

What is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse?

An advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) is a registered nurse with a master's degree or doctorate, nationally certified and licensed by the state nursing board. APRNs are trained and educated to assess and diagnose patients, perform treatments and procedures, manage patient health, order and interpret tests, prescribe medication and more, depending on their area of specialization.

Across the nation, patients are increasingly turning to APRNs for accessible and affordable health care in a variety of specializations.

There are four types of APRNs:

- Nurse Practitioners (NPs)
- Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs)
- Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs)
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)

Nurse Practitioners

Nurse practitioners can practice in acute or primary care settings, depending on their certifications. They are qualified to treat a range of injuries and illness, diagnose and manage chronic disease, and promote patient health with an emphasis on prevention.

Clinical Nurse Specialists

A clinical nurse specialist is an expert in a specialized area of practice. CNSs may focus on a particular population, such as women or children; a disease or specialty like diabetes, psychology, or oncology; a setting such as an emergency room; or a type of care like rehabilitation. A CNS may also participate in research, education and consulting.

Certified Nurse Midwives

Certified Nurse Midwives provide a full range of primary health care to women, including prenatal and postnatal care. CNMs manage low-risk labor and childbirth, care for newborns, and can treat both male and female patients.

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists are qualified to provide the full spectrum of patient anesthesia and anesthesia-related needs, including care in hospitals and surgical suites.