

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in India
Advancing higher education in Advanced Nursing Practice



BACKGROUND

National Health Policy 2017 document emphasized the need for preparation of nurse practitioners/specialist nurses, standardization of education and clinical training and strengthening regulation of nursing practice. In response to this, Competency-based and clinical residency-based curriculum for Nurse Practitioner programs and Post basic diploma in specialty nursing programs have been developed and redesigned by Indian Nursing Council. Practitioner programs include Nurse practitioner in Critical Care (NPCC) is two-year Masters' program and Nurse practitioner in Midwifery is 18 months Diploma level. Specialty Nursing programs are one-year residency programs offered at Diploma level. One batch of NPCCs have come out and the next batch is still undergoing the program. The NPCC graduates are prepared to practice in ICU settings as nurse practitioners upon additional registration at the state nursing council, based on Indian Nursing (INC) standards of critical care nursing practice and institutional standing orders/protocols.

The terminal advanced degree in nursing is PhD that prepares nurses for highest level of leadership in education, practice and scientific inquiry. The nursing doctorate holders perform these roles mainly in the educational settings. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) prepares graduates for highest level of practice beyond initial preparation in the discipline. DNP programs include development and validation of expertise in one area of specialized advanced nursing practice. This is the terminal degree in nursing in developed countries besides PhD. DNP is for moving advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners/specialist nurses) to doctoral level and it is a practice intensive degree whereas PhD is research intensive degree. The impact of DNP is expected to have increased patient outcomes, quality, and access, and decreased cost, which are the results of various research findings in many countries. Prescriptive privileges would be based on regulations of Government and Indian Nursing Council and the process of getting the legislation has already started.

INC and College of Nursing, University of Texas has signed an MOU to initiate DNP in India. However, the details will have to be worked out in-terms of theory, practice experience, advanced competencies, accountabilities and career pathway, while planning curriculum in the future. INC is periodically dialoging with College of Nursing, University of Texas via video conference for formulation of curriculum and technical support to initiate and run the DNP program on a pilot basis in 2-4 institutions in India.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS FOR DNP PROGRAM

Post masters' DNP & **Post BSN level DNP (NPM and PBD specialty)**

1. For post-masters' for example NPCC graduates

- Full time- 2 years
Part-time-3 years
2. **For post BSN level nurse practitioners/specialist nurses**
Full time- 3years (6 semesters)

DNP FOR NPCC (MSN) GRADUATES

Program description

DNP is practice intensive terminal degree for nurses aspiring to address problems in healthcare and improve health outcomes in practice settings. DNP (Critical Care) is a two-year full time or three-year part-time Doctorate in Nursing Practice for advanced practice nurses namely Nurse Practitioner Critical Care (NPCC) graduates.

Aim

To prepare experts in specialized advanced nursing practice with the main focus on practice that is innovative, and evidence-based reflecting the application of credible research findings.

Competencies

Include foundational competencies and specialty competencies

The DNP graduate

1. Integrates the knowledge of sciences relevant to foundation of nursing practice (eg. Pathophysiology, pharmacology, psychology, ethics etc) for highest level of practice developing new practice approaches
2. Is able to conceptualize new care delivery models within the current organizational, political, cultural and economic perspectives and assumes organizational and systems leadership for quality improvement
3. Demonstrates clinical scholarship and analytical methods for evidence- based practice
4. Uses information and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of patient care and healthcare systems
5. Engages in the process of health care policy development and implementation for advocacy in healthcare
6. Promotes interpersonal collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes
7. Engages in health promotion and population health activities
8. Develops required expertise and competencies to practice in the area of specialization
9. Demonstrates specialty focused competencies to practice as advanced practice nurse in that specialty

Curricular structure

1. Program length

Three year part-time for post masters nurse practitioner

Courses offered

- i. Foundations of DNP practice
- ii. Healthcare policy & Advocacy

- iii. Leadership (Organizational & Systems) and Management for Quality Improvement in Nursing & Healthcare
- iv. Population health strategies for improving nation's health
- v. Informatics in transformation of Healthcare
- vi. The economics and business of health care
- vii. Applied statistical methods for practice inquiry
- viii. Translational methods for practice inquiry
- ix. Scholarly practice project Seminar I, II, III & IV
- x. Clinical practicum I, II & III
- xi. Transformational leadership
- xii. Elective (Telehealth and nursing, Scientific writing etc)

2. *Clinical Practice Experience and environment*

- Medical College Hospital/Tertiary Hospital with all ICU facilities
- Clinical facilities and skill lab requirements as specified in NPCC curriculum
- Residential experience
- Clinical hours as per curriculum

3. *Final DNP project*

Derived from clinical experience focusing on evidence-based practice. Its main focus is to identify clinical problem/need and develop an evidence-based approach to address the problem. The project must be practice-based and result in a change or improvement in practice.

Examples:

- Quality improvement project
- Practice change initiative
- Program evaluation
- Evaluation of new practice model
- Research utilization project
- Systematic reviews

4. *Faculty characteristics*

- *Mix of PhD and DNP qualified faculty*
- *Faculty from other disciplines*
- *Initially Masters prepared faculty in the respective specialty (NPCC) and PhD faculty*

5. *Academic infrastructure*

Administrative and infrastructural support (Credible university/Medical College Hospital)

- Information technology
- Library holdings
- Clinical laboratories
- Equipment
- Space for academic and practice initiatives
- Academic/research faculty in other disciplines

Scope of practice

- Practices as advanced practice nurse (NPCC) with higher level competencies
- Clinical leadership positions (Quality, leadership & policy)
- Faculty positions in teaching nurse practitioner/specialty nursing programs
- Dual role leadership positions at integration of education and practice settings

CURRICULUM FOR DNP 3 YEAR PART TIME

S.No	SEMESTER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS/CONTACT HOURS
1	I	Foundations of DNP practice	2 credits/30 hours
2		Healthcare policy & Advocacy	2 credits/30
3		Leadership (Organizational & Systems) and Management for Quality Improvement in Nursing & Healthcare	4 credits/60 hours
	II		
4		Population health strategies for improving nation's health	2 Credits/30 hrs
5		Informatics in transformation of Healthcare	3 credits/45 hrs
6		The economics and business of healthcare	1 Credit/15 hrs
	III		
7		Applied statistical methods for practice inquiry	3 credits/ 45 hours
8		Translational methods for practice inquiry (EBP methods)	4 credits/ 60 hrs
9		Scholarly practice project seminar I	2credits/30 hrs
	IV		
10		Scholarly Practice project seminar II	2 credits/ 30 hrs
11		Clinical practicum I	4 credits/240 hrs
	V		
12		Scholarly practice project seminar III	2 credits/ 30 hrs
13		Clinical practicum II	4 credits/240 hrs
	VI		
14		Scholarly practice project seminar IV	2 credits/30 hrs
15		Clinical practicum III	2 credits/120 hrs
16		Transformational leadership	1 credit/15 hrs
			Theory- 30 credits/450 hrs Practicum- 10 credits/600 hrs

16 courses, 40 credits

{Theory- 1 credit=15 hrs (15 weeks/semester)
Practicum- 1 credit=60 hrs}