



Hunterdon Health

Hunterdon Health Nurse Externship Program



Nurse Externship Program

Welcome to the Hunterdon Health Nurse Externship Program! This immersive 9-week opportunity is designed to help rising senior-level nursing students gain real-world experience, strengthen clinical skills, and make a meaningful impact on patient care.

Program Overview

The Nurse Externship Program is a structured learning experience that enhances clinical knowledge through direct observation in a real-world healthcare environment. You will work alongside experienced nurses and nurse preceptors, observing various aspects of nursing care and interdisciplinary collaboration to support your transition from academic study to clinical practice.

- **Duration:** 9 weeks (e.g., May 26th - July 17, 2026)
- **Commitment:** 36 hours per week
- **Shift Rotation:** The program consists of four weeks on the day shift and four weeks on the night shift, including weekend rotations.
- **Time Off:** Time off is not permitted during pre-externship training or throughout the program.

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Eligibility & Qualifications

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To be eligible for the program, you must be:

- A rising senior-level nursing student in an Associate or Baccalaureate program.
- Have completed core clinical rotations by Spring 2026.

Important Dates (Example Dates - Please refer to current application cycle for exact dates)

- **Applications Open:**
November 10 – December 19, 2026
- **Extern Event (In-Person):**
January 7, 2026 | 1–4 PM | Hunterdon Medical Center
- **Interviews:**
January 12 – February 6, 2026
- **Offers Made:**
Week of March 9, 2026



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Your Role and Responsibilities

As a Nurse Extern, your role is primarily observational, focusing on learning and professional development. You will:

- Observe and learn from nursing staff and interdisciplinary teams during patient care, including clinical procedures, assessments, medication administration, and patient interactions.
- Shadow workflows related to care planning, patient education, and care coordination.
- Attend team rounds, shift reports, and care planning meetings to understand communication and collaboration.
- Participate in educational sessions and professional development activities.
- Observe care delivery to diverse patient populations and attend special rounds (e.g., NICHE) to gain insights into patient-centered care and geriatric considerations.

Note on Clinical Skills: While you will observe various procedures like medication administration, IV insertion, and catheter placement, you will not independently perform these tasks. The program focuses on learning proper techniques through direct observation, guided instruction, and review of policies and procedures. Nursing Unit Placement

Externs are assigned to a specific unit for the duration of the program and are expected to remain on that unit. While preferences are considered, final placement decisions are based on unit needs. You will have the opportunity to shadow in alternative units/departments.

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Program Goals

The Nurse Externship Program aims to foster your development in several key areas:

1. **Clinical Skill Development:** Gain valuable experience by applying nursing knowledge in real-world clinical settings under direct supervision.
2. **Patient Care Management:** Develop skills in patient assessments, care planning, and the implementation of interventions through observation.
3. **Collaboration and Communication:** Observe and learn from communication within the multidisciplinary team.
4. **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** Develop critical thinking through real-time patient scenarios, decision-making, and evidence-based practice.
5. **Nursing Sensitive Quality Indicators:** Understand how nursing practices and staffing impact patient outcomes using NDNQI data.
6. **Cultural Competence:** Develop a deeper understanding of unique challenges and considerations when working with diverse patient populations.
7. **Leadership and Professional Development:** Be encouraged to develop leadership skills, responsibility, and professional accountability.

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Expectations for Upholding Mission, Vision, and Values

As an extern, you are expected to uphold the mission, vision, and values of Hunterdon Medical Center through your conduct, curiosity, and commitment to learning.

- **Mission-Driven Learning:** Observe compassionate, patient-centered care, and recognize the impact of advocacy and health education.
- **Vision-Aligned Development:** Identify clinical excellence and personalized care, noting how communication and teamwork contribute to a seamless patient experience.
- **Living Our Core Values:**
 - **Accountable:** Be punctual, prepared, attentive, and follow hospital policies.
 - **Adaptive:** Be flexible and open to new situations and feedback.
 - **Authentic:** Be genuine, ask questions respectfully, and express sincere interest.
 - **Inclusive:** Respect diverse backgrounds and observe how inclusivity is practiced.
 - **Committed:** Stay engaged, curious, and focused throughout the program.
 - **Empowered:** Seek out learning moments, listen to discussions, and ask thoughtful questions.

For More Information

- Visit: [HunterdonHealth.org](https://www.hunterdonhealth.org)
- For questions, please email: HunterdonHealthNurseExternship@hhsnj.org