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Title:

Important Steps to Complete Before Applying for Nursing School

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Summary:

According to the Bureau of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook, the demand for skilled nurses is at an all-time high, and is only expected to go higher. Between now and 2016, the nursing occupation will generate nearly 600,000 new jobs, and hundreds of thousands of positions that already exist will need to be filled.

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Scrubs, Nursing Uniforms, Nursing School, Nursing Masters Degree, Nursing Scrubs, Online Nursing Program, Nursing Scholarship

Article Body:

According to the Bureau of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook, the demand for skilled nurses is at an all-time high, and is only expected to go higher. Between now and 2016, the nursing occupation will generate nearly 600,000 new jobs, and hundreds of thousands of positions that already exist will need to be filled. The demand for registered nurses will be higher than the demand for any other occupation for the next decade. If you are considering a career in nursing, there has never been a better time to pursue this rewarding field.

There are three different paths that will lead to an RN, a certificate that declares you a Registered Nurse. Before you apply for nursing school, you should carefully consider the kind of nursing position you want to aim for. There are currently over 700 programs that offer bachelors' degrees in nursing, a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing). There are about 850 programs at community colleges and other schools that offer an AN, an Associates Degree in Nursing, and about 70 programs that offer a diploma in nursing. Any of the three types of programs will qualify you for an entry level position in nursing. They differ largely in the amount of time each takes to complete and the types of jobs for which you will qualify. Here are just a few important considerations and steps to complete before you apply for a nursing school.

<b>1. Explore the many career options available in nursing.</b><br>

There are dozens of different career paths in nursing. While most people think of nurses in a hospital setting, it is far from the only type of nursing. Registered nurses work in doctors' offices and for insurance companies. They may be involved in doing research studies to help discover cures and new treatments for diseases, or work in administration to help shape and set medical policy. Some nurses work in public agencies like health departments of the Centers for Disease Control. Others go on to further education so that they can become nurse practitioners, physician assistants or nurse midwives. Some nurses even combine their careers with a love of travel and adventure to become travel nurses, working on cruise ships, resorts or with travel tour groups.

Before you start considering nursing schools, think about the kind of career that you want, and then make your choice of nursing program based on your career decisions.

<b>2. Get your high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma.</b><br>

Finishing high school is important, especially if you are considering a nursing career that requires a higher degree. Consider weighting your classes toward studies that will help prepare you for the courses and prerequisites for nursing courses. High school biology and chemistry courses will lay a solid groundwork for courses that you will have to complete in order to get a degree or certificate in nursing.

<b>3. Explore financial aid options.</b><br>

There are many sources available to help you fund your education in nursing. The first place to start is the federal government, where you can apply for Pell Grants and other educational grants, as well as qualify for low interest student loans with deferred repayment plans. Be sure to check into any special loan programs offered for those pursuing a career in medicine or nursing. As the demand for nurses grows, there will be more incentives available for those who want to enter the field.

Besides FAFSA (the federal student financial aid programs), there are many other sources. If you are post high-school and working, check with your employer to find out if they offer tuition reimbursement for nursing programs. Check with local hospitals and your local and state government as well. In many cities where the nursing shortage is especially acute, there are grants and loans available to those who commit to "giving back" by working in local and state hospitals after receiving their certificate or degree.

<b>4. Choose several nursing programs in which you are interested.</b><br>

There are nearly 1,600 accredited nursing programs in the United States. Once you have decided on the type of program you want to attend, you can search for programs that fit your criteria. Among the factors you should consider are location, reputation, accreditation and availability of financial aid. Once you have narrowed your choices, contact the programs to find out about their requirements for admission so that you can make sure to fulfill them before applying.