

Career Profile

A weekly series devoted to providing information on career exploration

Do You Like

- Do you like assisting and caring for others and providing personal assistance, medical attention, emotional support, or other personal care to others?
- Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate?
- Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems?
- Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems?
- Actively looking for ways to help people?

Then This Could Be The Career For You!

The Type of Work

- Administer prescribed medications or start intravenous fluids, and note times and amounts on patients' charts.
- Observe patients, charting and reporting changes in patients' conditions, such as adverse reactions to medication or treatment, and taking any necessary action.
- Provide basic patient care and treatments, such as taking temperatures or blood pressures, dressing wounds, treating bedsores, giving enemas or douches, rubbing with alcohol, massaging, or performing catheterizations.
- Sterilize equipment and supplies, using germicides, sterilizer, or autoclave.
- Answer patients' calls and determine how to assist them.
- Measure and record patients' vital signs, such as height, weight, temperature, blood pressure, pulse and respiration.
- Work as part of a health care team to assess patient needs, plan and modify care and implement interventions.
- Collect samples such as blood, urine and sputum from patients, and perform routine laboratory tests on samples.
- Prepare patients for examinations, tests or treatments and explain procedures.
- Assemble and use equipment such as catheters, tracheotomy tubes, and oxygen suppliers.

Pathways to Success

LPNs must complete a State-approved training program in practical nursing to be eligible for licensure. Contact your State's board of nursing for a list of approved programs. Most training programs are available from technical and vocational schools or community and junior colleges. Other programs are available through high schools, hospitals, and colleges and universities. A high school diploma or its equivalent usually is required for entry, although some programs accept candidates without a diploma, and some programs are part of a high school curriculum.

Most year-long practical nursing programs include both classroom study and supervised clinical practice (patient care). Classroom study covers basic nursing concepts and subjects related to patient care, including anatomy, physiology, medical-surgical nursing, pediatrics, obstetrics nursing, pharmacology, nutrition, and first aid. Clinical practice usually is in a hospital but sometimes includes other settings.

Licensure: the National Council Licensure Examination, or NCLEX-PN, is required in order to obtain licensure as an LPN. The exam is developed and administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. The NCLEX-PN is a computer-based exam and varies in length. The exam covers four major Client Needs categories: safe and effective care environment, health promotion and maintenance, psychosocial integrity, and physiological integrity. Eligibility for licensure may vary by State; for details, contact your State's board of nursing.

Individuals who possess knowledge in:

- Medicine and Dentistry - information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.
- Customer and Personal Service - principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Psychology - human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
- English Language - structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Therapy and Counseling - principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
- Education and Training - principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
- Mathematics - arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
- Biology - plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.
- Administration and Management - business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.

What Employers Look For

Earnings Potential

Location	Year	Pay Period	Low	Median	High
United States	2009	Yearly	\$28,900	\$39,800	\$55,100
Ohio	2009	Yearly	\$31,000	\$39,500	\$50,600
Cleveland Elyria-Mentor, OH MSA	2009	Yearly	\$34,000	\$43,400	\$52,400

O*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>.

LICENSED PRACTICAL & LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES



NAME: Elizabeth Martinez
JOB TITLE: LPN
COMPANY: Kendal At Oberlin
LOCATION: Oberlin

DEFINITION:

Care for ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled persons in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, group homes, and similar institutions. May work under the supervision of a registered nurse. Licensure required.

Q. How did you become interested in your particular field?

A. I have always wanted to help people, especially the elderly.

Q. Who or what influenced your decision the most and why?

A. I was a single parent and I needed a job where I could support myself and my children.

Q. What is your educational background?

A. I graduated from high school. I went to LCCC for one year and then into the LPN program.

Q. How did you get to where you are today? What path did your employment journey take?

A. I worked as a nurse's aide for many years in nursing homes and in home health. I worked at Kendal at Oberlin as a nurse's aide for two years before I went back to school. I finally made up my mind to go back to school.

Q. What skills or traits do you think are needed to be successful in this field?

A. You have to have a lot of patience and you have to like working with people. Working as a nurse's aide first definitely helped.

Q. What is the best part of your job?

A. The best part of my job is getting to work with my residents. You learn so much from them. They have so much wisdom. A lot of people don't realize that because they don't have any interaction with them.

Q. Do you have any words of advice for someone considering a career in your field?

A. You need to like working with people and you need to have patience, lots of patience. We need more nurses and nurse's aides in the future because the elderly population is living longer. It is a very rewarding career!



Job Outlook

Employment of LPNs is expected to

grow by 21 percent between 2008 and 2018, much faster than the average for all occupations, in response to the long-term care needs of an increasing elderly population and the general increase in demand for healthcare services. In 2008, there were approximately 750,000 LPNs employed nationally.

Demand for LPNs will be driven by the increase in the share of the older population. Older persons have an increased incidence of injury and illness, which will increase their demand for healthcare services. In addition, with better medical technology, people are living longer, increasing the demand for long-term healthcare. Job growth will occur over all healthcare settings but especially those that service the geriatric population like nursing care facilities, community care facilities, and home healthcare services.

In order to contain healthcare costs, many procedures once performed only in hospitals are being performed in physicians' offices and in outpatient care centers, largely because of advances in technology. As a result, the number of LPNs should increase faster in these facilities than in hospitals. Nevertheless, hospitals will continue to demand the services of LPNs and will remain one of the largest employers of these workers.

Sources: Occupational Information Network, O*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>; *U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, <http://stats.bls.gov/oco>