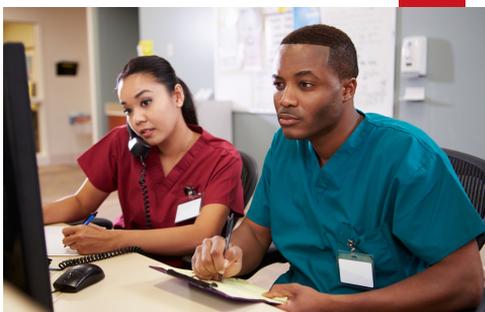
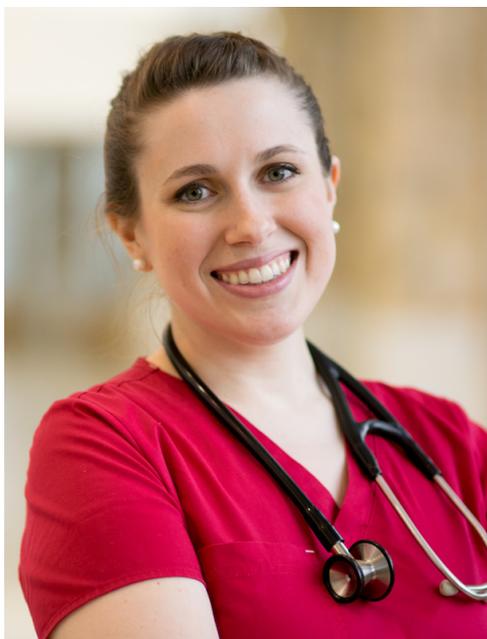




**A GUIDE ON**

# **ADVANCING YOUR NURSING CAREER**

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## **NURSING CAN BE AN INFINITELY REWARDING CAREER PATH.**

It is also an ever-evolving field of practice, one that offers plenty of opportunities for growth, professional development, and advancement. Many people get into nursing because of an innate desire to help people, and before long, dream of taking their career to the next level and making even more of an impact on patients' lives. If you are looking to boost your nursing career, CynaMed is a great place to start. Whether your motivation for advancement is a desire for higher pay, more challenging job roles, increased job satisfaction, or something else, there are several ways you can go about moving up in the nursing field. Follow our guide on advancing in your nursing career to improve your chances of landing the nursing job of your dreams.

# 6 WAYS TO TAKE YOUR NURSING CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL



## FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION

If you hope to advance your nursing career, one of the first things you should focus on is your education. Some of the more specialized career paths for nurses require an advanced degree, and while going back to school may seem like a huge commitment, furthering your education can make a significant difference in the career opportunities available to you. For instance, some advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) positions require a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree, and other advanced nursing positions require a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree.



## FIND A NURSE MENTOR

As we mentioned above, nursing can be an incredibly rewarding career path. It can also be a challenging one. Nurses encounter difficult situations on a daily basis that the average worker will never have to deal with, which can be both frustrating and isolating. Finding a nurse mentor they can consult with, learn from, and ask for advice can be critical in helping nurses successfully navigate these challenges, avoid burnout, and discover new career opportunities.

“Identifying a mentor can provide a newer nurse with a guide who can navigate them through the multitude of options that baccalaureate prepared nurses have in their careers,” explains Kim Hawkins, PhD, APRN, FNP-C, BSN program director at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky. “This can vary from bedside expert, manager, administrator, educator, advanced practice and other options.” A mentor can also connect newbie nurses with their vast professional network or provide a valuable reference for their next job.



## JOIN A PROFESSIONAL NURSING ORGANIZATION

Joining a professional nursing organization is another great way for nurses to make valuable connections and discover new job opportunities. Nursing associations are dedicated to fostering the personal and professional development of members, and they provide information, resources and opportunities to nurses that they may not have access to otherwise. According to the American Nurses Association (ANA), “professional development is a vital phase of lifelong learning in which nurses engage to develop and maintain competence, enhance professional nursing practice, and support the achievement of career goals.” There are more than 100 nursing organizations in the United States, so you should have no trouble finding one that meshes with your career goals.



## LEVERAGE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Experience plays a huge role in your ability to advance in your nursing career. Your level of education may be very similar to other nurses looking to get to that next stage in their career, but your experience and skills can help set you apart from other nursing candidates in the field. Work in as many nursing units as possible and gain as much practical experience as you can so you can figure out what you like and don't like. This can also help you hone your skills and give you an advantage when looking for a more advanced position. Even if you are relatively new to nursing, any relevant and applicable prior experience from your previous career can be leveraged within the context of a nursing career.



## EARN A SPECIALIZATION CERTIFICATION

You might think that developing your nursing skills in a variety of areas would make you a more desirable candidate for advanced nursing positions. In reality though, narrowing your focus can actually be a great way to demonstrate your expertise in a specific area of nursing and set yourself apart from the competition. By earning a certification in your desired specialty, you can improve your chances of advancing your nursing career, especially if the certification is through a reputable organization, such as the American Academy of Nursing Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB) or the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). The following are some examples of possible clinical specializations for nurses:

- Cardiac surgery (CSC)
- Dialysis (CDN)
- Adult critical care (CCRN)
- Progressive care (PCCN)
- Pediatric critical (CCRN)
- Gastroenterology (CGRN)



## **STAY UP-TO-DATE ON HEALTHCARE RESEARCH**

The healthcare field is always changing, and if you are serious about advancing in your nursing career, staying up-to-date on healthcare and nursing research and news is crucial. In some cases, you can demonstrate leadership and industry awareness simply by being informed, which you can accomplish by reading blogs, listening to podcasts, or keeping up with the news. If you can position yourself as someone who is educated and informed about new industry trends and advancements in nursing and healthcare, others will begin to view you as an authority in the field, which can only help your career.



## **PURSuing A MORE ADVANCED NURSING CAREER**

With so many options for advancing in your nursing career, figuring out where to focus your efforts may seem like a daunting task. Fortunately, pursuing a more advanced nursing career isn't an endeavor you have to attempt all at once. In fact, for many nurses, career advancement is something that they tackle bit by bit over the course of their entire career. That sounds much more manageable, doesn't it? If you are ready to commit to taking your career to the next level, earn the money you deserve, and create long-lasting job satisfaction, use this guide on advancing in your nursing career to plan your next steps.



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