



Why the Average Travel Nurse Salary Will Surprise You (In a Good Way)

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If you're considering a career in nursing, it's important to ask ahead of time, "Where can nurses work to get the best overall experience?"

Despite the favorable job outlook for nurses, if you want a job where you're truly happy, you need to start planning what kind of experience you'll need as early on as possible. By doing so, you can propel yourself ahead of all of the other applicants for nursing jobs.

In order to gain experience and expertise, you're best advised to start doing nursing-related activities even while you're still in training.

Nurses generally work in:

- state and private hospitals and clinics,
- physicians' offices,
- nursing and residential care facilities,
- and home healthcare services.

Since each of these types of work environments is different from the others, you're best advised to spend some time working at each. That way, you'll be in a better position to decide where you want to work in the long run.

Where can nurses work, at the onset of training?

1. Do volunteer work at a local healthcare facility.

As a volunteer, you will not be allowed to perform any nursing tasks.

However, you'll spend time with patients by reading to them or talking with them.

This will give you a good impression of what it's like to interact with patients. It will also make you aware of any soft skills you need to develop in order to be a good nurse.

Nursing requires a great deal of patience, as well as excellent communication skills.

At the same time, it also requires the ability to have empathy without allowing yourself to be devastated by someone else's pain.

Volunteering after school, on weekends, or during vacations is a great way to gain the exposure you need and develop critical people and self-management skills.

2. Select a nursing program with career placement.

There are a number of good programs that offer career placement, which means you'll be learning practical skills in a professional setting—and earning credits at the same time!

As Nurse Journal points out in the article “[10 Ways How to Get in and Gain Experience in Nursing](#),” though a placement in your chosen concentration might not always be available, you could discover a new area of nursing you enjoy.

3. Pursue internships.

Use your vacations to your advantage by pursuing internships.

While you won't earn very much (if anything), you'll gain considerable experience. In addition, most internships can be used for credit.

Plus, the people you get to meet and work with as an intern can be extremely helpful later on in your career. They can function as references for new positions and even alert you to new opportunities.

4. Become a student nurse.

As a student nurse, you'll work under supervision at a healthcare facility in your free time.

Your responsibilities will be light, but you'll have the opportunity to observe, learn, and hone your skills in a professional, practical setting.

The job probably won't pay a huge amount, but all the experience you earn will definitely pay off when you're ready to look for a full time nursing job.

Where can nurses work, with a license?

1. Accept a full time job with a local healthcare institution.

A local hospital or clinic with multiple departments offers a good amount of opportunities to gain experience.

You can always start in one department, for example in oncology, and then move on to the ICU or another department.

This career path offers the stability of staying in one place with one employer. However, it has the drawback that you'll likely have to complete a minimum of 18 months in one position before moving on.

Ideally, you'd advance after that amount of time, meaning your position would be more senior and you'd get a salary bump.

However, if you stay within one healthcare institution, your options may be limited. You might have to make lateral moves to gain the experience you want.

2. You can work through a staffing agency.

A good way to gain diverse experience is through a staffing agency.

Hospitals, clinics, and physicians' offices all need additional staff at certain times.

Sometimes it's due to a seasonal increase of work; other times it's to fill in for someone who's on leave or sick.

Either way, a staffing agency can help you find short-term jobs in disciplines and establishments that interest you.

For example, if you've never worked in a private physician's office before, you could be hired to fill in for someone who's on maternity leave. If you enjoy the work environment, you could then decide to only pursue jobs in physicians' offices.

At the same time, when temping, you could work in pediatrics at one hospital and then move on to a position in a nursing home for the severely disabled.

SEE ALSO: [How Do Staffing Agencies Work for Your Ultimate Benefit?](#)

3. You could work as a travel nurse.

One of the best ways to gain overall experience is to work as a travel nurse.

This involves registering with a travel nurse staffing agency and working with them to determine your next placement.

There are a number of significant advantages to doing this.

You can gain a wide range of subject matter experience in a broad selection of healthcare settings around the country.

You can also ask for placement in a renowned healthcare institution for a specific concentration.

For example, if you want to specialize in oncology, then working at Dana Farber Clinic in Boston would be a great option. And because you're not limited to one region, you'll have the opportunity to work with all sorts of demographics and a significant number of highly knowledgeable professionals.

When you work as a travel nurse, your recruiter at the staffing agency will get to know your likes and dislikes, which means he or she can help you plan your next job so it aligns with your overall career development.

And of course, there are the other perks to being a travel nurse: the salary is higher than that of a regularly employed nurse. In addition, you'll be remunerated for all of your travel-related expenses including accommodation and transport—and since that's not income, you won't have to pay taxes on it.

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Finally, you'll have a couple of weeks off between every three-month assignment. That means you'll have plenty of time to explore all of the exciting locations you visit!

Conclusion

So, where can nurses work to gain the best overall experience?

There are numerous ways, and many people find that the best and most rewarding way is to become a travel nurse.

If travel nursing is an option you're interested in, then [contact our team](#) to find out more about our travel nurse jobs and discuss how we can help you gain the experience you need to hone your expertise!

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