

Nurses Now Do More Than Ever

(NAPSA)—The next time you visit someone in a hospital or other health care setting, you may be surprised at just how much of what happens there is done by nurses.

Study Shows

Recently released results from a University of Phoenix College of Health Professions survey found that the role of nurses has grown dramatically in recent years. More than eight in 10 registered nurses (RNs) say health care professionals besides physicians (nurse practitioners, registered nurses and so on) are playing or will play a larger role in the overall management of patient care.

University of Phoenix, which offers leading-edge graduate, undergraduate, certificate and nondegree programs aimed at preparing students to improve the quality of health care in their communities and the industry, sought to understand the evolving role of nurses and what this changing environment means for the future of health care.

In addition to playing a larger role in managing patient care, it found, about a third of RNs say they've seen an increased role in doing tasks traditionally done by a physician. This may be due in part to specialty tracks available to nurses, including nurse practitioner programs.

"Our nurses play a pivotal role in getting patients back to health in an increasingly demanding environment," explained Dr. Lisa Radesi, academic dean for the School of Nursing at University of Phoenix. "As the health care industry continues to evolve to support an aging population, advanced technologies and a multifaceted insurance system, we must recognize the demanding work our nurses do and prepare them to be successful in this complex environment."

Looking Forward

When asked how they expect their role to change within the next five years, RNs cited the following for most anticipated changes:

- Increasing involvement with information systems (43 percent)
- Increasing involvement with regulations (43 percent)
- Increasingly greater role in the management of overall patient care planning (40 percent)
- Increasingly greater leadership role (36 percent).



In the next five years, many nurses expect to have increased involvement in regulations and information systems.

About a third of RNs say they'll be focusing more on the emotional well-being of patients, while nearly three in five strongly agree that good people skills are just as important as technical skills when giving quality care.

"The ability to balance bedside care with technical and leadership skills is crucial for today's nurses," added Dr. Radesi. "The job expectations for nurses continue to grow, but the heart of the profession will always be in providing the best possible care for patients. This should be encouraging, as nurses can use these new skills to continue to learn and grow within their roles while healing and helping their patients."

A Promising Career

As opportunities continue to increase in the profession—the Bureau of Labor Statistics notes that employment of registered nurses is projected to grow 15 percent by 2026—RNs say their facilities should focus on preparing health care professionals with greater leadership skills.

"The field continues to evolve, requiring facilities and educational institutions to innovate to provide nurses with the information they need to help them succeed in the profession," said Dr. Radesi. "University of Phoenix, for example, aligns its programs to leading industry organization standards, and offers concentrations in nurse administration, nurse education, informatics and more to help nurses specialize in what's most important to them."

Learn More

For further information about the College of Health Professions, visit www.phoenix.edu. For full survey information and details about College of Health Professions programs, please visit phoenix.edu.