



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK
Catherine McAuley School of Nursing and Midwifery



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK
COLÁISTE na hOILSCOILE CORCAIGH

Degree of BSc (Hons) Nursing: Psychiatric

In Partnership with the
Health Service Executive, Cork Mental Health Services



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Introduction

Psychiatric Nurses, or Mental Health Nurses, as they are frequently referred to, form the largest group of healthcare workers in the mental health services. They work in partnership with people experiencing mental health difficulties, assisting them to understand and recover from their distress and maintain an independent and fulfilling life.

The Qualities Of The Psychiatric Health Nurse

Psychiatric nurses demonstrate the following personal qualities: they get on well with people, they are good listeners, they are open minded, they are interested in the experiences of

others, they are non-judgemental, they are positive in their outlook, and they are insightful.

What Do Psychiatric Nurses Do?

The key aspect of a psychiatric nurse's work is about being able to communicate with a person in distress and develop a meaningful therapeutic relationship with him or her. Within such relationships, experiences, feelings, thoughts and beliefs are explored while trying to find ways to inspire hope and assist recovery.

This work can take place in a person's own home, in a day care facility, in a GP practice or in a mental health unit.



At 32, I was apprehensive about starting this course. However, I quickly found mutual support. As there were other mature students who like me had taken the plunge. While a little later in life than I had anticipated, it was the best career decision I ever made.

Emily, a mature psychiatric nursing student

Programme Details

The programme is a 4 year, full time Undergraduate Degree leading to registration with An Bord Altranais (Psychiatric Nursing Division) and the award of a Bachelor of Science (Hons) Degree (BSc) in Nursing from University College Cork, National University of Ireland.

The programme consists of periods of college-based learning & periods of practice-based learning. The four-year structure of the programme is as follows:

- Year 1** 26 weeks college-based learning, 7 practice-based learning & 15 weeks holidays.
- Year 2** 23 weeks college-based learning, 21 practice-based learning & 12 weeks holidays.
- Year 3** 16 weeks college-based learning, 16 practice-based learning & 20 weeks holidays.
- Year 4** 13 weeks college-based learning, 37 practice-based learning & 2 weeks holidays.

Throughout the four years you will study biological and social sciences as well as nursing studies.

The school has a state of the art clinical skills simulation resource centre where you will develop your clinical nursing and interpersonal skills.

College-based Learning

The focus of college-based learning is on helping you to develop the qualities, skills, knowledge and attitudes required to work effectively and collaboratively not only with people in distress and their relatives, but also with colleagues and other mental health professionals. You will be exposed to different ideas about the nature of mental health problems, develop a range of strategies to help people with their distress, and learn to understand the background in which mental health services are organised. Throughout this you are encouraged to develop a questioning approach.

Challenging, rewarding, eventful and enjoyable is how I would describe my first year as a psychiatric nursing student.

Patrick, a 2nd year psychiatric nursing student

Practice Based Learning

The practice-based learning experiences offer you opportunities to further develop your knowledge. You will gain most of your experiences in the Southern Area Health Service Executive (HSE) Cork Mental Health Services, our partners in this programme. These experiences take place in a variety of different settings; in a person's own home, in day hospitals/day centres, in psychiatric admission units, and in long term mental health care facilities.

There may also be opportunities to gain experiences in specialist settings such as; the child and adolescent mental health services, the addiction services, the forensic services and the homeless services. You will also gain nursing experience in the general hospital setting.



My job is tough at times but I love it. It's all about making a connection with people and helping them work through their difficulties.

Sarah, a qualified psychiatric nurse

Further Career Opportunities

There are career opportunities in practice, management, research and education. Diplomas, Masters Degrees, Clinical Doctorate Programmes and PhD's may provide you with the opportunity to work as a specialist mental health nurse, a nurse researcher, a nurse manager or a nursing lecturer.

Finally, you may wish to work abroad. Your Registered Psychiatric Nursing (RPN) qualification is recognised in many countries, but it is wise to check this with An Bord Altranais (Irish Nursing Board) in advance.

Entry Requirements

Under 23 years

Applicants under 23 yrs must satisfy the minimum entry requirements for the College of Medicine and Health. Minimum grade: HC3 in two subjects and passes in four other subjects at H or O level in the Leaving Certificate from Irish, English, Mathematics, one laboratory subject(i.e. Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Physics with Chemistry(Joint) or Agricultural Science and two other subjects recognised for entry purposes. Application for entry to programme is through the CAO

Mature Applicants (over 23)

Application for entry to the programme is through the CAO. Applications are processed by the Nursing and Midwifery Careers Centre, An Bord Altranais.

Disclaimer: The programme details are intended only for the guidance of students. While every effort is made to ensure that the information is accurate at the date of printing, this information may change.



Cork City

Since the city was founded by St Finbarr over 1,000 years ago it has grown from a trading merchant city to a cosmopolitan vibrant 21st century city of today. The city, situated on the banks of the River Lee, is home to 123,000 people. The overall quality of life and physical environment of Cork City and its hinterland is excellent and is readily accessible to residents and visitors. This is evident in the parks, rivers, lakes, tourist attractions, sports, and recreational facilities available along with many cultural and heritage attractions.

The city also boasts a year long calendar of festivals ranging from folk, jazz, choral and film. In recognition of this commitment Cork City was selected as the European Capital of Culture in 2005. Cork city has the deepest natural harbour in Ireland with direct ferry crossings to UK and mainland Europe. Cork International Airport offers direct flights to the UK and parts of Europe and connecting flights to other European and American destinations.



Further Information

Catherine McAuley School of Nursing and Midwifery

University College Cork

Enquiries: 021-4902159

www.ucc.ie/acad/nursing E mail: nursing.studies@ucc.ie

Director of Nursing

South Lee Mental Health Services

Enquiries: 021-4922579

Director of Nursing

North Lee Mental Health Services

Enquiries: 021-4921456

Director of Nursing

West Cork Mental Health Services

Enquiries: 027-52303

Director of Nursing

North Cork Mental Health Services

Enquiries: 021-4821411

Nursing Careers Centre, An Bord Altranais

Enquiries: 01-6398500 Fax: 01-6763348 E mail: ncc@nursingboard.ie

www.nursingcareers.ie

Central Applications Office (CAO)

Enquiries: 091-509800 Fax: 091-562344 Email: help@cao.ie

www.cao.ie



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