

Nursing Philosophy

Nursing is one of the most unique professions that exists. Within nursing and its many branches, one has the opportunity to grow not only professionally but also personally, providing achievements rarely offered in any other field. Advanced practice nursing adds further diversity and complexity to the nursing role. The rewards of advanced practice nursing are immeasurable, including the art of healing on a daily basis, positively affecting another human being's life, utilizing critical thinking skills to ensure optimal care for patients, and giving back to society in ways that improve the health and outcomes of members of a community.

Centered firmly within nursing is health and how we view the definition of health can greatly influence the way we care for patients. Health is commonly interpreted as the absence of illness and disease. I believe health encompasses more than this. Health is a state of ideal physical, mental, and social status based on individual interpretation. What I define as an optimal state of health is not what another would delineate it as, so it cannot be accurately written to include all human beings. My goal as an advanced practice nurse (APN) is to help bring patients as close to their personal belief of health and happiness as possible.

An advanced practice nurse has specific responsibilities and qualities that provide for separation from other nursing roles. With an educational foundation rooted in nursing, care given by an APN is more holistic in nature than other medical professions. Patient care is focused on all aspects of a person, including emotional, mental, and physical well-being. APNs achieve a higher level of education, which allows for a deeper understanding of human disease and treatment, health promotion and disease prevention, and the provision of community healthcare. Emphasis is largely put on preventing disease in advanced practice nursing. Early detection and screening for common health ailments like diabetes and hypertension by APNs ensures a healthier community. When prevention of disease is not possible, APNs provide evidence-based treatment to patients in order to restore the person back to their optimal state of health.

APNs are an integral part of the health care team and system. They make up a large portion of the healthcare providers throughout the United States. For this reason, APNs are in a prime position to participate in political activism that advocates for patients and their safety. The APN has the ability to contribute direction and leadership on behalf of their patients by being active in the political arena and community. APNs have an obligation to reach out to the community with the goal of optimizing the health of members of society.

Research is another important piece of the APN role. It is our duty as an APN to continually search for the best treatments and health regimens based on evidence in research to bring to our patients. Furthermore, the APN must keep up to date on the newest guidelines in order to render the best care possible to patients. APNs may also participate in research studies that could benefit future patients with new treatments and protocols.

Advanced practice nursing has a special place within the nursing profession. The role of the APN will continue to change and evolve as the healthcare system does. As APNs, we must be flexible and willing to fulfill the needs of society as these changes occur.