

Master's Degree Programme in Advanced Practice Nursing

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The Master's Degree Programme in Advanced Practice Nursing programme in Clinical Caring Science offers advanced clinical competencies for practice nurses. After completing this programme you will be able to practice in wider areas of responsibility, work independently in advanced clinical roles, provide direct healthcare services to individuals, families and communities, influence clinical healthcare outcomes, as well as contribute to the development of evidence-based healthcare services. Completed studies will result in a Master of Health Sciences degree.

This two-year programme of 120 ECTS follows the International Council of Nurses' recommendations for Advanced Practice Nursing. The overall learning outcome is that students will gain advanced clinical competencies to work as advanced practice nurses, and skills to care for adults and older people with acute health problems and/or patients with complex and long-term health conditions.

The ageing population and the increasing number people with long-term and multiple illnesses is a growing challenge. New types of skills and services are required for care, rehabilitation and prevention, as well as service coordination and informal family caregiving. Nurses will increasingly be responsible for monitoring the condition of patients with acute and long-term illnesses and bear primary responsibility, as well as provide support and/or consultant services to other healthcare professionals emphasising professional collaboration. In addition, shortening hospital stays and the more advanced treatment methods will increase the need for in-depth nursing expertise in primary and specialized health care.

The International Council of Nurses (ICN; 2004) define an advanced practice nurse as: "A registered nurse who has acquired the expert knowledge base, complex decision-making

skills and clinical competencies for expanded practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context and/or country in which s/he is credentialed to practice."

According to the Nordic model of APN the core competencies are direct clinical care, ethical decision making, coaching and guidance (health pedagogical methods), collaboration, consultation, case management, research and development, and leadership (clinical, system and health policy). Readiness for advanced, systematic and clinical assessment and clinical decision-making is a central key competence. A registered nurse with a master degree in APN has the capability to work independently, systematically assess patients' need for care as well as treat and monitor certain common health problems and illnesses. In addition, s/he is responsible for promoting health and developing evidence-based nursing while engaging in multidisciplinary cooperation.

According to research, advanced practice nurses contribute to high quality care and, especially improved patient satisfaction and patient safety.

The programme is offered as a combination of on campus studies and online learning.

Career Prospects

A registered nurse with a master degree in APN has the capability to work independently, systematically assess patients' need for care as well as treat and monitor certain common health problems and illnesses. In addition, s/he is responsible for promoting health and developing evidence-based nursing while engaging in multidisciplinary cooperation.

After completion of this programme, students are eligible to apply for a position in the Åbo Akademi University's Graduate School as well as other doctoral programmes within Finnish Higher Education Institutions.