

Since 2001, the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) Board of Directors has issued a series of proactive recommendations on the practice doctorate in nursing. As this level of preparation continues to evolve, these recommendations will expand and change. NONPF will focus on the direct practice of nurse practitioners and reaffirms its dedication to all currently credentialed NPs and faculty members. The Board recognizes that other nursing practice arenas may benefit from preparation at the practice doctoral level.

NONPF Recommendations for the Nursing Practice Doctorate and Nurse Practitioner Preparation

1. Multiple pathways can lead to a nursing practice doctorate.
 - A. Programs may build on an advanced practice nurse/nurse practitioner clinical base creating a clinical ladder.
 - B. Programs may offer direct entry into nursing and a seamless program of education.
 - C. Programs may offer both options.
2. A nursing practice doctoral program for nurse practitioners shall prepare the fully accountable independent health care provider with expert standing in the delivery and/or management of evidence-based health care to patients across health care settings. The nurse practitioner with a practice doctorate will provide care to patients with increasingly complex health care needs.
3. Nursing practice doctoral programs, in addition to preparing the expert in direct care practice, shall confer proficiency in the following areas: leadership; health care systems; evidence-based practice and research utilization; advocacy/policy; and clinical teaching with patients, students, families, communities, and professional colleagues.
4. The research emphasis in a nursing practice doctoral program differs from a traditional PhD program. Rather than preparing nurse scientists for research careers, this program shall prepare expert clinicians to use research knowledge and methods to create, implement, and evaluate practice interventions. As well, this program prepares graduates to assume a key role in establishing, implementing and testing national practice guidelines and collaboratively managing clinical trials.
5. Nursing practice doctoral programs shall prepare nurse practitioner graduates to contribute to the redesign and improvement of patient-centered, quality, and cost-effective health services delivery.

6. Nursing practice doctoral programs shall prepare graduates to create inter- and intraprofessional models and lead inter- and intraprofessional teams effectively to achieve better health outcomes and reduce health disparities.
7. In addition to the core preparation in the major, nursing practice doctoral students will have a synthesis experience, through intensive practica or residencies, leading to expert standing in at least one practice arena/specialty.
8. Graduates of practice doctoral programs will possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to articulate health care and cost issues along with proposed solutions and policy implications.

Prepared by the NONPF Practice Doctorate Task Force

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