Nurse Educators Play Essential Roles in Public Health

(NU) - Nurses remain an essential and trusted part of the healthcare system, and the nation faces an urgent need for nurses due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The World Health Organization is also celebrating the value of nursing by designating 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. In addition, 2020 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the 19th-century social reformer known as the founder of modern nursing.

The demand for nurses, and therefore for nurse educators, is likely to remain high, according to the National League for Nursing (NLN), as nurse educators are on the front lines teaching new nurses who are filling the shortages in hospitals and other health care settings.

Nurse educators will likely continue to be well paid. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate the median salary for nurse educators at $73,490. They may work in academic settings, but some expand their focus to teaching in schools, businesses, hospitals, and community agencies.

The NLN shares some key advantages to becoming a nurse educator:
- Intellectual stimulation. Nurse educators know the latest research in the field, and have the ability to share it with others.
- Flexibility. Nurse education allows for more autonomy and a flexible schedule. Not to mention that technology allows educators to teach from anywhere in the world, at any time, from the beach to the ski slopes.
- Research. Nurse educators have opportunities for research and publication in scholarly journals to advance the field of nursing and their own careers.

- Meaning. The desire for a purpose-driven life steers many people to the nurse education field, where they can make a significant difference in a variety of ways.
- Fulfillment. Nurse educators rejoice in encouraging young students, and take pride in their accomplishments.
- Impact. Nurse educators, by shaping and developing the next generation of nurses, by working in their communities, will continue to impact the shape of healthcare for future generations.
- Inspiration. Everyone remembers the teacher or teachers who made a difference for them by giving them that extra encouragement, or helping them explore paths they might not have seen.

But quite possibly the number-one reason to become a nurse educator, according to the NLN, is the unique chance to “teach what you love.”

Many career tracks exist for potential nurse educators. Teaching requires at least a master’s degree in either education or nursing, but these degrees may be earned through a traditional college setting or through the variety of fully accredited programs now available online.

For more information about careers in nursing education, visit NLN.org.