

# The Baccalaureate Degree In Nursing

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## Educational Preparations

The healthcare facilities and setups of today are becoming more complex and complicated with each passing day. They require a highly trained as well as well-educated professional staff to take care of the patients. It not only applies to doctors but extends to nurses as well. In most cases, the distinction between the nurses having an associate's degree and the ones having a baccalaureate degree is very much blurred. This is because both of these levels of learning require taking the same exam. However, there are clear differences between the learning that takes place at both levels, owing to the different teaching approaches and pedagogies.

There are two major differences between the two programs. One of the most major and obvious differences is regarding the curriculum that is taught in both programs. Another is in the quality and level of care extended to the patients. The associate's degree in nursing has two years of education and it trains the nurses to perform and apply their expertise upon graduating. On the other hand, the baccalaureate degree in nursing lapses over four years of education. It is an extension of the associate's degree nursing, which further polishes the skills gained during the two years of the associate degree. Learning is further enhanced in this program by including psychological, ethical and legal aspects and implications of nursing practices and healthcare into the curriculum. Public health issues are addressed in the program as well ("American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) > News & Information > Fact Sheets > Creating a More Highly Qualified Nursing Workforce," 2017).

Since it is more rigorous regarding learning and more demanding regarding the effort that it requires its students to put in, the baccalaureate degree in nursing shows better results. The nurses it produces, as a result of it being much harder than the associate's degree, are better trained and thus are better equipped to deal with all kinds of patients and scenarios. ("Hospital Nurse Staffing and Public Health Emergency Preparedness: Implications for Policy," 2017) They can handle emergency situations brilliantly. They are also well equipped to take care of and better understand the psychological aspect of whatever illness their patient is going through. Thus, they have the potential and training to deal with them and tackle them in a way that they are relaxed and satisfied. It is particularly important for those patients who have blood pressure issues or have to take medicines that cause temper issues as a side effect ("Differences in Competencies Between Nurses Prepared at the Associate's Degree Level Versus the Baccalaureate Degree Level," 2017).

This argument has been proven by a study that was conducted in 1999, according to which the number of deaths of patients decreased sharply when the ratio of Baccalaureate degree nurses to associate degree nurses was increased in a particular hospital. Other such studies have also been

conducted and found results that give weight to the argument being made here.

Recruitment managers are of the view that it's necessary and important for young professionals to comprehend the needs of the career or department that they are pursuing. This will help them to establish if their job may require a higher level of certification. Nursing is an excellent example of how the academic requirements for a particular field may change. Previously, an associate degree used to be accepted as sufficient and ample for many nursing jobs. However, in present times, more and more hospitals are employing nurses with at least a four-year degree. It is because of the traditional view and also the excellent experience of doctors and recruitment staff about the nurses who have a baccalaureate degree. It is concluded with a mutual consensus that these nurses are better trained as compared to nurses who have an associate degree ("Differences in Competencies: The Associate-Degree Level versus the Baccalaureate-Degree Level in Nursing," 2017).

This is particularly evident in situations where sometimes important decisions are left to be made by the nurses due to an extremely pressing emergency. For instance, if a nurse finds herself suddenly alone with a patient whose blood pressure has just been shot up, she needs to be trained enough to know exactly what measures to take and what steps to follow. The doctor does not always stay around the patient, nor is he always easily accessible. Such situations demand immediate action, and patients cannot wait for the doctor to arrive. Such are the cases where a couple of minutes delay can be the difference between life and death. Thus, the nurse should have the relevant knowledge as well as the confidence to be sure about what she is doing.

In such situations, and they occur every so frequently, nurses having baccalaureate degrees have shown remarkable performance both regarding response time and being highly efficient and effective as compared to nurses having an associate's degree. The latter get worried or become nervous because they lack the medical knowledge to be able to give a patient the required medicines or perform medical procedures on their own, and that too at a time when pressure is pressing. Furthermore, their nervousness and discomfort easily and immediately reflect on their faces and are judged by the patients, making him/her worried as well. Thus, it is important to have confident and better-trained nursing staff at a hospital, and such nursing staff has been proven to have been produced by baccalaureate degrees, not associate degrees ("Differences in Competencies: The Associate-Degree Level versus the Baccalaureate-Degree Level in Nursing," 2017).

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