



Health Career Directory

Registered Nurse

Overview

Registered nurses make sure that they achieve, maintain, or recover optimal health and functioning for their clients. Registered nurses work with physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, and other interdisciplinary professionals (Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapist, and Respiratory Therapists etc.) in a collaborative and team approach.

Registered Nurses main duties are to observe, assess, monitor, and document patient symptoms, reactions, and progress. They contribute to a culture of patient safety and promote health to patients/clients/residents families and other caregivers. Some of the ways they do this are through:

- administering medications
- caring for wounds
- educating and informing about nutrition
- self- care
- managing medication,
- disease prevention.

Registered nurses are trained as critical thinkers, problem solvers, and decision makers to provide safe and competent care to patients. They are strong advocates for their patients and they make sure patients get the necessary care to improve their health. Registered nurses are the largest group of health care professionals in providing care to patients. They play a significant key role as front line health care delivery. In addition, they play a key leadership role in sharing their expertise and knowledge to help improve patient care and promote health. Registered Nursing practice is a dynamic profession with multiple opportunities to learn, grow, and advance in clinical practice, and advance practice or in leadership roles.

Registered nurses can choose to become specialized by doing additional education and certification for positions in the following areas or roles:

- emergency
- operating room
- critical care
- community health
- primary care
- midwifery
- nurse practitioner
- many other clinical areas
- supervisory or clinical leadership positions.

Who is suited for this type of occupation?

Registered Nurses are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- integrity in relationship to ones actions
- strong interest and knowledge in the biological, psycho-social, and nursing sciences
- good problem-solving and communication skills
- good critical thinking skills, sound judgement, and patience
- compassionate, dependable, ethical, and mature
- ability to remain patient and helpful with people who are unwell and/or upset
- ability to be precise and accurate
- strong social skills
- leadership ability
- ability to manage high levels of stress associated with life threatening situations and medical conditions
- self-discipline and self-directed
- the ability to multi-task in a complex and face-paced environment
- physically fit to perform their job duties
- a clean record, no prior criminal background.

They should enjoy:

- working in a health care environment where you have a genuine interest in caring for people
- working directly with people who are unwell to help them recover
- working cooperatively with others in a team environment
- using standard and specialized equipment to gather assessments to provide proper care, and the performance of components, assemblies and systems
- analyzing and diagnosing problems

Who employs Registered Nurses?

Registered Nurses are employed in a variety of settings. They work mostly in:

- hospitals
- primary care clinics
- community health centers
- extended care facilities
- rehabilitation centers
- clinics
- doctor's offices
- community agencies
- companies and private homes.

They can also be self-employed. Registered nurses mostly work shift hours, which includes weekend rotations. They may also be required to be on call for emergencies. They may be exposed to diseases and must wear protective clothing, such as rubber gloves and masks in some work environments. Working in emergency situations can also be stressful.

Registered Nurses are employed by:

- health authorities/employers of BC
- health care research and development facilities
- private doctor's office
- insurance companies
- they can also own and operate their own private nursing business.

Experienced registered nurses may advance to supervisory or clinical leadership positions in their employing organizations. Additional education and certification is needed to go into management positions, and specialty nursing areas.

Registered Nurses work in the following areas:

Community

- health clinics
- schools
- wellness programs in the workplace
- doctors' offices
- home care
- family planning clinics
- poison control centers
- prenatal and well-baby clinics
- rehabilitation centers
- sexually transmitted disease units
- AIDS hospices

Hospital

- emergency
- intensive care
- operating room
- post-surgery
- maternity
- cardiovascular (heart)
- oncology (cancer)
- psychiatry
- pediatrics (children)
- palliative (dying people)

Specialty Nursing areas:

- Clinical Nurse Educator
- Community Health Nurse
- Critical Care Nurse
- Emergency Care Nurse
- Intensive Care Nurse
- Nurse Researcher
- Nurse Practitioner
- Occupational Health Nurse
- Operating Room Nurse

Salary

General duty unionized registered nurses salary in BC starts with Step 1 up to Step 9. Each step requires one year of nursing work experience.

Currently Step 1 hourly wage is \$30.79; Step 9 hourly wage is 40.42

Nurses, who work evening, nights and/or weekends, also get additional pay called "shift differential"

- Shift differential (night) \$3.50 per hour
- Weekend Premium \$2.00 per hour
- Over time is 2x regular hourly rate

When an RN has a Bachelor, Master's Degree, and/or taken Specialty Certification, he/she also gets additional pay called "Qualification Differential":

- Master's Degree \$125.00 per month
- Baccalaureate Degree \$100.00 per month
- Specialty Certification \$ 50.00 per month

Required Training and Education to Become a Registered Nurse

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing is a three to four year full time (year round) program. Each educational institution has their specific intake period and pre-requisite courses requirements.

Nursing programs offer courses in nursing, health sciences, psychology, liberal studies, health care, leadership, and the study of diseases and patho-physiology. Courses are offered in a variety of formats including lectures, laboratory, small group work, online courses, and clinical experiences on hospital units and community settings. Learning environments for clinical rotations are in various hospitals, outpatient clinic settings, acutely ill seniors, rehabilitation wards, adults, children, and families.

Learning opportunities in community health include clinical practice in public health, homecare and other community health agencies. The clinical practice experience can be during the day, evening or night shift, including weekends and holidays.

Bridging Programs: In some institution, if applicants have completed a Licensed Practical Nurse program, candidates may be given credits towards the Registered Nursing program.

Admission Requirements:

Most universities have highly competitive requirements and select those applicants that have the best opportunity for success. Please review the entrance requirements of the educational institution you are interested in attending in advance, so that you can plan your courses in high school to meet the entrance conditions.

To become a fully Registered Nurse in BC

Upon completion of a registered nursing undergrad program from one of the accredited colleges or universities in Canada, you must also pass the Canadian Registered Nurse Exam. This is so that you can become fully licensed and be eligible for registration with the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia Canada (CRNBC).

Career Advancement

Nursing offers many opportunities to learn, grow, advance, and change career direction. After graduating from a basic Registered Nursing Program, you may choose to specialize in a variety of nursing areas including:

- operating room
- critical care
- neurosciences
- paediatrics
- emergency
- oncology
- community health
- or other clinical areas.

Whatever your interest – working with children, science and technology, teaching, promoting healthy practices or developing your leadership skills – nursing has endless opportunities for you.

After several years of working as a registered nurse, some have gone on to do more education. Many RN's go on to complete a Master's Degree in Nursing, Public Administration, Leadership programs, and doctorate Degrees to work as a clinical educator, manager, director, management roles, and other leadership roles. Others go on to take a Nurse Practitioner Master's Degree in order to practice as a Registered Nurse Practitioner.

Resources

Educational Programs

British Columbia Institute of Technology
<http://www.bcit.ca/health/>

Camosun College
<http://camosun.ca/>

College of New Caledonia
<http://www.cnc.bc.ca/>

College of the Rockies
<http://www.cotr.bc.ca/RegNurse/>
Douglas College
<http://www.douglas.bc.ca/home.html>

Kwantlen College
<http://www.kwantlen.ca/home.html>

Langara College
<http://www.langara.bc.ca/>

North Island College
<http://www.nic.bc.ca/>

Okanagan University College
<http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/>

Selkirk College
<http://selkirk.ca/>

University of British Columbia
<http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/>

University College of the Fraser Valley
<http://www.ufv.ca/home.htm>

University of Northern British Columbia
<http://www.unbc.ca/>

Thompson River University
<http://www.tru.ca/>

Trinity Western University
<http://www.twu.ca/>

Vancouver Community College
<http://www.vcc.ca/>

Vancouver Island University
<http://www.viu.ca/>

Financial assistance and bursaries

For information about student bursaries from the Registered Nurses Foundation, <http://www.rnfb.ca/bursary-info-and-application/>

For information about Canada student loans and grants
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml

Associations

Association of Registered Nurses of BC
<http://www.arnc.ca/>

College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNBC)
<https://www.crnbc.ca/Pages/Default.aspx>

Registered Nurses Foundation of BC
<http://www.rnfb.ca/bursary-info-and-application/>

Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)
<http://www.cna-aiic.ca/>