

Financial Aid Question

Are nursing schools offering free tuition due to nursing shortages?

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What are we going to do if there aren't enough nurses? It's a question the United States and countries worldwide need to answer, especially in this pandemic.

Nursing shortages have been a problem in past years. It's, therefore, no surprise that COVID-19 has exacerbated the problem. For some states and colleges, the answer is to help cover tuition costs for nursing students.

If you're looking to become a nursing professional, you'd want to know of available scholarships due to the shortage of nurses.

The Current Situation of Nursing Shortages

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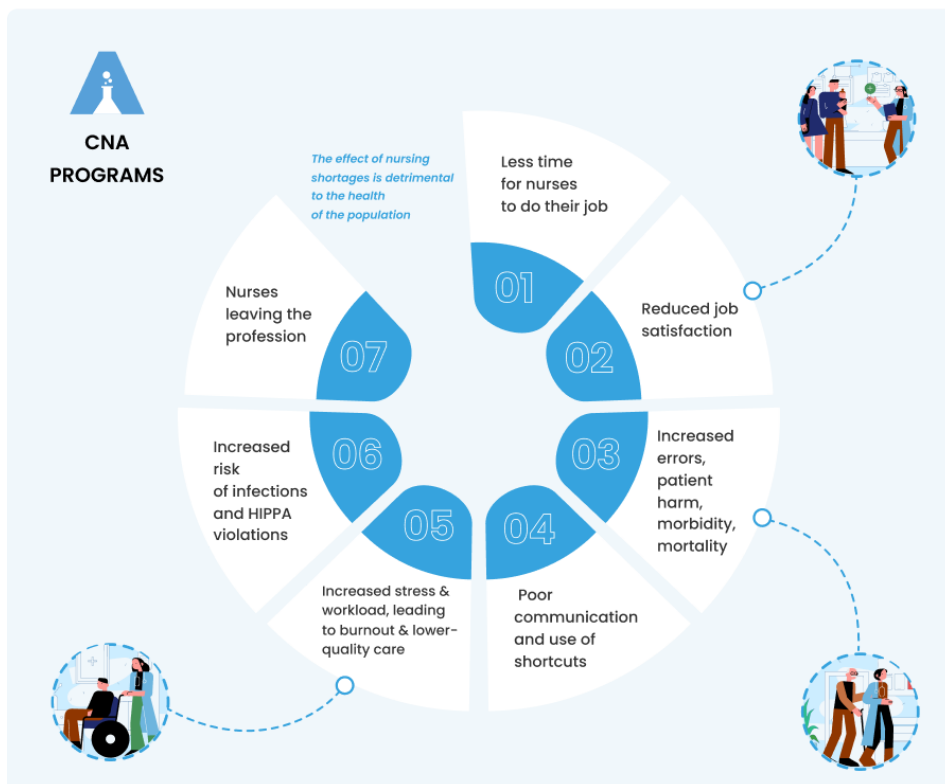
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In recent years, there has been a growing concern about nursing shortages. Nurses are critical to the healthcare profession and the population's overall health.

The [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) (BLS) estimates that the number of jobs available for nurses will increase by about 9% by 2030, with 194,500 nursing jobs becoming available each year.

BLS also notes that the projected growth aligns with the average growth rate among all professions.

However, the [American Nurses Association](#) claims that the number of available nursing jobs is higher than available jobs in **any other profession**.

There's an imbalance between the [supply of nurses and the demand for nurses](#). For example, in California, nurses are estimated to reach 343,400 by 2030. Meanwhile, the demand for nurses is estimated to be 387,900 by the same year.

Regardless of what stats and websites you look at, more nurse practitioners need to enter the workforce to replace the nurses leaving or retiring.

If new nurses don't fill these open positions, there'll be a nursing shortage. And in some areas, shortages are already happening.

Why Are There Nursing Shortages?

According to [StatPearls](#), some of the important reasons for nursing shortages include:

An aging population requires more nurses

U.S. citizens are growing older. The population has more health demands and needs health professionals to tend to them.

The workforce is aging, so many nurses are retiring

Similar to the aging population requiring more nursing help, the number of nurses reaching the point of retirement is also rising. As nurses retire, more nurses need to join the profession to replace them.

Nurses are seeking to balance career and family life

Some nurses quit their jobs because of family responsibilities and the desire to build their own families. Others are only able to work part-time because of family responsibilities.

Nurses are experiencing nurse burnout and are leaving the profession as a result

Nursing is a stressful profession. Some people choose to leave the profession for reasons related to feeling drained and overwhelmed.

Nursing Shortages and COVID-19

While the data is perhaps inconclusive, the COVID-19 pandemic has likely increased nursing burnout and contributed to the number of nurses leaving the profession.

According to the [University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences](#), COVID-19 possibly led to early retirement for many nurses.

For example, many hospitals shut down elective surgeries at the start of the pandemic. There weren't as many people in the hospital for reasons other than COVID-19.

So, some nurses experienced furloughs. Some hospitals encouraged older nurses to retire early.

The healthcare stress during the pandemic is also a contributing factor to nurses leaving the profession. Initially, medical professionals knew very little about the virus and how to treat the resulting symptoms effectively.

Many nurses were transferred from other departments to help manage the influx of COVID-19 patients. These new assignments have been draining and demanding for nurses.

The Impact of Nursing Shortages

The effect of nursing shortages is detrimental to the health of the population, including healthcare staff. Shortages contribute to a vicious cycle that makes the healthcare system dangerous and ineffective.

Some of the top problems resulting from shortages include:

- Less time for nurses to do their job
- Reduced job satisfaction
- Nurses leaving the profession
- Poor communication and use of shortcuts
- Increased stress and workload, leading to burnout and lower-quality care
- Increased risk of infections and HIPPA violations
- Increased errors, patient harm, morbidity, and mortality

States Offering Financial Help to Nursing Students

What are states doing to tackle the growing concerns of nursing shortages?

Some states are taking direct action to help increase incentives for students in accredited programs. Such incentives include covering the costs of nursing programs.

Some colleges in the country are also taking a similar approach. Here are a few groups offering scholarship opportunities to support nursing students:

New York

On [November 18, 2021](#), the governor of New York, Kathy Hochul, announced a new scholarship program called "Nurses for Our Future."

The scholarship is for nursing students attending the City University of New York and the State University of New York. This program is offering to cover the full tuition of 1,000 nursing students.

Kentucky

In Kentucky, [UPike's Elliott School of Nursing](#) provides free tuition to nursing students. The stipulation is that these registered nurses will be required to work for three years at the Pikeville Medical Center.

The governor of Kentucky is also trying to include student loan forgiveness for nursing students in the state budget and pay increases for healthcare workers.

He further declared a [state of emergency](#) on the lack of nursing staff with plans to help the state board of nursing increase the enrollment of students in nursing programs.

West Virginia

West Virginia is seeking to [allocate funds](#) to expand education opportunities

for nurses.

Governor Jim Justice plans to use \$48 million from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act funding to help increase the state's number of nurses.

Part of this money will go toward a scholarship program for nursing students and expanding nursing programs throughout the state.

The governor also wants to use the funds to encourage more nurse professionals to become nurse educators. He's seeking to create a nursing faculty loan repayment program to help make this process easier for potential nurse educators.

Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin System offers \$500 tuition reimbursement to 1,000 nursing and pharmacy students with a specific stipulation. The students need to work at least 50 hours in a hospital or other healthcare setting before February 2022.

This tuition refund is part of state efforts to help students get training while also helping with staff shortages.

Minnesota

In Minnesota, shortage concerns are more on certified nursing assistant (CNA) positions. CNAs are also a critical part of the healthcare workforce.

Minnesota plans to use \$3.5 million of its funds from the COVID relief package to cover the training costs for CNAs. The state's goal is to add 1,000 certified nursing assistants to the workforce by the end of January of 2022.

Where to Look For More Information or Get Updates for New Programs

When it comes to finding information about scholarships available for nurses, there are four main areas to focus on: states, colleges, hospitals, and nursing news.

States

You can look for information related to the specific state where you plan on attending nursing school. Focusing on one particular state tailors your search to state scholarship information specific to you.

For example, suppose you live in New York. In that case, you can follow the developing story about the full scholarships for nursing students and how you can apply for one of them.

Schools

Do you have a list of potential educational institutions you want to attend for higher education? Check out scholarships available to nurses in those colleges.

Contact the school directly to ask about scholarships available to nursing students. You can even mention scholarships offered by other colleges to help compare your options.

Hospitals or Organizations

You can enquire about tuition and loan help from specific hospitals.

Suppose you plan to work at a particular hospital after your education. In that case, you can ask if they can offer you any financial assistance with your student loans.

If you're interested in working for a specific organization, scholarships may also be available through the organization.

Nursing News

Finally, your inquiry can also be particular to the latest in the nursing field. Here are a few websites that cover nursing news:

[American Association of Colleges of Nursing](#)

This site offers information about the latest in nursing, including information related to students and scholarships. It also has a comprehensive list of search engines for scholarship and financial aid information.

[Nursing Times](#)

This site explicitly covers the latest in nursing news, including the latest in nursing shortages. However, you do have to pay a membership fee for full access.

[American Nurses Association \(ANA\)](#)

Membership with ANA will cost you \$15 a month. But they do have the latest in nursing news. The group is an authoritative source when it comes to the nursing profession.

Where to Look for General Scholarship Information

A great way to start looking for scholarships is to search the institutions that

pick your interest and the state where you plan to practice.

Several sites do offer information about scholarships in general. Other sites provide information about nursing scholarships. Here are just a few to get you started:

[Scholarship360](#)

This group has helpful search engine tools that help you discover scholarships in various categories. You can look for scholarships based on the profession you're interested in or by a specific state.

[Johnson and Johnson](#)

This website offers a great way to search for specific nursing scholarships, and it provides some helpful general scholarship information.

[Careeronestop](#)

This group explains different careers and has lots of data about scholarships. So, they can tell you more about nurses' salaries and help you decide if the profession is a good fit for you.

[ExploreHealthCareers.org](#)

This website allows you to choose where you'd be best suited in the healthcare field. It has a special section to look for scholarship information.

Conclusion

The demand and need for nurses continue to rise. Along with that is an increase in financial help available for those interested in nursing school. It's best to start now and get any financial support available.

Nursing is a gratifying profession that allows you to make a difference. It's best to jump on scholarship opportunities to get a foot in the nursing profession.

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