

# ASSOCIATE degree in nursing



## LPN/LVN to RN

### Becoming a Registered Nurse (RN)

As an LPN/LVN, are you prepared to take the next step in your nursing career by becoming an RN? As industry demand for RNs continues to climb, there has never been a better time to pursue an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN).

As an RN, you will be eligible to work in the healthcare environment that most interests you, from hospitals and specialized care facilities to private clinics and doctor's offices. In your new role, you will be prepared to work directly with physicians to diagnose medical issues, make treatment decisions, and manage patient cases from start to finish. You may decide to select a specialization such as neonatal or surgical care, or you might elect to work in an office setting as a resident expert for a corporation or public health organization.

With your new credentials, you will also become eligible for a significant increase in pay. With an average annual salary of \$52,903,<sup>1</sup> most ADN-prepared RNs earn about \$12,500 more per year than LPNs/LVNs.<sup>2</sup> RNs can also become eligible for upward career mobility, qualifying for higher pay rates, and managerial positions.

### The Changing Job Market

As job growth in the nursing sector flourishes, your qualification as an ADN-prepared RN will open the door to a proven number of future job opportunities. In today's economic conditions, registered nursing remains the single most secure occupation, ranking #1 for job growth and employment status on *U.S. News & World Report's* "25 Best Jobs of 2012."<sup>3</sup>

In order to serve the aging population, job opportunities in nursing are expected to grow 26% by 2020, creating an estimated 1.2 million new jobs for nurses.<sup>4</sup>

### A Call for Higher Credentials

As the patient landscape becomes more demanding, industry standards for nursing credential requirements are in the midst of a historic change. In 2011, the Institute of Medicine officially recommended that all nursing professionals achieve higher levels of education and practice to the full extent of their training.<sup>5</sup> As a result, many healthcare facilities are raising their minimum educational requirements for hiring candidates.<sup>6</sup>

By pursuing your ADN today, you can secure your position as a qualified RN candidate and prepare yourself for future changes in this growing market.

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### Associate Degree in Nursing Overview

Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> School of Nursing, an NLN Center of Excellence in Nursing Education<sup>™</sup>, is the largest nursing school in the United States. Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> offers an ADN program that prepares nurses to deliver quality care and become effective members of the healthcare team in collaboration with other healthcare professionals. The program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

Many of the requirements for the curriculum may be met by passing college equivalency exams, making it possible for you to earn your ADN, and become an RN in less time than most campus-based programs. However, the length of time it takes you to complete the program is dependent upon several factors, including degree needs, prior college credit earned, the time you devote to the program, and your personal study habits.

### How Do I Earn My Associate Degree in Nursing?

#### Step 1:

##### Receive your preliminary course analysis

To determine an estimate of your course requirements, a Program Advisor will complete a preliminary course analysis for you in person or by phone. Please call us at 1-877-256-5327 and we will assist you.

#### Step 2:

##### Complete enrollment papers with The College Network<sup>®</sup>

Upon receiving a FREE course analysis of recommended program requirements, complete an enrollment form, and submit a deposit to initiate the The College Network portion of your program.

#### Step 3:

##### Study your Comprehensive Learning Modules<sup>™</sup>

Your learning modules contain the information necessary to be successful on the college equivalency exams—we even guarantee it! Study the material and complete the practice examination. If you need assistance with your studies, call Academic Support at The College Network.

#### Step 4:

##### Take college equivalency exams

The College Network's program also includes online exams, which may be taken from the comfort of home. Your general education and elective requirements can be fulfilled using a combination of The College Network's online program and exams, CLEP<sup>®</sup>, DSST<sup>®</sup>, and Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> Examinations.

#### Step 5:

##### Enroll in Excelsior College<sup>®</sup>

You must enroll in Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> before challenging the nursing exams. Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> requires that all of your nursing credits and all but ten credits of general education requirements must be completed before you're eligible to schedule the clinical examinations.

#### Step 6:

##### Take the Focused Clinical Competencies Assessment (FCCA<sup>SM</sup>)

This is a two-part, computer-generated (or delivered), simulated clinical competency assessment of skills related to head-to-toe assessment, managing multiple patients, and interacting with an interdisciplinary healthcare team.

#### Step 7:

##### Pass clinicals

This 2 ½-day exam tests your clinical skills. Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> will provide you with study materials to prepare for this exam. There is typically a wait for the clinical (depending on the time of year and location). During that time, you can prepare for the Clinical Performance in Nursing Examination<sup>®</sup> (CPNE<sup>®</sup>) and finish any general education credits you have not yet completed.

#### Step 8:

##### Graduate from Excelsior College<sup>®</sup>

Receive your Associate in Science in Nursing degree. We encourage you and your family to attend graduation ceremonies in New York. It's an accomplishment you should be very proud of!

#### Step 9:

##### Take State Board exams to earn your RN license

Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> will inform your state nursing board that you are eligible to sit for the exams. Upon passing the boards, you will become a licensed registered nurse. Congratulations!



## Course Descriptions

These Comprehensive Learning Modules™ cover basic nursing concepts and practices. Before studying each of these modules, learners should have a good working knowledge of anatomy and physiology, emotional and physical development, microbiology, and nutrition.

### Transition to the Professional Nurse Role

The Transition to the Professional Nurse Role Comprehensive Learning Module focuses on the roles and responsibilities of the associate degree nurse, including the following topics: historical figures and forces influencing the development of the nursing practice; the healthcare delivery system; framework for nursing practice (including ethical, legal, and educational aspects of nursing); and roles, functions, and practice settings of the associate degree graduate.

### Essentials of Nursing Care: Health Safety

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: the nursing process; health, wellness, and illness; and environmental safety, biological safety, bioterrorism and disaster preparedness, medication safety, and psychological safety. The Comprehensive Learning Module places an emphasis on theoretical frameworks for nursing care, including the nursing process and the ANA Standards of Care.

### Essentials of Nursing Care: Health Differences\*

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: nutrition, elimination, oxygenation, fluid and electrolyte balance, activity and mobility, and sleep. The Comprehensive Learning Module

places an emphasis on theoretical frameworks for nursing care, including the nursing process and the ANA Standards of Care.

### Foundations in Nursing Practice

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: comfort, pain, chronic illness, end-of-life care, sensory impairments, culture and diversity, and community-based nursing care. The Comprehensive Learning Module has an emphasis on theoretical frameworks for nursing care, including the nursing process and the ANA Standards of Care.

### Reproductive Health

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: human sexuality, needs of the childbearing family, congenital abnormalities, genetic disorders, developmental problems, and reproductive disorders. The Comprehensive Learning Module has an emphasis on theoretical frameworks for nursing care, including the nursing process and the ANA Standards of Care.

### Health Differences Across the Life Span 1

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: cardiovascular problems, respiratory problems, and abnormal cellular growth.

### Health Differences Across the Life Span 2

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

Major topics covered include the following: behavioral responses, cognitive assessment, regulatory mechanisms, and metabolic mechanisms.

### Health Differences Across the Life Span 3

*Prerequisites: Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology*

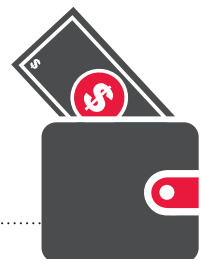
The Health Differences Across the Life Span 3 Comprehensive Learning Module focuses on the following areas of nursing care: infectious and communicable diseases, tissue trauma, neurological dysfunction, and musculoskeletal dysfunction.

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*\*If you have taken the NCLEX®-PN within five years prior to enrolling with Excelsior College®, you may not be required to complete Essentials of Nursing Care: Health Differences. Final determination rests with Excelsior College®.*  
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## Did you know?

**\$52,903**

is the average annual salary for an ADN-prepared RN.<sup>1</sup>



## Clinicals

The Excelsior College® Associate Degree in Nursing program includes two clinical exam components that you will be required to successfully complete to graduate.

### 1. Focused Clinical Competencies Assessment (FCCA®) (4 Semester Hours)

The first clinical exam component is the FCCA. To be eligible for the FCCA, you will need to complete all nursing theory exams and be within ten (10) general education credits of completing your degree. The FCCA is graded as Pass/Fail and is worth four credits when passed. This computer-generated (or delivered), simulated clinical assessment provides a means for students to demonstrate competencies related to the following two essential elements of nursing practice:

- Head-to-Toe Assessment and Nursing Process
- Managing Multiple Patients/Working with Interdisciplinary Teams

You may register and take the sections in any order. Once you meet the eligibility requirements, Excelsior College® will send you a study guide to help prepare you for the FCCA. Online conferences and practice exams are also available to help you prepare for the FCCA.

### 2. Clinical Performance in Nursing Examination® (CPNE®) (8 Semester Hours)

The second clinical exam component, the CPNE®, is a competency based examination that measures beginning RN knowledge and skills. The CPNE is a 2 ½-day performance examination where you will be observed one-on-one by a master's prepared nurse faculty member. Eligibility to complete the CPNE will be granted upon successful completion of all nursing theory exams, the FCCA, and at least 21 of the required 31 semester hours in general education.

Once you meet the eligibility requirements, Excelsior College® will send you the CPNE Study Guide. A videotape and workbook, workshops, teleconferences, and online programs are also available to help you prepare for the exam. There are two areas of focus in the CPNE:

#### A). Simulation Laboratory

During this portion of the CPNE you must successfully meet all of the critical elements for the following areas:

- Management of a wound
- Administration of IV medications by gravity
- Administration of IV medications by bolus
- Administration of injectable medications

#### B). Patient Care Situations

During this portion of the CPNE you will be providing care to actual, hospitalized adult and pediatric patients. You must successfully complete all of the critical elements for the assigned areas of care.

## CPNE Locations

The CPNE is currently being administered at the following locations\*:

### Wisconsin

- Madison (Meriter Hospital)
- Madison (St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center)

### Texas

- Lubbock (Health Systems-Lakeside Campus)

### New York

- Albany (Albany Medical Center)
- Albany (St. Peter's Hospital)
- Flushing (New York Medical Center Hospital of Queens)
- Syracuse (University Hospital)
- Utica (Faxon/St. Lukes Health Care)

### Pennsylvania

- Chambersburg (Chambersburg Hospital)

### Georgia

- Atlanta (Grady Memorial Hospital)
- Atlanta (Northside Hospital/Children's Healthcare of Atlanta)
- Riverdale (Southern Regional Medical Center)
- Savannah (Memorial Health University Medical Center)



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\*Obtained from the Excelsior College® web site (www.excelsior.edu) and the Excelsior College® School of Nursing catalog. To access the School of Nursing Catalog, you will need to create a free account. Clinical sites and fees are subject to change at the discretion of Excelsior College®.  
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### Degree Requirements

The Associate in Science in Nursing from Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> requires successful completion of 67 semester credits, including 31 in general education and 36 in nursing.

Many requirements for this degree program may be met by taking Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> Examinations after you have studied The College Network's educational materials.

### School of Nursing Admission Policy\*

The Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> nursing degree program has been specifically designed to meet the educational needs of qualified individuals with a significant background and/or experience in clinically oriented healthcare disciplines.

#### Admission to the ADN program is open to:

- Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses (LPNs/LVNs)
- Certain classifications of Military Corpsmen
- Paramedics

Admission to the program and final acceptance of credit rests with Excelsior College<sup>®</sup>, where you will complete your program and receive your degree.\*\*

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Excelsior College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.  
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### How The College Network's Program Works

The College Network's<sup>®</sup> online program enables you to continue your education and earn college credit from the comfort of home. Many of your degree requirements can be satisfied by using The College Network's materials to prepare for comprehensive examinations, including The College Network's own ACE CREDIT<sup>®</sup> recommended exams as well as CLEP<sup>®</sup>, DSST<sup>®</sup>, and Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> Examinations.

### ACE<sup>®</sup> Transcript Services

For the benefit of our learners, The College Network participates in the American Council on Education's (ACE) Transcript Service. The ACE Transcript Service offers a lifelong record for

students who have successfully completed our courses that have been reviewed by ACE CREDIT. This service enables adult learners to present a nationally recognized transcript to the college or university of their choice for the potential award of academic credit. For more information, visit the ACE CREDIT Transcript Service web site at [www.acenet.edu/credit/transcripts](http://www.acenet.edu/credit/transcripts).

For more than 30 years, colleges and universities have trusted ACE CREDIT to provide reliable course equivalency information to facilitate their decisions to award academic credit. For more information, visit the ACE CREDIT web site at [www.acenet.edu/credit](http://www.acenet.edu/credit).



\*Not available in all states. Some restrictions apply. Call for details.

\*\*The College Network is not a partner of Excelsior College<sup>®</sup>. Partnership with Excelsior College<sup>®</sup> is not required for this credit-by-examination program.

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### Prepare For Your Clinicals

#### ePatient

ePatient® is an online software application designed to help you become more proficient in handling clinical situations. Using the software's components, you will conduct a patient assessment and virtual physical exam, organize patient data into framework categories, and then use the information to select nursing diagnoses and create care plans. Then, after a period of virtual time, you will be able to evaluate your patient's progress toward the desired outcomes. Questions and expert feedback throughout each client case provide you with an opportunity to evaluate your progress and the quality of your decision making.

#### Case studies

Each case study allows you to experience the considerations required for different patient populations in a virtual environment, including:

- Pediatrics
- Geriatrics
- Obstetrics
- Adult Health



*(ePatient is sold separately.)*

### Prepare For Licensure

#### Rx for NCLEX Success

The Rx for NCLEX® Success is an online software application designed to help you pass your NCLEX-RN® exam.

#### Features include:

- More than 3,800 NCLEX exam-style practice items, complete with comprehensive rationales, available in our online Question Review Bank
- 8 online Comprehensive Learning Modules™ to help you improve your knowledge in specific content areas as outlined by the NCLEX-RN test plan
- NCLEX® Testing Strategies Guide

*(Rx for NCLEX Success is sold separately.)*

### Did you know?



Nursing ranks #1 for job growth and employment status on *U.S. News & World Report's* "25 Best Jobs of 2012."<sup>3</sup>



#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> [www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Associate\\_Degree\\_Nursing\\_%28ADN%29/Hourly\\_Rate](http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Associate_Degree_Nursing_%28ADN%29/Hourly_Rate)

<sup>2</sup> [www.bls.gov/oooh/healthcare/licensed-practical-and-licensed-vocational-nurses.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oooh/healthcare/licensed-practical-and-licensed-vocational-nurses.htm)

<sup>3</sup> *U.S. News & World Report: Registered Nurse: Job Profile & Salary*, <http://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/registered-nurse>

<sup>4</sup> [www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/nursing-shortage](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/nursing-shortage)

<sup>5</sup> [www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx](http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> [www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/education/changing-requirements-send-nurses-back-to-school.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/education/changing-requirements-send-nurses-back-to-school.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)