Professional Nurse

A Nurse is a health care professional engaged in the practice of nursing. Along with other health care professionals, nurses are responsible for the treatment, safety, and recovery of acutely or chronically ill/injured people; health maintenance of the healthy; and treatment of life-threatening emergencies in various health care settings. Nurses may also be involved in research and may perform non-clinical functions necessary to the delivery of health care.

Tasks

- Give professional nursing care and treatment, either as curative or preventive measures, to ill, injured, disabled and other patients, and newborn babies and their mothers, in hospitals, clinics or other establishments;
- Supervise and coordinate the work of nursing and other non-medical staff in operating theater and assist surgeons during operations;
- Administer medicine and drugs, apply surgical dressings and give other forms of treatment prescribed by physicians;
- Maintain accurate, detailed reports and records;
- Participate in preparations for physical and psychological treatment of mentally-ill patients;
- Give professional nursing care to patients in their homes;
- Provide professional nursing services, care and advice within a community or at a workplace;
- May specialize in community services to industrial and other organizations; and engage in research activities related to nursing.

Basic Educational Requirement

All Professional Nurses are required to have a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing. Practice of the profession requires a license issued by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), the body which oversees the licensing of nurses and other professionals.

Skills and Competencies

- Ability to convey information effectively;
- Excellent reading comprehension;
- Ability to use logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems;
- Analytical skills;
- Ability to communicate information and ideas clearly in speaking and in writing so others will understand;
- Problem sensitivity or the ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong;

Physical Attributes and Characteristics

- Service Oriented - always actively looking for ways to help people;
- Compassionate and understanding;
- Possess "social perceptiveness" or a keen sense of awareness for patients’ needs and problems.
- Ability to see details at close range (near vision).

Salary/Compensation
Locally, a professional nurse employed in government receives an entry level salary of P6,000 a month in rural areas while nurses in the urbanized areas receive around P8,000 a month. In the private sector, the rate averages around P12,000 per month.

Overseas, the pay scale is much way above local rates with the US market offering a monthly salary of $4,000, the United Kingdom with $34,221 (£17,000 entry level) and the Middle East $700 - $1,500.

**Prospects for Career Advancement**

There are several distinct levels of the nursing career structure distinguished by increasing education, responsibility, and skills. Advanced practice nursing which involves diagnosis of health problems and prescription of medication and other therapies is the next career move for a professional nurse. These are the clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners who have acquired a PhD and have gained specialization in clinical nursing, research, health policy, teaching, and consultancy.

**Employment Opportunities**

Aside from employment in hospitals, clinics and other establishments, the following are the emerging local job market for nurses:

1. Medical Tourism
2. Medical Transcription
3. Rural Health Centers
4. Day Care Centers
5. Alternative Health Care Delivery System
   - Home health care
   - Long-term care facilities for the elderly
   - Independent nurse practice
   - Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs)

In the overseas market, there is an increasing and continuous demand for nurses and other health care professionals particularly in the US, Canada, Ireland, UK, Australia & the Middle East. The demand in existing foreign markets for nurses specializing in geriatric care, acute/intensive care, cardiovascular care, renal, dialysis, oncology and telemetry is likewise fast growing. At present, the Philippine government is working on expanding the market for Filipino nurses in Slovenia, Cyprus, Italy and Japan. Likewise, an agreement has been forged between the Philippines and Bahrain on an exchange training and recruitment program for Filipino nurses and other health professionals; and with Auckland, New Zealand to hire Filipino nurses under a direct-hiring scheme.

**Cost of Education**

The cost of pursuing a BS in Nursing degree may range between P145,000 to P390,000 in a private school. The cost is much lower in public universities where tuition fees amount to only around P50,000 for the entire course.

**11 CORE COMPETENCIES IN NURSING**

1. SAFE AND QUALITY NURSING CARE
2. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT'S
3. HEALTH EDUCATION
The nurse must be competent in the following areas of responsibilities:

A. Safe and Quality Nursing Care
   1. Demonstrates knowledge based on the health/illness status of individual groups
   2. Provides sound decision making in the care of individuals/groups
   3. Promotes wholeness and well-being including safety and comfort of patients
   4. Sets priorities in nursing care based on patients' need
   5. Ensures continuity of care
   6. Administers medications and other health therapeutics
   7. Utilizes the nursing process as framework for nursing
   8. Formulates a plan of care in collaboration with patients and other members of the health team
   9. Implements planned nursing care to achieve identified outcomes
   10. Evaluates progress toward expected outcomes
   11. Responds to the urgency of the patient's condition

B. Management of Resources and Environment
   1. Organizes work load to facilitate patient care
   2. Utilizes resources to support patient care
   3. Ensures availability of human resources
   4. Checks proper functioning of equipment/facilities
   5. Maintains a safe and therapeutic environment
   6. Practices stewardship in the management of resources

C. Health Education
   1. Assesses the learning needs of the patient and family
   2. Develops health education plan based on assessed and anticipated needs
   3. Develops learning materials for health education
   4. Implements the health education plan
   5. Evaluates the outcome of health education

D. Legal Responsibility
   1. Adheres to practice in accordance with the nursing law and other relevant legislation including contracts, informed consent
   2. Adheres to organizational policies and procedures, local and national
   3. Documents care rendered to patients

E. Ethico-Moral Responsibility
1. Respects the rights of individuals/groups
2. Accepts responsibility and accountability for own decisions and actions
3. Adheres to the national and international code of ethics for nurses

F. Personal and Professional Development
1. Identifies own learning needs
2. Pursues continuing education
3. Gets involved in professional organizations and civic activities
4. Projects a professional image of the nurse
5. Possesses positive attitude towards change and criticism
6. Performs function according to professional standards

G. Quality Improvement
1. Utilizes data for quality improvement
2. Participates in nursing audits and rounds
3. Identifies and reports variances
4. Recommends solutions to identified causes of the problems
5. Recommends improvement of systems and processes

H. Research
1. Utilizes varied methods of inquiry in solving problems
2. Recommends actions for implementation
3. Disseminates results of research findings
4. Applies research findings in nursing practice

I. Record Management
1. Maintains accurate and updated documentation of patient care
2. Records outcome of patient care
3. Observes legal imperatives in record keeping
4. Maintains an effective recording and reporting system

J. Communication
1. Utilizes effective communication in relating with clients, members with the team and the public in general
2. Utilizes effective communication in therapeutic use of self to meet the needs of clients
3. Utilizes formal and informal channels
4. Responds to needs of individuals, families, groups and communities
5. Uses appropriate information technology to facilitate communication

K. Collaboration and Teamwork
1. Establishes collaborative relationship with colleagues and other members of the health team for the health plan
2. Functions effectively as a team player