills

A skill is goal-directed behavior that can be strengthened through practice.

- Ability to evaluate information or symptoms.
- Ability to prepare and administer treatment or medications.
- Ability to maintain charts and records neatly and accurately.
- Knowledge of medical terminology.
- Willingness to provide personal services to patients.
- Ability to complete and explain insurance forms.
- Ability to administer electrocardiograph (EKG) test.
- Ability to follow medical records control procedures.
- Ability to use extensive care treatment skills.

California Licensing

Registered Nurses are licensed through the **Board of Registered Nursing (BRN)**

What's the Pay and Job Projections?

International Labor Resources

Finding a Job

More Information

Unions & Apprenticeships

Unions represent workers in bargaining with employers to establish better pay, hours, benefits and working conditions. Union information may or may not apply to this occupation, depending on the exact job, employer and state where the work is located. Some jobs and employers require union membership, while for others it is optional or even discouraged. Supervisors and managers are usually not union members. Some occupations and employers can be covered by more than one union.

Apprenticeships are **training programs** that involve a combination of paid employment and classroom training. For more information, see **Apprentices**.

- **American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME)**
- **SEIU California State Council**

Associations

If an association has a website, you may find the information you need there. You may also email to request helpful career information.

- **Aaina Life Care Association**
- **American Assembly for Men in Nursing**
- **American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA)**
- **American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN)** - Grant Research, Scholarships, Mentor partnerships
- **American Geriatric Society**
- **American Health Care Association (AHCA)**
- **American Nurses Association (ANA)**
- **American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)** - Educational Programs, List of training resources
- **Asian & Pacific Islander Nurses Association** - Traveling Nurse employment
- **Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN)**
- **Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)** - Job openings, conventions, online learning options
- **International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN)** - Certification program, education listings, job listings
- **International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE)**
- **International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA)**
- **International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA)**
- **International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA)** - Professional certifications
- **National Alaska Native/American Indian Nurse Association**
- **National Association of Hispanic Nurses**
- **National Black Nurses Association, Inc.** - Job links, financial aid, programs, research opportunities
- **National Certification Corporation (NCC)**
- **National Nurses Organizing Committee**
- **Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC)** - Certification for nurses & technicians

- **Philippine Nurses Association of America**
- **American Holistic Health Association (AHHA)**
- **California Nurses Association (CNA)**
- **National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHA) - California Chapter** - Scholarships, Mentor Program
- **Northern California Society for Public Health Education**

Advancement

Opportunities vary by type and size of employer, economic conditions, and supply and demand for workers. Some teach health care, supervise, teach other Nurses as **Nursing Educators**, or assist a **Physician** during examinations or surgery.

RN's may advance by specializing or becoming **Nurse Practitioners**, **Nurse Anesthetists**, or **Midwives**. They may also work in nursing management as **Nursing Directors**. Those with a Bachelor's or Master's degree are preferred by most employers. Continued education in the field is essential to getting promoted.

Tips

Volunteer experience in your area of interest or study is a valuable addition to a college admission application. Begin your volunteer experience while still in high school. Assist patients in their personal care and perform minimal nursing duties such as feeding or transporting patients, providing water, writing letters or emails, shopping, and visiting. Work with the **American Red Cross** teaching community health courses and during a disaster. Not all employers accept volunteer experience as qualifying experience, but some do. See **Volunteerism**.

Bibliography

These are the latest versions of the resources used to develop occupation descriptions.

O*NET-SOC Codes & Titles

- 29-1111.00 Registered Nurses

Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes. Third Edition, Gary D. Gottfredson and John L. Holland, PAR Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc., 1996.

Dictionary of Occupational Titles

- 075.364-010 Nurse, General Duty
- 075.374-018 Nurse, Private Duty

Specialties:

- 075.137-010 Nurse, Supervisor, Occupational Health

- 075.117-026 Director, Occupational Health Nursing
- 075.374-022 Nurse. Staff. Occupational Health Nursing

California EDD Occupational Guide

- Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners

Complete Guide for Occupational Exploration, JIST Works, Inc., 2006 edition.

- 10.02.01 Nursing

International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

- 2230 Nursing and Midwifery Professionals

Military Careers, U.S. Department of Defense

- Registered Nurses.

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook

- Advanced Practice Nurses, Registered Nurses

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