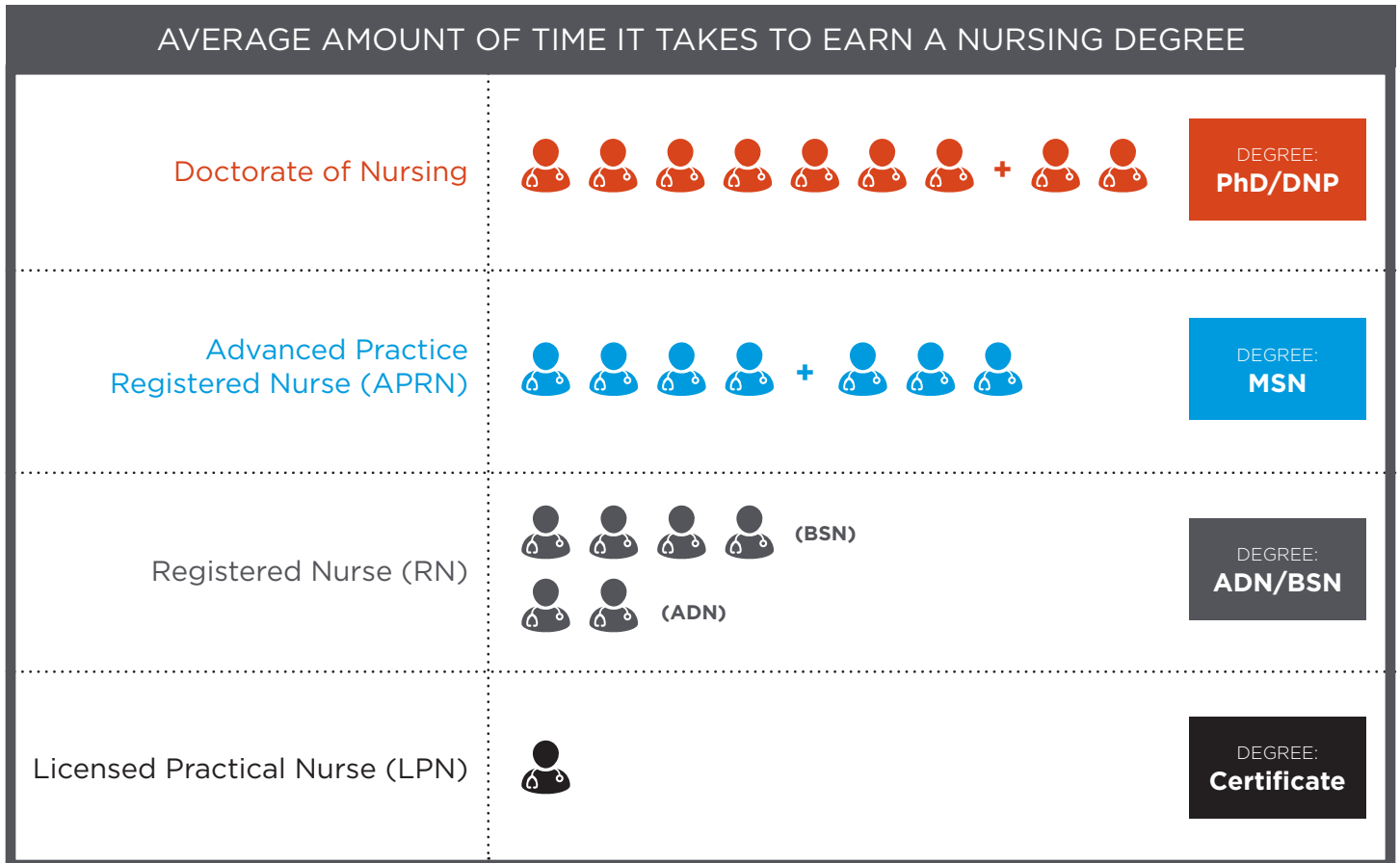


 = 1 ACADEMIC YEAR


DEGREE ABBREVIATIONS

ADN = Associate Degree in Nursing | BSN = Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree
 MSN = Masters of Science in Nursing Degree | DNP = Doctor of Nursing Practice

RN EDUCATION

To be eligible for a state license, nurses must complete a degree from an accredited school of nursing and pass the standardized National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)-RN.

- **ADN:** The Associate Degree in Nursing is offered by community colleges and hospital-based schools of nursing. Diplomas in Nursing are in decline and only available through hospital-based schools. To receive an ADN, a student nurse must complete clinical hours at the bedside, providing direct patient care.
- **BSN:** The Bachelor of Science in Nursing, offered at colleges and universities, prepares graduates to practice in all health care settings, and includes study of research, leadership, health care economics, informatics, and health policy. To receive a BSN, a student nurse must complete clinical hours at the bedside, providing direct patient care.
- **MSN:** Master's degree programs offer a number of tracks designed to prepare nurses for roles in administration, nursing education, business, government and advanced clinical practice. Must have a BSN to receive a MSN.
- **PhD/DNP:** PhDs typically teach and/or conduct research, while doctors of nursing practice focus on clinical practice or leadership roles.

HOW DO LPNs DIFFER FROM RNs?

- Licensed practical nurses (LPNs), complement the health care team by providing basic, routine care under supervision. An LPN scope of practice is not as broad as an RN. Additional education would be needed to qualify for RN licensure. LPN Education is generally include one year of coursework, offered in vocational program or community college.

ESSENTIAL CARE DELIVERED BY RNs AND APRNs

- Counsel and educate patients and families
- Conduct physical exams and obtain medical histories
- Administer medications, wound care and other direct patient care
- Provide preventive care such as screenings and immunizations
- Interpret patient information and make critical decisions about care
- Coordinate care with other health professionals
- Conduct research and translate findings to evidence-based best practices
- Direct and supervise health care personnel

ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES (APRN)

APRNs acquire specialized knowledge and skills through graduate or postgraduate education and certification in a specific role with a specific patient population, as defined by the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation. The level of autonomy an APRN has depends on the state and the clinical setting. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses include:

Certified Nurse Practitioner

Certified Nurse Practitioners work in specialty areas. These range widely, from cardiology to pediatrics and women's health, family care to surgical services, pain management and oncology. While they perform a range of services to patients and may assist doctors or other medical professionals, they are also often active in teaching and patient advocacy and may conduct research as well. They may provide care in a range of settings, including doctor's offices and hospitals, small clinics and other settings.

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

This type of advanced practice nurse provides anesthesia to a wide range of patients in a variety of care settings. They are certified to provide a full spectrum of anesthesia care, including for surgical procedures, and may work with healthy to very sick individuals of all ages and all levels of acuity.

Certified Nurse Midwife

A Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) provides many of the same services as a gynecologist and midwife combined. Not only does a CNM help women with contraceptive control and gynecologic care as well as family planning, she assists in all stages of the pregnancy cycle. This includes initial consultations as well as prenatal visits and exams and postpartum care for the mother and care of the newborn. A nurse midwife also spends a lot of her time actually assisting in births and may either work outside the hospital in women's homes, or inside the hospital with her own practice, where she is able to make many of the critical care decisions, if not all.

Certified Clinical Nurse Specialist

A Clinical Nurse Specialist, as indicated by the title, specializes in a certain area of medicine. These areas include:

- › Setting: You may earn your specialty depending on where you work, such as in a clinic, in critical care or in the emergency room.
- › Population: Your specialization may link to the population you serve, such as children, women or the elderly.
- › Disease: You may choose to focus on a specific disease or group of diseases, such as cancer (oncology), heart disease or diabetes.
- › Health Problem: If you choose to specialize in specific issues such as pain, wounds or stress, you may specialize in a health problem area.
- › Care Type: You can specialize in care type, such as psychiatric or rehabilitative, if you wish to work with a specific type of patient undergoing a specific health condition.

Clinical Nurse Specialists, like all the advanced practice nursing types, do also provide primary patient care to those under their scope.