

HIV Care Specialization

There are over 900,000 persons in the US living with HIV/AIDS, and over 40 million persons with HIV/AIDS living on the planet. It is a world-wide epidemic. The epidemic continues to grow. Scientific advances have demonstrated therapies that are effective for treatment as well as prevention. The most recent thrust is to work with those most at risk to insure access to quality services that are provided in a culturally competent manner.

HIV/AIDS affects persons of all faiths and walks of life. Heterosexuals and homosexuals have the disease. Persons of color, teenagers and elders have the disease. People of high and low economic status have the disease. HIV/AIDS is found in the urban, suburban and rural communities of our country.

Nurses are in the forefront of the care for persons living with HIV/AIDS, as they have been throughout the history of the epidemic. Nurses can be found in every community in the United States. And since we can find HIV/AIDS wherever we look, we need to find HIV/AIDS nurses wherever we look. All nurses need to think of themselves as HIV nurses.

The nurse who elects this specialization will be the person caring for clients in the clinic, community, hospital, prison, and mental health setting. Children, teenagers, young and old adults are her/his client. They may be single, married, divorced, or living with their significant other, with or without children – these are the persons nurses will see in their work environment; these are the person's whose lives are affected or infected with HIV/AIDS.

Changing the landscape of health care reform, patients living with HIV will be receiving care in a variety of settings including traditional primary care settings. This factor will acutely place a demand on nurse practitioners who can provide the needed care and in an interdisciplinary format. The curriculum is inclusive of key populations as well as the cutting-edge science which continues to inspire the work in HIV/AIDS practitioners.

Role and Qualifications: Building upon the role of the Nurse Practitioner in Primary Care, the nurse who has a specialization in HIV care will be at the forefront of the health care team regardless of the setting. Successful students will find themselves qualified in a variety of settings from specialized HIV tertiary programs to community based organizations. The Rutgers graduate of the specialization will be leaders in nursing.

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible for the specialization Nurse Practitioner (Adult-Gerontology, Family, Psychiatric, Acute, Nurse Midwifery) Nurse Practitioner certification exam given by the national certifying bodies. Once nationally certified, graduates can apply for certification in the State in which they will practice as advanced practice nurses with prescriptive authority. Additionally, "The curriculum for the HIV specialization was designed in partnership with the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care in order to prepare students to sit for the Advanced AIDS Care Registered Nurse certification exam".

The qualifications for entry include a dedication to quality patient care and a desire for excellence of practice. Nurses who work in the field of HIV are able to utilize all of the skills that they have learned over the years. At Rutgers, we will build on these to give you the competitive edge in job searches.

Scope of Practice: The scope of practice builds upon the specialty areas. The HIV specialist will be able to utilize all of the skills as well as be prepared to practice in an interprofessional manner and in a variety of settings. The individual who completes this program will be able to provide care to individuals who are known to be HIV positive or to be at risk of HIV infection.

Curriculum: The HIV Care Specialization program is 9 credits in addition to the required number of credits for each specialty. For current APNs who are seeking a specialty certificate, clinical hours will be provided for the student to gain hands-on knowledge through a mini-residency program. The following are the required courses for this program (which only adds one course within the BSN-DNP curriculum):

HIV Specialization Courses: *

Course #	Course Title	Cr. Hrs.	Clinical Hrs.
HVAD 5000	HIV Care Symposium I – Diagnosis, Care and Treatment for Primary Care Providers	3	
HVAD 5020	HIV Care Symposium II – Social Determinants of Health and the Impact on HIV Care	3	
HVAD 5010	HIV Care Symposium III – Responses to the HIV Epidemic	3	
Totals		9	

*Specialties requiring an elective will use one of the courses above as a substitute. Nursing 5020 is substituted for NURS 6040 Social Determinants of Health.