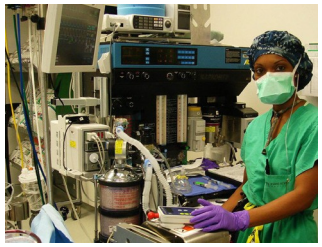
Education Requirements

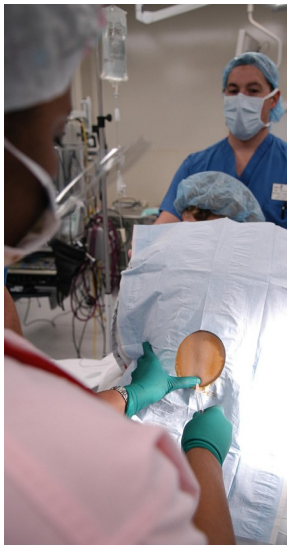
The minimum education and experience required to become a CRNA includes:

- A baccalaureate or graduate degree in nursing.
- An unencumbered license as a registered professional nurse and/or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) in the United States or its territories and protectorates.
- A minimum of one year fullo time critical care work experience. The average experience of RNs entering nurse anesthesia educational programs is 2.9 years.
- Graduate with a minimum of a master's degree from a nurse anesthesia educational program. All nurse anesthesia educational programs must transition to a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree by 2025. As of August 2019, there were 121 accredited nurse anesthesia programs in the United States and Puerto Rico.
- Nurse anesthesia programs range from 24o 51 months, depending on university requirements. Programs include both didactic and clinical experiences. Graduates of nurse anesthesia educational programs have an average of 9,369 hours of clinical experience.

Certification

Graduates of nurse anesthesia educational programs must pass the National Certification Examination. The National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to promoting patient safety by enhancing provider quality in the field of nurse anesthesia. Currently, it is the only certifying body for CRNAs.





Maryland Association of Nurse Anesthetists

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist CRNA

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) are anesthesia professionals who safely administer more than 49 million anesthetics to patients each year in the United States. CRNAs practice in all 50 states including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. There are approximately 50,000 CRNAs and SRNAs (student registered nurse anesthetist) practicing in the United States.

There are over 800 students and active CRNAs in the state of Maryland practicing in all types of hospital, ambulatory surgery, and clinic settings.

CRNAs in Maryland collaborate with anesthesiologists, physicians, and dentists.

CRNAs are one of the four advanced practice nursing specialties recognized in Maryland.

History

Nurse anesthetists have been providing anesthesia care to patients in the United States for more than 150 years. The CRNA credential came into existence in 1956. The title “nurse anesthesiologist,” which is synonymous with the title “nurse anesthetist,” is used by some CRNAs.

Rural America

CRNAs are the primary providers of anesthesia care in rural America enabling healthcare facilities in these medically underserved areas to offer obstetrical, surgical, pain management, and trauma stabilization services.

Practice of Nursing

When anesthesia is administered by a CRNA, it is recognized as the practice of nursing; when administered by a physician anesthesiologist, it is recognized as the practice of medicine. Regardless of whether their educational background is in nursing or medicine, all anesthesia professionals give anesthesia the same way.

Practice Settings

CRNAs practice in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered including traditional hospital surgical suites, obstetrical delivery rooms, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory surgical centers. CRNA’s also provide anesthesia services in office settings with dentists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists, plastic surgeons, and pain management specialists. Public Health Services, U.S. military, and Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare facilities also employ CRNA’s.

Practice in Maryland

CRNAs in Maryland collaborate with anesthesiologists, physicians or dentists. CRNAs may collaborate with anesthesiologists as part of an anesthesia care team (ACT) which is one anesthesiologist collaborating with up to four CRNAs. However, CRNAs may also collaborate directly with the surgeons or dentists they are working with and do not require anesthesiologist collaboration. Visit **www.crnasofmd.org** for more information.

Anesthesia Safety

Numerous outcomes studies have demonstrate that there is no difference in the quality of care provided by CRNAs and their physician counterparts.

Military Presence

During WWI, CRNAs became the predominant providers of anesthesia care to wounded soldiers on the front lines; today, CRNAs continue to be the primary providers of anesthesia care to the U.S. military personnel on the front lines, navy ships, and aircraft evacuation teams around the globe.

Nurse Anesthesia Programs in Maryland

University of Maryland School of Nursing Nurse Anesthesia Program graduated its first class in 2006. This program is a 36-month full time plan of study with students graduating with a Doctorate of Nursing Practice degree. Since its inception, approximately 300 CRNAs have graduated from the program with 65% of these graduates practicing in Maryland.

Johns Hopkins University plans to open a Nurse Anesthesia Program and admit its first class in May 2020.