

Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are independent practitioners licensed by their state's board of nursing with graduate or postgraduate education at a master's or doctoral level from an accredited nursing curriculum. APRNs must complete a designated minimum number of clinical practicum hours working with patients, ranging from 500 to 1000 or more hours in a particular specialty, depending on their specialty and university requirements. Course work is completed in advanced pathophysiology, pharmacology, and physical assessment. APRNs practice within the scope of their state's nurse practice act. Recognized APRN roles include registered nurse anesthetists, nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists. APRNs focus on health promotion, disease prevention, early intervention, counseling, and health education for urologic patients and their families across the lifespan. They can fill the roles of researchers, change agents, educators, administrators, advocates, and consultants in research, in addition to their expanded roles as expert practitioners in providing patient-centered nursing care, improving quality of life.

In addition to obtaining board certification in their population focus (adult, geriatric, pediatric, family, and women's health), many APRNs are certified in the specialty of urology, demonstrating expert knowledge and competence. APRNs in urology include clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners. They collaborate with other healthcare disciplines working with patients and their families to coordinate high-quality, cost-effective, individualized health care to promote a safe environment for well-being. APRNs work in interdisciplinary relationships providing leadership and high-quality urologic care to patients, with the goal of allowing each patient to attain his or her maximum level of wellness and satisfaction. In many states, APRNs may diagnose and treat patients without the supervision of a physician.

## APRN Scope of Practice May Include

May include the following:

- Advocating for urology patients, as well as facilitating access to and movement through the healthcare system.
- Providing comprehensive health history, health maintenance examinations (for example, routine urology care), and pre- and post-operative urologic surgery evaluations.
- Ordering and interpreting urologic tests, such as urodynamics, ultrasonography, radiological studies, and laboratory tests.
- Performing urologic procedures, such as urodynamics, cystoscopy, Botox injections, urethral bulking agent injections, pelvic floor trigger point injections, percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation, vaginal and anal electrical stimulation, stent removal, incision and drainage, and sacral neuromodulation reprogramming.
- Providing pelvic floor assessment and physical pelvic floor therapy.
- Writing and refilling prescriptions.
- Serving as surgical first assistant during urologic surgery.
- Providing health and wellness counseling to patients across the lifespan, including prevention of urologic diseases (such as urinary tract infections, urinary incontinence, childhood voiding dysfunctions, urologic cancers, and kidney stones).
- Diagnosing, evaluating, and treating critical conditions (such as urinary bleeding, urinary retention, urologic injuries, and acute urinary tract pain).
- Diagnosing, evaluating, and treating ongoing conditions (such as prostate disorders, urinary incontinence, neurogenic bladder with spina bifida, pelvic floor disorders, sexual dysfunction, and fertility issues).
- Serving as a change agent to promote and provide excellent evidence-based care.

- Educating multidisciplinary staff and serving as a role model, preceptor, and mentor to other staff.
- Developing and/or participating in research to improve patient care and each patient's quality of life.
- Providing case consultations to other disciplines.

## Resources

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American Academy of Nurse Practitioners

American College of Nurse Practitioners

American Nephrology Nurses Association

American Urogynecology Society

National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education. July 7, 2008.

Lewandowski, W. & Adame, K. (2009). Substantive areas of clinical nurse specialist practice: A comprehensive review of the literature. *Clinical Nurse Specialist*, 23(2), 73-90.

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The Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates, Inc. is a professional organization committed to excellence in patient care standards and a continuum of quality care, clinical practice, and research through education of its members, patients, family, and community.