

# Salute to Nurses



# Nurses' Role During COVID-19

In December 2019, a devastating coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, surfaced in Wuhan, China causing mass illness throughout the country.

The global pandemic has led to nationwide lockdowns in Italy, major-league sporting cancellations and uncertainty throughout world stock markets. On March 14, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency regarding the coronavirus.

Medical professionals, including nurses, are on the front lines risking exposure while limiting the spread and symptoms of the virus. The union National Nurses United urges employers to keep their health experts safe by incorporating necessary protocols.

- Employers shall clearly communicate with all health care workers, including notifying nurses when there is a possible or confirmed COVID-19 case.

- Facilities should be prepared for a surge of patients with potential or confirmed cases of the virus which should include how to isolate and care for patients, along with how to provide safe practices for medical staff.

- Employers shall conduct a thorough investigation after a COVID-19 patient is identified, ensuring the staff who were



© ADOBE STOCK

exposed are identified and notified. Nurses who faced exposure shall be placed on precautionary leave for at least 14 days without losing their pay or benefits.

- Nurses and other health care workers must also be provided with efficient protective gear and any available education and training that may help

experts understand the outbreak more efficiently.

## **HOW NURSES CAN STAY SAFE**

Since much is still unknown about how COVID-19 spreads, nurses and others in the medical field are at an increased risk of exposure.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges

all nursing professionals to wear properly fitting masks and protective gloves while attending to patients.

## **HELP A NURSE**

The coronavirus is a widespread pandemic that is causing major corporations to close their doors temporarily. As a citizen, you can help the medi-

cal professionals in your area by listening to guidelines from your state's officials.

Many are prohibiting events that are expected to draw over a specific number of people. To help lessen your exposure and need for medical assistance, avoid visiting high-traffic areas where the risk of obtaining the virus is enhanced.

# Thank a Nurse

If you or a loved one has ever faced a life-threatening situation or a tense moment under medical watch, a licensed nurse likely assisted.

Their compassion and knowledge are effective in overcoming emergencies and making patients feel comfortable as they recover.

If someone in the nursing field impacted your life, take the time to thank them for their service.

Thanking a nurse doesn't have to cost a fortune. A small token of appreciation can be significant and encourage a professional to excel when working in a high-stress environment.

If you're struggling to show a medical expert how their presence changed your life for the better, consider thanking them with these ideas.

## HANDWRITTEN NOTE

A personalized, handwritten note is an excellent way to show your gratitude for a nurse. In your letter, document the situation you faced and how the nurse's assistance made you feel comforted.

You should consider using high-quality paper or a durable card so the nurse can look back on the note when they face challenges throughout their career.



© ADOBE STOCK

## A HEALTHY GIFT BASKET

While nurses dedicate their lives to improving the health of others, sometimes their own wellbeing gets overlooked. You can provide them with high-protein snacks like beef jerky or nuts and beneficial fruits to boost their energy.

Many nurses also rely on

small levels of caffeine to get through rigorous shifts. Consider gifting them with a gift card to a local coffee shop or a bag of freshly grounded beans.

## COMFORTABLE CLOTHING

Nurses are on their feet for an extended portion of their

workday. Check the hospital gift shop or your local outlet store for a pair of universal compression socks. Pressure from these stockings promotes blood flow by enhancing the efficiency of blood vessels.

If you know the nurse's approximate shoe size, you can also consider gifting them

with a pair that uses memory-foam padding or a comfortable insert. You may also find unique scrubs at a uniform shop that showcases their personality.

Whether you buy a gift for your nurse or draft a compassionate letter to show your appreciation, your gratitude will be appreciated.

# Adjusting to Night Shift

While the responsibilities of nurses don't change when the sun goes down, the atmosphere can be a shock to what you're used to.

Not only will the types of emergencies you face be different, but adjusting to a new schedule and lifestyle can be challenging.

Whether you're a new nurse or a veteran who is adjusting to the night shift, consider these tips from Every Nurse to succeed.

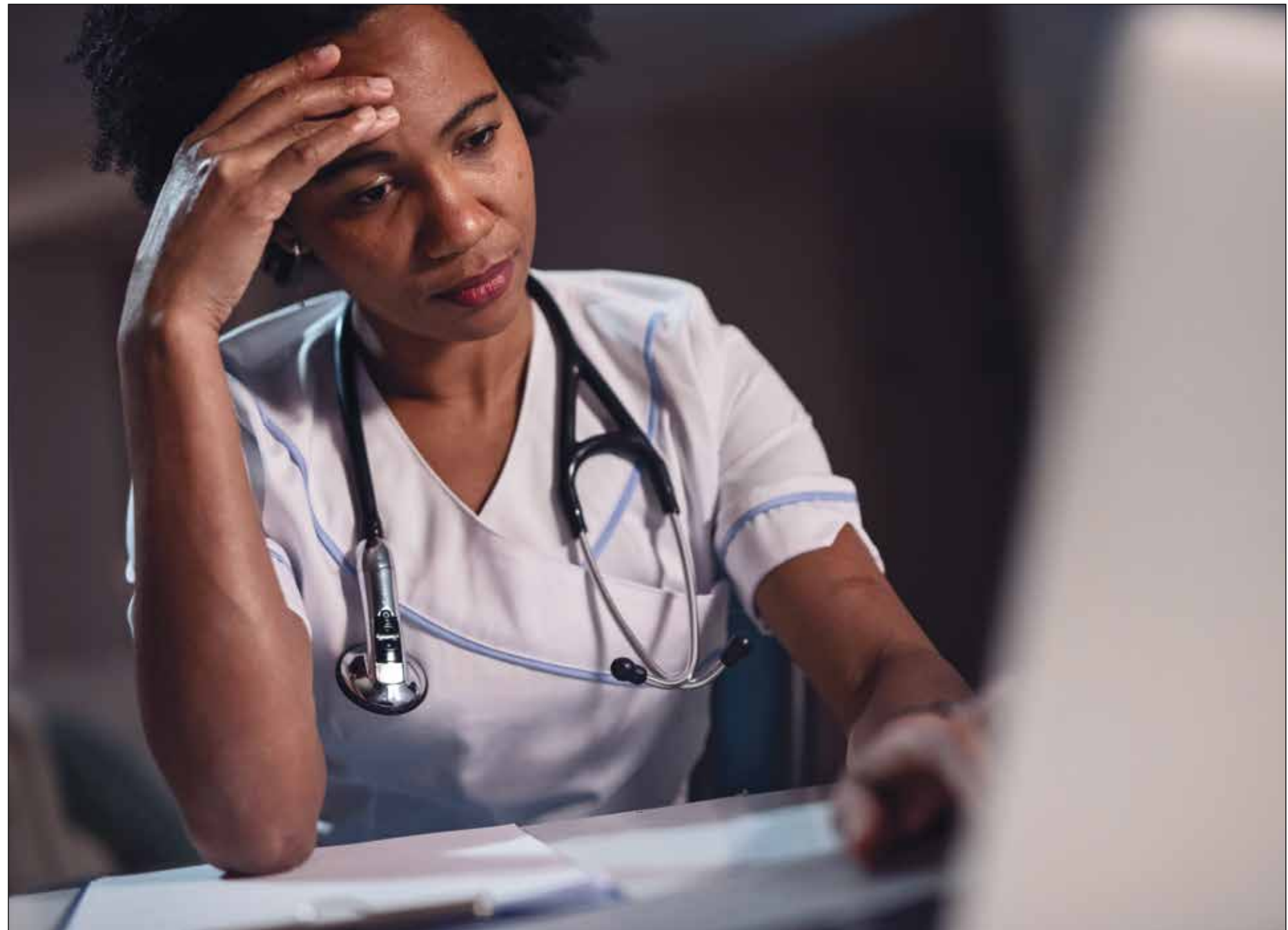
## ADJUST YOUR SLEEPING SCHEDULE

One of the biggest routine changes for night shift is learning how to sleep throughout the day. Ensuring that you get enough rest is crucial for your work performance and overall health.

The National Sleep Foundation encourages night-shift nurses to stick to the same bedtime and wake schedule, even on the weekends.

If you find it difficult to adjust to sleeping during the day, here are some helpful tips from the foundation.

- Avoid consuming alcohol or caffeinated beverages close to bedtime.
- Invest in a sleep mask and earplugs to eliminate lights and sounds.
- Use light-blocking window



© ADOBE STOCK

coverings to block the sun from entering your bedroom.

## EAT HEALTHY MEALS

Consuming the right foods before your shift can have a significant impact on your energy and stamina levels. Experts say that grazing rather than ingesting large meals throughout the workday can also help you during a night

shift.

Pack light meals like raw salads, fruits, nuts and vegetables to create a well-balanced diet. Add these items to your weekly shopping and menu list:

- Gluten-free breads.
- Hard candy and granola bars.
- Dried fruits.
- Fruit juice and bottled

water.

Try to keep your snacks in areas that you frequent throughout the shift to give yourself a quick burst of energy while avoiding caffeine and foods that are high in sugar.

## MONITOR YOUR OWN HEALTH

The NFS also suggests that night shift workers face a

higher risk of experiencing insomnia, daytime sleepiness, high blood pressure and diabetes.

If you feel like your health is declining while on the job, it's crucial to seek medical assistance.

You should also experiment with sleeping patterns and exercise to find the best method to feel refreshed.

# Building a Portfolio

A professional portfolio is not necessarily a resume or curriculum vitae, but it can be an important tool as you navigate your nursing career.

Building a portfolio includes creating a visual channel to showcase your work highlights and the milestones you have reached.

To understand how a portfolio acts as a supporting document to other career credentials, check out the difference between a resume and a CV, as defined by the Internship and Career Center.

- A resume is a short one- or two-page form that emphasizes skills, industry experience and education achievements.

- A curriculum vitae is used to show your academic accomplishments and is most beneficial when applying for positions in academia, fellowships and grants.

If you're trying to break into the nursing field, employing the expertise of a certified resume writer can be an excellent strategy to impress hiring managers. Once you begin your journey in health care, consider documenting your career by building a portfolio.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A PORTFOLIO

The University of Alabama in Huntsville suggests that a nursing portfolio is a sourcebook for future employers. It should contain documents that back up your work histo-

ry found in a resume. When logged chronologically, it will show the precision of your professional development and progression.

It's an efficient log of essential documents like licenses, continued education certificates and proof of your achievements.

## WHERE TO CREATE YOUR PORTFOLIO

Many nurses choose to build their portfolio with both a hard copy and a digital version. It's good practice to keep a few copies that can be easily restored online. You need both because employers may vary with how they choose to receive the portfolio. Some may ask you to bring it with you to an interview, while others prefer to have the document emailed.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE

Because a portfolio is a tool to market yourself to potential employers, it should highlight your achievements both academically and professionally.

Make sure to include letters of recommendation and appreciation you have earned and brief descriptions of roles you have held in the nursing field. Of course, you should also log your licenses and certification cards.



# Technology in Nursing

To assist nurses in making their jobs easier and improve the experiences of those under care, cutting-edge technology is consistently providing upgrades.

Recently, LinkedIn surveyed more than 600 nursing professionals and the majority said they have a somewhat or very positive view of how technology is affecting patient care.

Check out some of the most cutting-edge tools that nurses can take advantage of, as reported by Western Governors University.

## **AUTOMATED IV PUMPS**

The specialty tools are effective to control dosages and drips provided to patients. They reduce human error by electronically adjusting to a person's need for medication.

Automated pumps are also responsible for automatically dispensing important nutritional content at pre-set times and allowing patients to increase a controlled amount of pain medication by themselves.

One of the most significant advantages of these electric pumps is that nurses have more time to focus on other areas of their work rather than



© ADOBE STOCK

measuring and giving medication.

## **SMART BEDS**

Connected beds are useful to track a patient's movement behaviors and regularly update the nursing staff. Smart bed technology can help medical professionals discover patterns in physical activity, which can often lead to a new diagnosis or under-

standing of a condition.

They also limit the need for nurses to attend to adjustments that make patients more comfortable as users can typically make adjustments on their own.

## **TELEHEALTH**

Telehealth is a relatively new technology found in hospitals and clinics. Rather than visiting a facility for minor issues,

patients can communicate with their nurses via video chat. It's a valuable tool to keep contagious people away from the public and receive medical advice remotely.

Video communication is also valuable to describe your symptoms or show medical professionals issues like rashes or bumps.

Of course, if an expert feels that the problem is severe,

they will suggest that you visit their clinic in person.

However, in some cases, they may resolve that the issue is manageable and call in a prescription.

Mental health assistance is also included in telehealth communication. Patients can speak to counselors or nurses online from a comfortable environment like their home or office.

# The Importance of Nurses

Nurses play a monumental role in the health care setting.

They use their knowledge to assist in life-threatening situations and act as advocates toward patient safety and trust. Their presence is varied and valuable and should be respected and applauded throughout your community.

A nursing professional isn't limited to practicing in a clinic or hospital. In fact, many with RN or LPN qualifications accept jobs that place them in unique settings across the globe.

Experts hold positions for schools and summer camps, as traveling aides and hospice nurses who help patients find comfort in their final days. Find out why nurses are so significant in health care, as suggested by the Roseman University of Health Sciences.

## GARNER TRUST WITH PATIENTS

Nurses are not only responsible for monitoring progress and administering medications during their daily duties, but they also become trusted advocates for patients.

Because those under care rely on having someone to talk to regarding their symptoms and concerns, nursing professionals quickly become supporters.

Doctors generally make their rounds once a day. Nurses, however, deliver hour-to-hour care throughout their workday. This often leads to a



© ADOBE STOCK

wholesome relationship between patient and provider, which results in better communication for the those who are in care.

## IMPROVE OUTCOMES

Nurses with a bachelor of science in nursing degree (BSN) are shown to have a vital presence in health care settings. A report from the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation shows that hospitals with more BSN-prepared nursing professionals have lower patient mortality rates, shorter average patient stays and reduced health care costs.

Other studies report that their role also leads to lower instances of:

- Incidence of pressure ulcers.

- Postoperative deep vein thrombosis.

- Hospital-acquired infections.

## EDUCATION

Nurses are also excellent at educating both patients and their caregivers about how to make healthier decisions. While most information is given during a hospital stay,

once a patient is released, they are armed with more knowledge for living better at home.

Nursing professionals are also advocates of informing their communities about lifestyle risks. They often provide advice about the importance of regular checkups and being adamant about screenings and regular exercise.

# 2020: The Year of the Nurse

In honor of the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the World Health Organization declares 2020 as the year of the nurse.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the health care field will add 3,059,800 new registered nursing jobs between 2018 and 2028; that's a growth rate of 12%.

In support of nurses, WHO suggests the "Triple Impact" to give these professionals the tools they need to excel in patient care: better health, stronger economies and greater gender equality.

With these tools, nursing experts are given the opportunity to receive a formal education, enroll in training programs and enter a career that stimulates the economy and health care field.



© ADOBE STOCK

## WHO WAS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE?

Florence Nightingale is widely known as the founder of modern nursing. During the Crimean War, she oversaw providing care for the British and allied soldiers in Turkey. Sometimes called, "The Lady with the Lamp," Nightingale would go on to found the first scientifically based nursing school in London, in 1860.

She was also responsible for instituting training for mid-

wives and nurses who practiced in workhouse infirmaries. Her work continues to inspire medical professionals today and led to her birthday, May 12, being designated to commemorate International Nursing Day each year.

## REPORTS AND CAMPAIGNS

As part of the 2020 celebra-

tion for nurses, WHO will release its first State of the World's Nursing Report. The document will describe how the nursing workforce can help deliver Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goals. It will also highlight new areas for policy growth over the next three to five years.

2020 will be the final year for the Nursing Now campaign that was started in 2018. The movement focused on five areas:

1. A more prominent voice in health policy making.
2. Greater investments in the nursing workforce.
3. Recruiting more nurses in leadership roles.

4. Conducting research to find where nurses can have the most impact.

5. Share of the best nursing practices.

You can help spread the message by sharing the Nursing Now campaign across social media, hosting local events or advocating for the nurses in your community.