Certified Nursing Assistant/Aide

Nursing assistants help nurses in nearly every aspect of nursing care in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, assisted living, and home health. In hospitals, nursing assistants also provide daily care to patients, such as helping with meals, baths, exercises, and treatments. Nursing assistants are responsible for recording vital signs (pulse, respiration, blood pressure, and temperature), recording fluid intake and outputs, weights, and recording other observations. They must be familiar with normal values for vital sign measurements and observations and report normal and abnormal findings to a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.

In outpatient clinics, nursing assistants are primarily responsible for preparing patients for the examination by a physician or nurse. They are also responsible for making sure the patients, nurses, and physicians receive the help they need during examinations or treatments. Other duties involve monitoring and stocking medical supplies, and clinic scheduling. In rural Alaska, Native speaking nursing assistants are often called upon to provide crucial translation skills.

Where do they work?

Nursing assistants work wherever nurses are employed. Rural Alaska employers include regional hospitals, specialty clinics operated by regional health corporations or state and federal agencies, and community-based health care programs.

Educational Requirements

- Graduation from high school is not required, but if students do not have a high school diploma, they need to have a GED or take a prerequisite test such as the ABLE test or Accuplacer. The test required depends on the academic program.

- Completion of an approved Nursing Assistant training program. All Alaska programs are required to provide a minimum of 60 hours of classroom instruction and 80 clinician hours of supervised clinical practice.

- Successful completion of a certification examination is increasingly being required. Certification is required to work as a nursing assistant in long term care and home health settings.

Hourly Wage Range

$13.22-$23.46 (Mean $18.04)*
*Based on 2016 Alaska DOL data

Years in School

2 years or less (after high school graduation)

Academic Programs in Alaska

Training programs are available at vocational schools, some high schools, and at many facilities that employ Nursing Assistants, such as Providence Extended Care. The University of Alaska has programs on many of its branch campuses.

The State of Alaska maintains a list of academic programs. For more information, see https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/NurseAideRegistry.aspx and check on the link under Certification Information: State Approved Nurse Aide Programs.

National/State Contact

There does not appear to be a state or national association for Nursing Assistants. For information on licensing, programs, and program requirements, contact:

Alaska Board of Nursing
Contact Danielle Curry. Licensing Examiner
Phone: (907) 269-8169
Fax: (907) 269-8196
Email: danielle.curry@alaska.gov
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/