

# Perioperative nursing

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Perioperative Nurses are a breed of their own. Handling the responsibilities in the operation room well is critical to the success of any surgical situation. It takes an individual with a clear healthy focused mind to handle the stress and physical burden it can bring. There are three distinct ways for perioperative nurses to serve within the operating room: as scrub nurse, circulating nurse or as RN First Assistant. The ones who choose and operate the instruments and whatever accessories needed for the surgical operation are called scrub nurses.

Circulating nurses, on the other hand, are those who manage the overall nursing care in the operating room and help maintain a safe, comfortable environment. Should perioperative nurses want to elevate their education and responsibilities, they may eventually become certified Registered Nurse First Assistants or even further as nurse anesthetists. The RN First Assistant directly assists the surgeon in the operation by controlling the patient's bleeding, giving wound exposure and suturing incisions.

Nurse anesthetists, on the other hand, are allowed to apply the anesthesia to the patient, observe his vital signs while the operation is on-going and assist in care after anesthesia has been given. Becoming a Registered Nurse can be done through a bachelor's science degree in nursing, an associate degree in nursing or a simple diploma course. However, according to Francisca Ravara, a perioperative nurse for six years, academic training is essential but the best way to really get a feel of this career is by being assigned to the emergency room where almost everything is done quickly and even small mistakes or "being slow can make someone die.

" Presence of mind and quick thinking are some of the key traits that those who want to pursue this career should possess. Handling physical and emotional stress is also an important skill to learn. Operating room nurses are exposed to a lot of occupational hazards because of their possible involvement in constant fast-paced activities, handling instruments and supplies that have dangerous side effects, and a very shifting working schedule.

According to Linda Ricafort, a Registered Nurse First Assistant, minor wounds such as cuts, scratches and stings from needles or even shallow burns are common accidental results of having to move quickly to save a life. Exposure to drugs, radiation and different gases can also have its side effects. Applying disinfectant regularly also has its disadvantages on the skin and muscle pains due to patient handling and long hours of being in the standing position can also result. Due to the shifting nature of work, perioperative nurses are also prone to burn out and other illnesses born out of stress.

Sick patients, especially those who are in need of surgical operations, mostly need 24 hour vigilance. This requires hospital based nurses, even perioperative nurses, to work in the evenings, on weekends and even holidays. It is possible for Registered Nurses to be on call too if a life needs to be saved immediately. Perioperative nurses who choose to work in other institutions like clinics and physician's offices may have more flexible job schedules compared to those who are in hospitals and day-surgery units. Saving lives has its compensation.

According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2006-2007), the average annual salary of registered nurses is \$52, <https://assignbuster.com/perioperative-nursing/>

330 with those in employment services and general or surgical hospitals having better pay compared to those who are in homehealthcare services, doctor's clinics and nursing care facilities. It is also common for employers to offer benefits like child care and education aside from bonuses. Because of the country's increasing aging population that is deemed to require more medical attention compared to the younger generation, the job outlook for registered nurses is more than positive.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook supports this projection by indicating that the need to employ registered nurses is assumed to “ grow much faster than the average” through 2014. Although technology is allowing faster and less laborious surgical operations, high turnover of employment in the surgical room is high because of the stress that the nature of work entails. The increasing number of nurse retirees is also indicative of the positive career opportunities for those who seek to become operating room nurses. Becoming a perioperative nurse requires academic training, skill, presence of mind and the ability to handle stress well.

Although the compensation is attractive, many operation room nurses opt to shift into other departments because of the working hours and physical and mental strain involved in surgical operations. Any individual contemplating on pursuing this career must be fully aware of the nature of the job and know his limitations well enough to meet the demands of the work. Works Cited Occupational Outlook Handbook 2006-2007. Aug. 2006. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor. 08 October 2007 . Ravara, Francisca. Personal Interview. 07 October 2007. Ricafort, Linda. Personal Interview. 07 October 2007.