

Practical Nursing Certificate (PNC)

Certificate Program Limited Enrollment



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Career Definition

Practical nurses are members of the health care team and work under the supervision of nurses and/or physicians to provide care for people who are sick, injured, or convalescent.

Program Overview

The Practical Nursing Program is a 37-credit hour certificate program that includes theory and clinical experiences. This program can be completed in one year. Upon completion of the program, graduates are eligible to sit for the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX-PN). This exam is required to obtain licensure as a practical nurse. Consistent with the passing of this exam, the candidate's name is entered into the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation as a practical nurse.

In 2011, graduates of the Harper College Practical Nursing Program had a 100 percent pass rate on this exam.

Program Outcomes

At the conclusion of the program the student should be able to:

- provide safe holistic care for a diverse population of clients.
- utilize critical thinking skills to improve client outcomes.
- communicate effectively with clients, families and members of the health care team.
- collaborate with colleagues and other disciplines in health care to promote wellness.
- practice nursing in compliance with legal, ethical and professional standards.
- demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

Program Requirements

- To complete the program all theory classes, laboratory and clinical experiences must be attended and skills competence demonstrated. Attendance and material covered are federal and State of Illinois mandated requirements.
- Students must achieve a satisfactory theory grade of 76 percent in order to pass the course. Clinical evaluation is pass/fail. A “passing” evaluation is required for the theory, laboratory and clinical components of the class. Unsafe or unethical performance can result in immediate dismissal from the class.
- A criminal background check is required by Illinois law and is initiated before the class begins. You will receive the paperwork for this process once you are accepted into the program.
- Clinical experiences begin approximately the second week of class and may be scheduled on the weekend and during the day or in the evening. You must provide your own transportation to the various clinical sites.
- The textbook, workbook, electronic devices and other required materials may be purchased at the Harper Bookstore. A required list of textbooks and resources are given to students at the information session that follows admittance into this limited enrollment program.

Opportunities for Employment

Employment for the practical nurse is expected to grow in response to an increasing elderly population, as well as the increase in clients being seen in the community.

Practical nurses work in long-term care facilities, doctor's offices and home health agencies.

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*Certificate Program, continued . . .
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Opportunities for Advancement

Graduates use their Practical Nursing Certificate as a springboard to advance their nursing career to later become registered nurses and / or other advanced levels of nursing.

Helpful Academic Skills

- High school sciences, English and communication courses
- The Certified Nursing Certificate

Professional Organization Web Sites

- National League of Nursing:
www.nln.org
- U.S. Department of Labor:
www.bls.gov
- Illinois Department of Public Health:
www.idph.state.il.us
- Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations:
www.idfpr.com
- National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission:
www.nlnac.org
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing:
www.ncsbn.org