

# Nursing – Nurse Practitioner

## ***Nature of the Profession***

*A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse with advanced academic and clinical experience.*

*The nurse practitioner is able to diagnose and manage most common illnesses, either independently or as part of a health care team. The nurse practitioner provides some care previously offered only by physicians and, in most states, has the ability to prescribe medications.*

*Working in collaboration with a physician, a nurse practitioner provides high quality, cost effective, and individualized care.*

*With a strong emphasis on primary care, nurse practitioners are employed within several specialties, including neonatology, nurse-midwifery, pediatrics, school health, family and adult health, mental health, home care, and geriatrics.*

*Nurse practitioners are educated through programs that grant either a certificate or a master's degree. A registered nurse should have extensive clinical experience before applying to a nurse practitioner program. An intensive preceptorship under the supervision of a physician or an experienced nurse practitioner, as well as instruction in nursing theory, are key components in most programs.*

## **APTITUDES**

- Ability to learn biological sciences and practices of nursing
- Good math skills and strong verbal abilities for reading, writing, and speaking
- Good space and form perception, general coordination, and manual dexterity
- Ability to handle a variety of activities, make decisions based on data and observations
- Creativity, flexibility, ability to work under stress, and willingness to make decisions
- Good communication and interpersonal skills

## **EDUCATION**

To become a nurse practitioner, an applicant must first complete a baccalaureate degree in nursing and become licensed as a registered nurse. A registered nurse may then enter a master's degree program to become a nurse practitioner. Most master's degree programs require two years of full-time study.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN NEBRASKA**

- Clarkson College – Omaha (M)
- Creighton Health Sciences – Omaha (M)
- University of Nebraska Medical Center – Omaha, Kearney, Lincoln, Scottsbluff (M, D)

## **LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION**

An applicant for a license to practice as a nurse practitioner must be a registered nurse, complete an approved advanced registered nurse practitioner program at the master's level, and pass a national certifying exam.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

***American College of Nurse Practitioners***

Web Address: [www.nurse.org/acnp/](http://www.nurse.org/acnp/)

***American Academy of Nurse Practitioners***

Web Address: [www.aanp.org](http://www.aanp.org)