

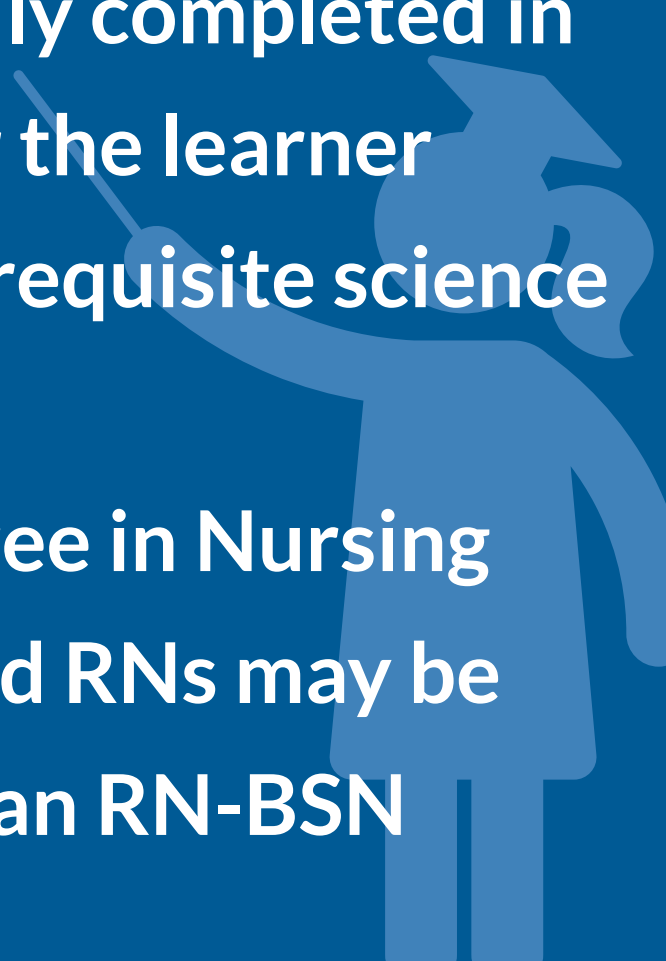
PATHWAY TO BECOMING A NURSE PRACTITIONER (NP)

Start Your Journey Here

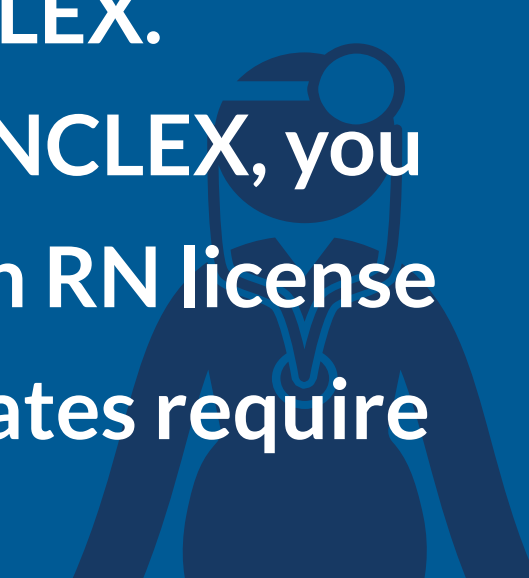
NPs have been providing primary, acute and specialty health care to patients of all ages and walks of life for over half a century. An NP is an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) who has additional education beyond that of a registered nurse (RN) to diagnose, manage and prescribe medications and treatments for patients. NPs have a graduate degree, have passed a national certification exam and are licensed in their state. As clinicians that blend clinical expertise in diagnosing and treating health conditions with an added emphasis on disease prevention and health management, NPs bring a comprehensive perspective and personal touch to health care.

Follow the steps below to begin your NP Journey!


STEP 1: Obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing

- A Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree is required for applying to a graduate NP program, even if you hold a bachelor's degree in another field.
 - Holders of a bachelor's degree in another field may be eligible for an accelerated BSN program, which is typically completed in two years after the learner completes prerequisite science courses.
 - Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)-prepared RNs may be candidates for an RN-BSN program.
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STEP 2: Pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and Receive an RN License

- The NCLEX is a national board certification exam required for state licensure. The exam tests your knowledge and critical thinking skills related to nursing.
 - Remember to contact the nursing regulatory body in your state to receive an Authorization to Test (ATT). You must have an ATT to take the NCLEX.
 - After you pass the NCLEX, you need to apply for an RN license in your state. All states require RNs to be licensed.
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STEP 3: Enroll in a Graduate Program

- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) programs build on the foundational knowledge of the BSN degree.
 - Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs build on MSN content.
 - Select the population focus and degree that you are interested in pursuing.
 - Research each program's accreditation and graduate certification rate before you apply to find the right match for you.
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STEP 4: Pass the National NP Certification Board Exam and Obtain NP Licensure

- Once you have completed your graduate program, you will need to pass a national board certification exam specific to your population focus.
 - After passing the exam, apply for initial NP licensure in your state.
 - NPs must periodically renew their certification and state licenses by meeting certain requirements, including continuing education. Consult the certification board and state regulatory body for specific requirements.
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