CAREER OUTLOOK

According to the US Department of Labor, nursing is the largest health care related occupation in the country. It is also a profession that is experiencing a nation-wide shortage. Employment opportunities for registered nurses are excellent and are expected to grow 21%-35% through the end of the decade. As the "baby-boom" generation becomes increasingly older, the number of people who will require medical care is projected to grow very rapidly. There will also be a demand for nursing educators who will be responsible for teaching the next generation of talented nurses. Another area of expected growth is in advanced training and specialization.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Nurses Association
600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 100 W.
Washington, DC 20024-2571
Phone: (202) 651-7000
Web: www.nursingworld.org

Mississippi Nurses Association
31 Woodgreen Place
Madison, MS 39110
Phone: (601) 898-0670
Web: www.msnurses.org

National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
11250 Roger Bacon Drive-Suite 8
Reston, VA 20190-5202
Phone: (703) 437-4377
Web: www.noadn.org

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Registered nurses (RNs) are the backbone of almost every health care facility in the nation. RNs provide patients with treatment and education, as well as participating in patient care evaluation and discharge planning. Responsibilities of a registered nurse may include understanding, administering, and evaluating the effects of a wide range of medicines, operating and interpreting intricate life saving equipment, and being caring and sympathetic to patients with severe injuries and illnesses. There are many specialties that an RN may choose such as intensive care, pediatrics, gerontology, surgical care, psychiatry, oncology, orthopedics, administration, or education. Registered nurses are also in charge of supervising other nursing staff such as licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and certified nursing assistants (CNAs). Anyone interested in entering this field of nursing should be well organized, able to work well under pressure, able to form and maintain good interpersonal relationships, and have the ability to handle emergencies calmly. Academic ability and good study habits are also necessary for any student who is considering a career in nursing. Nursing is one of the most challenging and rewarding health careers and requires hard work and dedication to be successful.

Registered nurses work in hospitals, nursing homes, public health departments, clinics, schools, physicians' offices, home health agencies, rehabilitation centers, mental health institution, the military, and industrial or corporate sites.

Students interested in a career as a registered nurse should take courses in biology, chemistry, algebra, geometry, psychology, sociology, first aid, foods and nutrition, health occupations/medical professions education, physical education, English, computer skills, and foreign languages.

Students interested in an associate's degree in nursing should have a high school diploma or the equivalent. Qualified LPNs are also able to join programs that offer advancement to the registered nurse level. Programs are two years in length at community colleges and universities, and are taught under the leadership of a nursing faculty. Upon completion of the program, students will hold an Associate Degree and are eligible to apply to take the national licensure exam to become a Registered Nurse. These programs are a complete entity and are not designed as the first half of a baccalaureate degree, but students may continue their education by enrolling in a BSN completion program which will result in a baccalaureate degree.

**Position Responsibilities**

**Work Environment**

**High School Preparation**

**College Requirements**

**Educational Institutions**

**Salary Range**

Average Annual Salary--$42,600
Salary Range--$35,600-$45,400