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# Nursing Foundation

## for Post Basic BSc Nursing

Suresh Sharma
Shiv Kumar Mudgal

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CHAPTER 2

# Role and Responsibilities of a Nurse

## Learning Objectives

- Articulate a comprehensive definition of what constitutes a high-quality nurse in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- Summarize the core roles and responsibilities of a nurse upon graduating from nursing education.
- Examine how the role of a graduate nurse fits within the broader healthcare team and contributes to patient care.
- Define the concept of an expanded nursing role and its significance within the healthcare system.
- Explore specific examples of advanced nursing roles, such as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse educators.
- Identify and analyze current trends shaping the landscape of nursing practice in India.
- Examine how factors such as technological advancements, changing patient demographics, and healthcare policy reforms impact nursing care.

## INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a vital profession in the healthcare industry, and nurses play a crucial role in promoting and maintaining the health of individuals, families, and communities. The role of a nurse has evolved over time, and today, nurses are responsible for a wide range of tasks, including patient care, education, and advocacy. Nurses are responsible for a range of tasks, including assessing and monitoring patients, administering medications, providing wound care, and communicating with patients and their families. They also educate patients on disease prevention, health promotion, and treatment options, as well as provide emotional support and advocacy.

The primary goal of nursing practice is to provide holistic care that addresses the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of patients. Nurses can be found in diverse work environments, ranging from hospitals and clinics to nursing homes, schools, and community settings. Nursing practice is guided by a set of ethical principles, including respect for patients' autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. Nurses are also expected to practice evidence-based care, which involves using the best available research to guide clinical decision-making.

Overall, nursing is a challenging but rewarding profession that requires a high level of skill, compassion, and dedication. Nurses are an essential part of the healthcare team, and their role is critical to ensuring the well-being of patients and communities.

## QUALITIES OF A NURSE

There are some qualities that are generally considered important for nurses to have **(Fig. 2.1)**:

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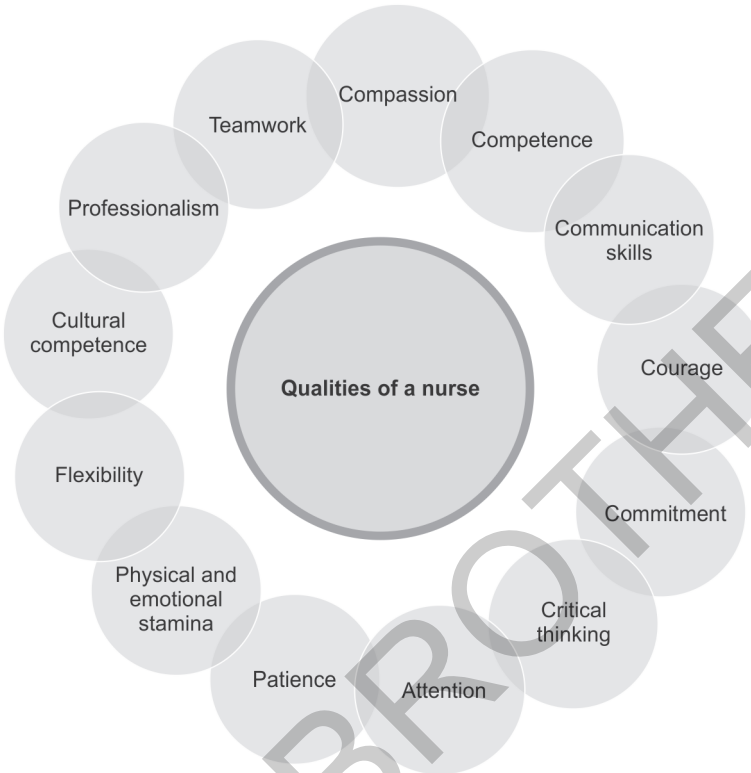


**Fig. 2.1:** Qualities of a nurse.

- **Compassion:** Nurses need to be able to empathize with their patients and provide them with emotional support during times of illness or distress.
- **Communication skills:** Nurses need to be able to communicate effectively with patients, their families, and other healthcare professionals.
- **Competence:** Ensuring that nursing practice is evidence-based and that nurses have the knowledge, skills, and experience to provide high-quality care.
- **Courage:** Speaking up and taking action when faced with situations that may compromise patient safety or dignity.
- **Commitment:** Being dedicated to delivering the best possible care and continually improving nursing practice through learning and development.
- **Critical thinking:** Nurses need to be able to analyze complex situations and make decisions quickly and effectively.
- **Attention to detail:** Nurses need to be detail-oriented to ensure that patient care is delivered accurately and safely.
- **Patience:** Nurses need to be patient and able to handle stress and long hours.
- **Physical and emotional stamina:** Nursing can be physically and emotionally demanding, so nurses need to have the stamina to work long hours and handle challenging situations.
- **Flexibility:** Nurses need to be flexible and adaptable to handle changes in patient conditions, staffing, and healthcare protocols.
- **Cultural competence:** Nurses need to understand and respect the cultural beliefs and values of their patients and provide care that is culturally sensitive.
- **Professionalism:** Nurses need to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and maintain patient confidentiality.

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- **Teamwork:** Nurses need to work effectively as part of a healthcare team to ensure the best possible patient outcomes.

These qualities are all interconnected and essential for a graduate nurse to provide safe and effective patient care.

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GRADUATE NURSE

Nurses hold a crucial position in the healthcare system, responsible for delivering top-notch care to patients across a diverse range of settings. The nature of a nurse's responsibilities can differ depending on their level of education, professional background, and the specific work environment they operate in. Nonetheless, some common duties and responsibilities that nurses generally undertake include:

- **Patient care:** Nurses are responsible for providing direct patient care, including assessing patient needs, developing care plans, administering medications, and monitoring vital signs.
- **Communication:** Nurses also function as intermediaries between patients, their families, and other healthcare professionals. By serving as a link between these parties, nurses ensure that patients receive the best possible care and that their needs are effectively communicated to physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, and other healthcare providers to ensure coordinated care.
- **Health education:** One of the vital roles of nurses is to educate patients and their families about their medical conditions, treatment options, and self-care techniques that promote wellness and prevent disease. By imparting this knowledge, nurses empower patients to take an active role in their healthcare and make informed decisions that support their recovery and overall well-being.
- **Documentation:** Nurses bear the responsibility of ensuring that patient records are precise, comprehensive, and regularly updated. They must document assessments, interventions, and treatment outcomes, among other crucial patient information. By maintaining accurate records, nurses facilitate effective communication among healthcare professionals and promote quality care delivery.
- **Quality improvement:** Nurses participate in quality improvement initiatives to improve patient outcomes and promote best practices.
- **Advocacy:** Nurses advocate for their patients' needs, ensuring that they receive appropriate care and treatment and that their rights are protected.
- **Leadership:** Nurses may serve in leadership roles, overseeing the work of other nurses and providing guidance and support to less experienced staff.
- **Collaboration:** In order to deliver thorough and well-coordinated care to patients, nurses work in tandem with various healthcare personnel, including doctors, nurse practitioners, social workers, and pharmacists. Through this collaborative effort, patients receive comprehensive care that addresses their individual needs.
- **Crisis management:** Nurses are trained to identify and manage medical emergencies and crises, such as cardiac arrest, respiratory distress, and traumatic injuries.
- **Ethical decision making:** Nurses are responsible for making ethical decisions that promote patient autonomy, justice, beneficence, and nonmaleficence.
- **Counsellor:** Nurses can also serve as counsellors, offering emotional support and guidance to both patients and their loved ones. This aspect of their role helps patients cope with their medical conditions and eases the burden on their families.
- **Administrator:** Nurses can serve as administrators in healthcare organizations, managing the daily operations of healthcare facilities, managing budgets and resources, and overseeing the work of other healthcare staff.

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Overall, nurses play a critical role in promoting the health and well-being of patients, advocating for their needs, and providing high-quality, evidence-based care. Nurses are essential members of the healthcare team, and their contributions are essential in ensuring optimal health outcomes for patients.

## EXPANDED ROLE OF A NURSE

The role of a nurse has evolved significantly over time, from providing basic care to patients to taking on expanded responsibilities and roles that go beyond traditional patient care. Today, nurses play a crucial role in providing high-quality, patient-centered care, promoting health and wellness, and improving patient outcomes.

The expanded role of nurses reflects the increasing complexity of healthcare needs, as well as the recognition of the unique contributions that nurses can make to patient care and healthcare delivery. Nurses now work in a wide range of settings, from hospitals and clinics to community health centers, schools, and government agencies, and they are involved in a diverse array of activities and functions.

He expanded role of a nurse includes a range of responsibilities such as advanced clinical practice, nursing education and research, healthcare informatics, patient advocacy, healthcare administration and leadership, and more. Nurses in expanded roles are trained and equipped to provide comprehensive and holistic care that addresses the physical, emotional, social, and psychological needs of patients.

### Definition of Expanded Role of a Nurse

The expanded role of a nurse refers to the range of activities and functions that nurses now perform beyond traditional patient care. This expanded role reflects the increasing complexity of healthcare needs and the recognition of the unique contributions that nurses can make to patient care and healthcare delivery.

Overall, the expanded role of a nurse reflects the ongoing evolution of healthcare and the important role that nurses play in promoting health and wellness, improving patient outcomes, and advancing the field of nursing. Some of the expanded roles of nurses include:

- **Nurse practitioner:** Nurse practitioners are skilled nurses with advanced training who offer essential healthcare services, encompassing the identification, treatment, and supervision of medical conditions. They are authorized to prescribe medications and order diagnostic tests, and they work independently or in collaboration with physicians.
- **Clinical nurse specialist (CNS):** Clinical nurse specialist is an advanced practice nursing role that involves providing specialized care to patients in a particular clinical area or specialty. Clinical nurse specialists are employed in diverse environments such as hospitals, clinics, private practices, and community. They are responsible for providing expert clinical care, consultation, education, and leadership to patients, families, and healthcare teams.
- **Nurse educator:** Nurse educators teach nursing students and healthcare professionals, developing and delivering training programs and educational materials. They may also contribute to the development of nursing curricula and conduct research in nursing education.
- **Nurse researcher:** Nurse researchers conduct scientific studies and clinical trials to advance nursing knowledge and improve patient outcomes. They may work in academic institutions, healthcare organizations, or government agencies.
- **Nurse informaticist:** Nurse informaticists are experts in healthcare information technology and data management. They design and implement electronic health records, develop data analytics tools, and ensure that healthcare data is accurate, secure, and accessible.

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- **Nurse advocate:** Nurse advocates work to promote the rights and interests of patients, families, and communities. They might advocate for modifications in policies, engage in outreach initiatives within the community, or act as a go-between for patients and healthcare practitioners.
- **Nurse consultant:** Nurse consultants provide expertise and guidance to healthcare organizations, helping to develop policies, procedures, and programs that promote high-quality, patient-centered care. They may also provide advice and guidance to individual patients and families.
- **Nurse administrator:** Nurse administrators oversee the daily operations of healthcare organizations, managing budgets, staffing, and resources. They may also develop strategic plans, implement quality improvement initiatives, and ensure regulatory compliance.
- **Nurse as a change agent:** The role of nurses as change agents is critical to improving the quality of care within the healthcare system. By identifying areas for improvement, advocating for change, leading change initiatives, educating patients and families, and using technology to drive change, nurses can make a significant impact on patient outcomes and the overall quality of care.
- **Space nursing:** Involves providing healthcare services to astronauts who are in space.
- **Nurse liaisons:** Play a crucial role in serving as a connection between potential patients and rehabilitation facilities, with their responsibilities being varied.
- **Hospice nurses:** Focus on providing comprehensive physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual care to individuals who are terminally ill, as well as their families, with the aim of promoting a high quality of life.
- **School health nurses:** Support the educational process by helping students maintain good health and teaching them preventive practices, both for themselves and their teachers.
- **Tele-nursing:** Involves providing nursing services to patients who are physically far away from the nurse, using telecommunications and information technology.
- **Cruise ship/resort nurses:** Work on ships or at resorts to provide emergency and general care to passengers, if required.
- **Nurse attorneys:** Engage in a range of legal activities, including providing legal consultation.
- **Disaster/bioterrorism:** Nurses work in disaster areas that result from bio-terrorist attacks or situations caused by natural or man-made disasters.
- **Epidemiology nurses:** Investigate trends in disease occurrence in specific areas, identifying populations at risk, monitoring disease progression, determining priorities, and identifying areas of healthcare need.
- **Sports nursing:** Which is a sub-specialty of orthopedic medicine, involves treating injuries or traumas that result from athletic training or competition.
- **Nurse authors:** Work in various areas of writing and produce material that may be used for research, education, training, and marketing purposes.
- **Nurse analysts:** They are involved in data analysis and interpretation related to the efficiency and effectiveness of data collection, entry, and utilization in healthcare facilities and hospitals.

## TRENDS IN NURSING PRACTICES

The trends of nursing practice refer to the current developments, shifts, or patterns that are shaping the field of nursing and influencing how nurses deliver care. These trends can encompass a wide range of factors, including changes in healthcare policies, advancements in technology, evolving patient needs, and emerging research findings.

By understanding and adapting to these trends, nurses can enhance their practice, improve patient outcomes, and stay aligned

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with the evolving healthcare landscape. The trends of nursing practice provide insights into the direction in which the field is heading and highlight areas where nurses need to focus their attention and professional development.

It is essential for nurses to stay informed about these trends, as they can impact various aspects of their work, such as patient interactions, treatment approaches, documentation, collaboration with other healthcare professionals, and lifelong learning. By recognizing and embracing these trends, nurses can remain effective and responsive in providing quality care within the ever-changing healthcare environment.

## Trends Influencing Nursing Practices in India

Several trends are influencing nursing practices in recent years. Here are some notable ones:

- **Increasing demand for healthcare services:** With a growing population and rising healthcare needs, there is an increasing demand for healthcare services in India. This trend puts pressure on the nursing workforce to deliver care efficiently and effectively, requiring nurses to adapt to evolving patient needs and healthcare delivery models.
- **Technological advancements:** India is witnessing rapid technological advancements in healthcare. Electronic health records (EHRs), telehealth, mobile health applications, and other digital platforms are being integrated into healthcare settings. Nurses need to embrace and leverage these technologies to enhance patient care, streamline documentation, and improve communication.
- **Emphasis on primary healthcare:** India is focusing on strengthening primary healthcare services to improve access and affordability. Nurses play a crucial role in primary healthcare, providing preventive care, health education, immunizations, and community-based services. This trend highlights the need for nurses to have a strong foundation in primary healthcare principles and skills.
- **Expansion of specialized nursing roles:** There is a growing recognition of specialized nursing roles in India. Advanced practice nursing, nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, and critical care nurses are being increasingly utilized in various healthcare settings. This trend offers nurses opportunities for career advancement and specialization, requiring them to acquire advanced skills and knowledge in their respective fields.
- **Quality improvement and patient safety:** There is an increased emphasis on quality improvement and patient safety in Indian healthcare. Nurses are actively involved in initiatives to enhance patient outcomes, reduce medical errors, and improve infection control practices. This trend highlights the importance of nurses' participation in quality improvement programs and their role in ensuring patient safety.
- **Evidence-based practice:** The use of evidence-based practice is gaining prominence in Indian nursing. Nurses are encouraged to incorporate the latest research evidence into their clinical decision-making and provide care based on best practices. This trend promotes a culture of lifelong learning and encourages nurses to stay updated with current research findings.
- **Global healthcare collaborations:** India is witnessing collaborations with international healthcare organizations, academic institutions, and nursing associations. These collaborations facilitate knowledge exchange, skill enhancement, and professional development opportunities for nurses. This trend opens doors for international exposure and collaboration with nurses from diverse backgrounds.
- **Chronic disease management:** The prevalence of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and respiratory

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conditions is increasing. Nurses play a vital role in managing these conditions, including patient education, lifestyle modification support, medication management, and monitoring. This trend highlights the importance of prevention, self-management, and long-term support for individuals with chronic illnesses.

- **Global health challenges:** Global health issues, such as pandemics, emerging infectious diseases, and natural disasters, have a significant impact on nursing practices. Nurses are at the forefront of responding to these challenges, providing direct patient care, infection control, vaccination campaigns, and community education. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and implement effective public health measures is crucial in these situations.
- **Emphasis on education and training:** There is a growing emphasis on education and training in the nursing profession in India. Nurses are encouraged to pursue higher education and specialized training to improve their skills and knowledge.
- **Patient-centered care:** Patient-centered care is gaining importance in India, with an emphasis on providing care that is tailored to patients' unique needs, preferences, and values. Nurses are encouraged to involve patients in their care planning and promote patient autonomy.
- **Government initiatives:** The Indian government has launched several initiatives to improve healthcare access and quality, including the Ayushman Bharat program, which provides health insurance to vulnerable populations. Nurses play a vital role in implementing these initiatives and providing high-quality care to patients.
- **Increasing focus on mental health:** Mental health is an emerging healthcare concern in India, with rising rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders. Nurses are being trained to address these issues and provide mental health support to patients.
- **Aging population and complex care needs:** India's population is aging, leading to an increased demand for healthcare services for older adults. Nurses are facing the challenge of caring for a growing population with complex care needs, including managing multiple chronic conditions, promoting healthy aging, and addressing end-of-life care.

These trends in nursing practice in India reflect the need for nurses to adapt to changing healthcare dynamics, leverage technology, focus on primary healthcare, embrace specialized roles, promote quality improvement and patient safety, engage in evidence-based practice, and participate in global healthcare collaborations. By being aware of these trends, Indian nurses can contribute to providing high-quality, patient-centered care and positively impact the healthcare system.



## CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. Nurses must have certain positive qualities such as commitment, knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, empathy, emotional strength, and advocacy, in addition to good personal characteristics.
2. Each role of a nurse involves a unique set of patterned behaviors and denotes their status or place within a specific context.

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3. Defining the roles and responsibilities of nurses is important for achieving organizational objectives and meeting the needs of clients.
4. Professional nurses have multiple roles and responsibilities in various specialties, settings, and levels of nursing, including as care givers, educators, counselors, advocates, communicators, coordinators, leaders, managers, researchers, and administrators.
5. Nurses can also have expanded roles, such as clinical nurse specialists, primary care providers, partners in healthcare teams, change agents, researchers, and telenurses, which are not limited to traditional hospital settings.
6. Several trends reflect the changing healthcare landscape in India and the need for nurses to adapt to new technologies, patient-centered care, and emerging healthcare challenges. By staying informed and embracing these trends, nurses can provide high-quality care and contribute to positive patient outcomes in India.



## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Define expanded role of a nurse. Discuss expanded role of a nurse.
2. Explain role and responsibilities of a graduate nurse.
3. Describe the qualities of a nurse.
4. Explain the trends influencing nursing practice in India.

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# Nursing Foundation

## for Post Basic BSc Nursing

This textbook is authored to suit the requirements of the curriculum for the Post Basic BSc Nursing students. It is precisely written as per the curriculum prescribed for the Post Basic BSc Nursing students as other existing textbook on the subject of nursing foundations are primarily designed for the undergraduate nursing students. Thus, this is an excellent attempt towards introducing the most customized, comprehensive and suitable content on nursing foundation for Post Basic BSc Nursing students.

***Salient Features***

- **Written as per curriculum for the Post Basic BSc Nursing program:** The book has been written and enriched by including all topics as per the syllabus for Post Basic BSc Nursing program.
- **Simple and lucid content:** This book covers all the necessary content in a simple and comprehensive way, perfectly meeting the requirements of Post Basic BSc Nursing students.
- **Easy-to-understand:** This is an applied, use-friendly textbook with self-explanatory simple language and presentation for the readers.
- **Authentic content:** The content in this book is developed from evidence-based resources ensuring its authenticity and reliability.
- **Illustrative presentation:** This book uses diagrams and tables to present information, making it easier to quickly review and remember important ideas.
- **A ready reference book:** Whether you are a Post Basic BSc Nursing student, a nursing faculty, this book will equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of nursing foundation subject.
- **Chapter summary:** Provides chapter summaries and sample university questions for self-assessment purposes.

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