Registered nurses (RNs) must graduate from a state-approved school of nursing and pass a national licensing exam. Entry level nurses may earn a bachelor's degree, offered by four-year colleges and universities, an associate's degree offered by community colleges and technical schools (two years); or diplomas which are offered by hospitals-based programs in North Carolina. RNs must complete a state-approved educational program and pass a licensing examination. A nursing program leading to a diploma in practical nursing is generally one-year and a half to two years in length and can also be obtained at the community institutions such as community or vocational schools.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) must graduate from a master's degree program in a field of choice and pass a national certification examination and specialization education. Nursing assistants, also known as nurse aides, provide a supportive role to nurses and other licensed professionals. Although nursing assistants are not licensed, they make great contributions to the field of nursing and the healthcare industry in general. Nurse assistants can train at any of North Carolina's community colleges or programs on the job. Students have the opportunity to become nursing assistants through Technical Occupational Health classes at local high schools.

The roles of the nurse include: 
- Direct Patient Care
- Team Building
- Leadership
- Problem Solving

Nurses assist the licensed health professionals in their role. They can work in a variety of settings in the healthcare industry, including hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, home health agencies, and more. Nurses can specialize in different areas such as pediatrics, geriatrics, oncology, and more. They work with patients of all ages and can provide care in a variety of settings, including inpatient and outpatient care.

The fields of study include: 
- Emergency
- Medical-Surgical
- Critical Care

Nurses are important to the healthcare system, improving the quality of human life around the clock, 24 hours a day, seven days of the week, 365 days of the year. Nurses focus on how individuals and families respond to actual or potential health problems. Nurses are educated to anticipate and meet the needs of the whole person rather than just the presenting health problem. A nurse's knowledge of disease and illness is blended with the most up-to-date technologies and a caring approach to restore and maintain the health of an individual or family.

Registered Nurses (RNs) care for individuals who are healthy and ill, of all ages and cultural backgrounds, and who have physical, emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, and spiritual needs.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) hold at least a Master's degree in their area of practice. There are four types of APRNs currently offered by post secondary educational programs. For information about the North Carolina Board of Nursing, call (800) 4-FEDAID. This educational partnership is sponsored by: The North Carolina Center for Nursing.