

Do you have what it takes to be a Nurse?

What does it take to be a nurse?

Often students have limited information about what it really takes to be a nurse. Family or friends or messages from the popular media often portray that the only thing you need to be a nurse is a caring attitude, willingness to help people, etc. Unfortunately, this is not the case. You must be willing to care for others, but you also have to have the mental, physical, emotional and ethical abilities to care for people in a safe and effective manner. In general, students who are admitted to the nursing program must have excellent intellectual abilities, ACT scores, GPA and usually graduated in the top 10-25% of their high school class.

You will need maturity and critical thinking skills to make quick and correct decisions in emergencies, emotional stability to deal with multiple and often conflicting patient and bureaucratic demands, and moral character to safeguard patient information, property and controlled substances. Before you decide to spend time and money taking coursework towards admission to the nursing program, please consider the following items.

Legal Issues

Students who have been convicted of ANY felony or a misdemeanor involving drugs, alcohol, fraud etc. will be denied admission to school of nursing. Students who do not disclose their criminal backgrounds will be denied admission or dismissed from the program if they are admitted. See note from the KBN below.

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS OF NURSING ON STUDENTS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

The Kentucky Board of Nursing is authorized by law to deny a license or to issue a license under disciplinary conditions because of an applicant's criminal conviction. KRS 314.091(1) states, in part: "The board [of nursing] shall have power to reprimand, deny, limit, revoke, probate, or suspend any license ... to practice nursing issued by the board or applied for in accordance with this chapter ... upon proof that the person ... (b) has been convicted of any felony, or a misdemeanor involving drugs, alcohol, fraud, deceit, falsification of records, a breach of trust, physical harm or endangerment to others, or dishonesty..."

Therefore, please talk to us about ANY criminal background (even if it has been expunged, even if you were a minor, even if you don't think it applies to who you are now, even if it was just bad checks or a DUI or smoking pot, or you were being abused, etc.)

Physical, mental, and emotional requirements

Mental health, chemical dependency, or physical evaluation of licensee or applicant -- Suspension or denial of application until person submits to evaluation. (Effective June 1, 2007) From KRS 314.085

Nursing is a mentally, emotionally and physically demanding profession. People who have prior difficulties with emotional stability (depression, anxiety, ADHD or other psychiatric disorder) will mostly likely find that their mental health condition is exacerbated (made worse) by nursing school and by practicing in the nursing profession. Nurses who have mental illness may have their licenses suspended for public safety reasons. Nurses may not

be allowed to take common medications for treatment of various illnesses while practicing as a nurse. This is particularly true if the board of nursing judges that use of such medication while on duty would impair the nurse's judgment and critical thinking skills, and thus could endanger patients. Please talk to us about any history of mental illness prior to taking classes towards admission into nursing.

Nurses often work 12 hour shifts, night shifts, and mandatory overtime (most full time nurses work 48 hours a week due to overtime). Nurses often are on their feet much of their working shift and often have to manage multiple and competing tasks. Please talk to us about any physical or sensory limitations prior to taking classes towards admission into nursing.

Technical Standards for Nursing:

An individual must be able to independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet the following technical standards of general abilities and those specifically of (1) observation; (2) communication; (3) motor; (4) intellectual, conceptual, and quantitative abilities; (5) essential behavioral and social attributes; and (6) ability to manage stressful situations. Individuals unable to meet these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, will not be able to complete the program and are counseled to pursue alternate careers.

General Abilities: The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, and smell so that data received by the senses may be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. A student must also possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information needed to effectively evaluate patients. A student must be able to respond promptly to urgent situations that may occur during clinical training activities and must not hinder the ability of other members of the health care team to provide prompt treatment and care to patients.

Observational Ability: The student must have sufficient capacity to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of laboratory studies, medication administration, and patient care activities. In addition, the student must be able to document these observations and maintain accurate records.

Communication Ability: The student must communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally to elicit information and to translate that information to others. Each student must have the ability to read, write, comprehend and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, their family members, and other professionals in health care settings. In addition, the student must be able to maintain accurate patient records, present information in a professional, logical manner and provide patient counseling and instruction to effectively care for patients and their families. The student must communicate effectively verbally and in writing with instructors and other students in the classroom setting as well.

Motor Ability: The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to perform complete physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A student must develop the psychomotor skills reasonably needed to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment, and such maneuvers to assist

with patient care activities such as lifting, wheel chair guidance, and mobility. The student must have sufficient levels of neuromuscular control and eye-to-hand coordination as well as possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for satisfactory and safe performance in the clinical and classroom settings including performing CPR if necessary. The student must possess the ability of manual dexterity such as to draw up solutions in a syringe.

Intellectual, Conceptual, and Quantitative Abilities: The student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a nurse. Problem solving involves the abilities to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective data, and to make decisions, often in a time urgent environment, that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation and sound clinical judgment. Each student must demonstrate mastery of these skills and possess the ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the nursing and medical literature to formulate sound judgment in patient assessment, intervention, evaluation, teaching, and setting short and long term goals.

Behavioral and Social Attributes: Compassion, integrity, motivation, effective interpersonal skills, and concern for others are personal attributes required of those in the nursing programs. Personal comfort and acceptance of the role of a nurse functioning under supervision of a clinical instructor or preceptor is essential for a nursing student. The student must possess the skills required for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical settings; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other members of the health care team. Each student must be able to exercise stable, sound judgment and to complete assessment and interventional activities. The ability to establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds is critical for practice as a nurse. The student must be able to adapt to changing environments; display flexibility; accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical settings; effectively interact in the clinical setting with other members of the healthcare team; and learn to function cooperatively and efficiently in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical practice.

Examinations: Certain courses in the nursing programs require students to take timed and/or online examinations. Students may be required to take timed, online and/or other types of examinations in a proctored, secure setting that is acceptable to the program.

Ability to Manage Stressful Situations: The student must be able to adapt to and function effectively to stressful situations in both the classroom and clinical settings, including emergency situations. Students will encounter multiple stressors while in the nursing programs. These stressors may be (but are not limited to) personal, patient care/family, faculty/peer, and or program related.

<http://www.drexel.edu/CNHP/nursing/technical.asp>