

7 Nurses

A Nursing grades

Nurses working in a hospital have the following grades:

student nurse	a nurse who is still in training
staff nurse	a nurse who has completed the training course
charge nurse	a more experienced nurse who is in charge of , or responsible for, a ward or department
nurse manager	a nurse who is in charge of several wards

Note: The old term **sister** is still sometimes used for a female charge nurse. A female nurse manager may be called **matron**.

Dr James is talking to Sister Watkins.

B Support workers

The **clinical support worker**, who has done a short course and obtained basic qualifications, and the **nursing auxiliary**, who is usually unqualified, both assist nursing staff. There may also be **ward clerks**, whose duties include making sure patients' notes and information are up to date, and answering the telephone.

C Specialization

Like doctors, nurses can specialize:

- A **midwife** has specialized from the beginning by doing a course in midwifery, the management of pregnancy and childbirth.
- **District nurses** visit patients in their homes.
- **Health visitors** also work in the community, giving advice on the promotion of health and the prevention of illness.

D The nurse's role

The nurse's role has changed considerably in recent years. In addition to general **patient care**, **checking temperatures**, **pulse rates** and **blood pressures**, **changing dressings**, **giving injections** and **removing sutures**, nurses now do some of the things previously reserved for doctors, such as **prescribing drugs**, and **ordering laboratory tests**. More responsibility for nurses is planned, as the following article demonstrates.

Nurses carry out surgery in effort to cut patient waiting lists

Nurses in Scotland trained to **perform** minor surgery have entered the operating theatre for the first time in an effort to cut patient waiting times. Five nurses who have passed a new course at Glasgow Caledonian University are now qualified to **carry out** such **procedures** as the removal of small lesions, benign moles and cysts.

The Scotsman

The verbs **perform** and **carry out** are used with all types of procedures. They are often used in the passive form.

perform carry out	an examination
	an operation
	a procedure
	an experiment
	a test
	a biopsy

The procedure was performed/carry out by a nurse.

7.1 Complete the sentences. Look at A, B and C opposite to help you.

- 1 Someone who specializes in delivering babies is a
- 2 Someone who is qualified to assist nurses is a
- 3 Someone who is not qualified but is able to assist nurses is a
- 4 A nurse who has qualified is a nurse.
- 5 A nurse who specializes in health promotion is a
- 6 A nurse who looks after a ward is a nurse.
- 7 A nurse who works in the community is a nurse.
- 8 Someone who answers the ward telephone is a

7.2 Make word combinations using a word or phrase from each box. Look at D opposite to help you.

carry out
change
check
give
remove

sutures
a procedure
an injection
a dressing
the temperature

7.3 Complete the sentences with the correct grammatical form of *perform*.

- 1 An isotope brain scan is painless and easy
- 2 Biopsy of the pancreas last March.
- 3 If the patient's condition deteriorates, a laparotomy should
- 4 If a diagnosis of meningitis is suspected a lumbar puncture must
- 5 Last year we a randomized, double blind group study.

7.4 Complete the sentences with the correct grammatical form of *carry out*.

- 1 I now intend a larger study.
- 2 Unfortunately few properly controlled trials so far.
- 3 A number of studies recently to look at this question.
- 4 A right hemicolectomy and the patient made a full recovery.
- 5 This procedure can in the emergency department.



Over to you



What kind of tasks do nurses carry out in your country? Are nurses' responsibilities increasing? What are the implications of this?