

Geriatric Nursing Serves An Increasing Population

Geriatric Nursing is one of the fastest growing specialties in the medical field. With longer life expectancies brought about by the advances of modern medicine, enhanced nutrition, and better hygiene and health care, our aged population is growing in size. The Baby Boom generation is contributing to this rise in the percentage of older people in the population as well, as more of them reach senior citizen age every year - a trend that will continue well into the future. Geriatric nursing specialists are uniquely qualified to recognize and treat the complex medical issues of the senior segment of the population.

New facilities and agencies are springing up every day to meet the needs of our increasing numbers of elderly citizens, each creating new and varied employment opportunities for geriatric nurses. Demand for geriatric nurses is well ahead of the numbers of qualified applicants in the field, creating a chronic shortage of staff in many areas.

Home-based care is the segment of geriatric care that is expanding most rapidly, in response to rising demand among the elderly population. Advances in technology have made health care more portable, allowing many treatments to be done at home that used to be relegated to hospital or nursing facility settings. Many home care agencies are constantly looking for skilled geriatric nursing professionals to meet this ever increasing need.

Independent Living Centers are another area of rapid growth in the field of geriatrics, creating a greater demand for geriatric nursing specialists. These centers are becoming a very popular alternative for seniors who have healthcare difficulties or disabilities that make home-based care a bit too challenging, yet are not severe enough to require the advanced care of a skilled nursing facility.

Skilled nursing facilities are seeing a rise in demand for their services as well, with advanced medical procedures able to prolong the lives of many more senior citizens. Conditions that were most often fatal years ago can be managed these days with the assistance of a skilled healthcare team, adding significantly to longevity and quality of life. However, managing some of these issues requires constant access to medical care in many cases, often provided by geriatric nursing specialists on staff at skilled nursing facilities.

These are but a few examples of the many opportunities available to those who choose to specialize in the field of geriatric nursing. This rapidly expanding field has many rewarding and exciting new horizons to explore, as medical discoveries continue to revolutionize the way we handle the aging process.

About the Author

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