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**Having A Midlife Career Change To Nursing**

**By Rob Zawrotny**

Midlife career changes are nothing new. If you're looking for a field with abundant opportunity and if you enjoy caring for others, nursing might be right for you. The job outlook is robust: The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports employment among registered nurses will grow faster than the average for all occupations through 2008. Some reports indicate that more than 1 million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. A career in nursing is also lucrative: Typical salaries start in the \$35K-\$50K range and increase significantly for more specialized positions. Some hospitals are even offering signing bonuses upwards of \$14K. So if you've spent some time off from work or are looking at a career switch, following are a few tips to help get you started in a nursing career:

Do your homework. There are numerous specialties to choose from—including oncology, pediatrics, recovery, and emergency care—and several settings in which you can work. Practices range from home care to private practice to clinics to hospitals. Determine your course by actively networking. Attend career fairs and educational sessions. Contact your state nursing board, the local nurses association, or the closest chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the nursing honor society. The more informed you are, the better you can map out your direction.

Types of nurses include: ·Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) ·Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) ·Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) ·Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) ·Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) ·Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) in California and Texas ·Nurse Practitioner (NP) ·Registered Nurse (RN) ·Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

For more specific information on the differences, visit The Nursing Degree Guide:

[http://www.nursingdegreeguide.org/articles/types\\_of\\_nurses/](http://www.nursingdegreeguide.org/articles/types_of_nurses/)

Recognize the steps involved. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, several steps must be taken before a nurse can enter the profession. This usually involves:

·Graduating from a recognized nursing program ·Meeting the specific requirements of the state board of nursing ·Passing the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) NCLEX® examination

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for registered nurses (RNs) or licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/VNs).

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing Directory (list of nursing boards by state):

[http://www.ncsbn.org/regulation/boardsofnursing\\_boards\\_of\\_nursing\\_board.asp](http://www.ncsbn.org/regulation/boardsofnursing_boards_of_nursing_board.asp)

Carefully choose a school. There are over 1500 nursing programs in the country. The minimum education requirement to get into nursing programs is a high school diploma, but advanced degrees require higher education. Most require an entrance exam. There are three basic types of programs available:

·For those with bachelor degrees, post–bachelor programs are available which build on your previous education and put you on an accelerated course. This allows you to finish in 12–18 months. ·Bachelors of Science in Nursing (BSN degrees) are four–year programs at colleges and universities. They build a strong foundation, providing leadership and management skills. ·Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) are available at two–year programs found at many community and junior colleges. Pre–nursing courses

are typically required.

The school you choose is vital. It will largely determine how prepared you are for the NCLEX. The schools you consider should be state board approved and accredited.

The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc.:

[http://www.nlnac.org/Forms/directory\\_search.htm](http://www.nlnac.org/Forms/directory_search.htm)

The Nursing Degree Guide:

<http://www.nursingdegreeguide.org/>

The College Network (online degree options):

<http://www.college-net.com/nursing/cybernurse/>

American Association of Colleges of Nursing:

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/>

Research the financial commitment. Make sure you understand the financial commitment associated with nursing school. Tuition varies but can cost up upwards of \$30,000 per year. Daunting, but the typical nurse's salary should make it easier to swallow.

Financial Aid Resources: ·US Department of Education:

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

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·Nursing

Scholarship Search:

[http://www.discovernursing.com/scholarship\\_search.aspx](http://www.discovernursing.com/scholarship_search.aspx)

·Federal Student Aid:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp>

·Stafford Loans:

<http://www.staffordloan.com/>

Take The National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Once you've made it through the craziness of school, you still have to pass the NCLEX. Regular study combined with the education you've acquired should prepare you.

Link to an NCLEX fact sheet:

[http://www.ncsbn.org/pdfs/NCLEX\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.ncsbn.org/pdfs/NCLEX_fact_sheet.pdf)

Know your state's licensing requirements. Get all the specifics on state licensure including the license period, fees, and continuing education requirements. Look into CEUs even if they're not mandated. It's always a good idea to stay current on knowledge and practices, and many CEUs are easily available online. SpeedyCEUs (

[www.speedyceus.com](http://www.speedyceus.com)

) offers several online continuing education courses. Make sure your state board accepts the CEUs you're interested in.

The Nursing Center (list of state licensure information):

<http://www.nursingcenter.com/careercenter/licensure.asp>

Go get your job! Finally, after researching, attending school, and passing your boards, it's time to embark on your new career. Luckily, the job search should be the easy part. Your school's placement program or an intent search should provide abundant opportunities. Enjoy the job shopping spree!

Rob Zawrotny is a copywriter at MWI web design. He has assisted several companies in developing content for their website, including Nursing CEUS. Visit

<http://www.mwi.com>

and

<http://www.ceus-nursing.com>

for more information.

## **Nursing Degrees Through Online Continuing Education**

### **By Garrick Banks**

If you are interested in a career in nursing, you will at one point or another begin a search of schools that you might wish to attend. A nursing degree is very valuable nowadays and can open many doors to different health and medical positions with even greater pay scales. Moreover, most technical and trades schools offer online equivalents of their nursing degree programs.

#### **1. Why Nursing?**

A career in nursing is the most frequently enrolled in program even when compared with business, legal, and other trades degrees. Enrolment has become easier than ever – often you can enroll online by filling out a form or two.

#### **2. What Program Should You Choose?**

When one registers to study nursing, you can actually choose between several different nursing programs. Some of the categories in the nursing continuing education include the following –

– Accident Precautions – Biological Agents – Cardiovascular Studies – Critical Care Nursing – Degenerative Conditions – Home Health Care or Community Nursing – Hormonal Conditions – Maternal Health – Mental Health Nursing – Nursing Management Issues – Pediatric and Perioperative Nursing – Legal Nurse Consultant Courses – Nurse Home Administration Courses

#### **3. After You Finish Your Online Education**

If you successfully complete your final examinations, a degree will be mailed to you and you can use it to apply to any job it is relevant towards. One of the advantages of taking such programs is it provides you additional knowledge for you to be competitive enough in a career in nursing. Graduating with only a baccalaureate degree will just contain you in a position and gradually make you stay there until you retire.

#### **4. The Benefits Of Online Learning**

– Learn according to your own schedule – No transit time fees to and from school – Significantly less expensive than a traditional education – Almost all nursing degrees have an online counterpart

#### **5. Nursing as a profession**

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Nurses acknowledge that the nursing profession is an essential part of the society from which it has grown. The authority for the practice of nursing is based upon a social contract that delineates professional rights and responsibilities as well as mechanisms for public accountability. The practice of nursing involves altruistic behavior, is guided by nursing research and is governed by a code of ethics.

Nursing continues to develop a wide body of knowledge and associated skills. There are a number of educational paths to becoming a professional nurse but all involve extensive study of nursing theory

and practice and training in clinical skills.

For more great nursing degree related articles and resources check out

<http://onlineeducationadvisor.info>



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