

A Registered Nurse



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What made you decide to get into the field of nursing?

Ever since I was a little girl I wanted to be a nurse. When I was little, my first trip to the hospital involved me getting stitches. The only person that could calm me down was this sweet, beautiful nurse. She kept my mind off the stitches by stroking my hair and asking me questions about my favorite color and my pet. It was at that moment I knew that I wanted to become a nurse. I wanted to make a difference in a child's life and make them forget their pains.

Do you find that having children helps you to relate to your patients more closely as a pediatric nurse?

I find that having children helps me immensely; Not only when relating to the children but also to the parents. When relating to the children, I try to treat them as if they were my own and so I love, guide, and protect them. Sometimes I try to tell parents not to be too worried because my children underwent some of the same problems and developmental stages.

You hear a lot of people saying these days that hospitals are a place for business. Do you agree with this statement?

I strongly disagree with this statement. It has been proven that people tend to heal faster and harder with love and care in their environment. I believe a hospital is a place people come for help and comfort. However hospitals are losing a lot of good nurses due to this fact that they are a business and not a place to socialize with patients. They suggest you get in the room, do your job, and leave. Also, we are given such an overload of paperwork which causes us to not spend enough time with patients. We come into this field with hopes and dreams of helping and caring for others, not to fill out paperwork.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

The most rewarding part of my job is when a child recovers and goes back to the regular pediatric floor. You see, I work in the pediatrics ICU unit so I deal with extreme cases. Some people give up on the children and give them almost no chance of survival. That is when my working drive kicks into overdrive. I hold them longer, love them more and sometimes even talk and sing to them. Children can tolerate almost twice the amount of pain than adults and they fight ten times harder. When a child pulls through given such underestimated chances of survival, I know that I helped that miracle to occur; that is when I feel most rewarded.

What kind of person does it take to be in this field?

First off it takes a very strong willed and faithful person. Anytime a child doesn't recover or passes away, I have to be able to deal with it. If you do not have faith that all of the children are God's children then, it is almost impossible to cope with their deaths. You must also be nurturing because when people are at their lowest weakest point they need to be nurtured. Another major characteristic is patience. You have to be patient with the crying, the scared, the angry, the mean and most of all the paperwork and hospital rules.

What advice would you give someone entering this field?

It is hard to deal with some of the but it is the most rewarding thing I have ever done. My boss of ten years gave me some advice when I began this job. She said "you will know when it is time to change fields. That day will be when you come to work and don't learn anything". That is the best advice I could give. I have worked for over ten years, as a nurse, and there has not been a day that I have not learned at least one thing. As for education, you must either have an Associates or a Bachelors degree in Nursing.

What is the salary range for someone entering this field?

The pay is slightly different between the educational levels. With an Associate's degree an individual will earn between \$45,000 to \$50,000 whereas with a Bachelor's degree they will earn between \$50,000 to \$55,000.

What is the most memorable experience you have had as a nurse?

This experience happened just two years ago. I had a little girl in critical condition; they had to do major brain surgery on her to remove some tumors. Her parents were so scared that they would hurt her, just by hugging her that they rarely showed her love and attention. So the girl felt that they didn't love her because she was sick. I remember being with her for many nights trying to ease her feelings of guilt and constantly assuring her of her parents love. The surgery turned out wonderfully and things returned to normal. One day the girl came by and gave me a friendship necklace and I wear it always.

Interviewed by Danielle Farmer for a College 101 assignment on 12/00.