

Someday I'd like to be a...

Charge Nurse

Someday I'd like to be a...



Meet Kathy Nigro, RN

Charge Nurse

WakeMed Health & Hospitals

"I made my decision to become a nurse when I was in middle school. Biology class influenced me, and I became interested in how the human body worked. Additionally, I enjoy working with people."

WHAT A CHARGE NURSE DOES

In addition to caring for patients, administering medicine, and conferring with doctors and pharmacists, a charge nurse manages a department in a clinic, hospital, or health care facility. She/he is in charge of patient admission and discharge as well as scheduling the activities and assignments of the nurses and staff for the shift.

A TYPICAL DAY IN MY JOB

When I come in, I get a report from the previous shift's charge nurse and check all equipment to make sure it's working properly. In the morning I do rounds with a multidisciplinary team, which includes the charge nurse, a physician, pharmacist, dietitian, case manager, respiratory therapist, and a chaplain. Our goal is to review patient care and address the patients' needs to assess how things are going and adjust their plan of care if it needs to be altered or modified. It's a great way to get a snapshot of the needs of the patient and their family. Throughout the day I am responsible for answering any emergency calls that happen within the hospital, and I am part of the rapid response team (RRT). The RRT is called if a patient has an acute change in their condition

and further evaluation is needed; it is like calling 911 within the hospital. I assist with procedures and care for the patients. As a charge nurse, I manage the flow into and out of the unit.

THE MOST REWARDING PART OF MY JOB

Seeing patients get better is the best part. The nurses and staff work together to help patients get better, to meet their needs, and to make their stay in the hospital as pleasant as possible.

EDUCATION

I earned my bachelor of science in nursing from the University of Delaware. After I graduated, I worked at Columbia Presbyterian in New York City. After about a year and a half, I decided I wanted to go into critical care, and I received my training through the hospital. After working for some time at Barnert Hospital in New Jersey, my family moved to North Carolina. I have been working at WakeMed for almost 10 years, most recently in the Intensive Care Unit.

THE IDEAL PERSON FOR NURSING

You have to enjoy the sciences, interacting with people, and teaching. Nurses are called on to teach patients a lot of things, whether it's how to care for themselves, teaching a diabetic ways to manage their condition, or explaining how to use medical equipment at home, such as catheters. Finally, having good organizational skills is important. As nurses, we're called on to do a lot of different things for the patient during the day from teaching and administering medication, to caring directly for the patient or assisting the doctors.

