

# APNA *transitions* in *practice*

## Energizing RNs with Knowledge, Tools, & Best Practices to Create a Solid Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing Foundation



**T**he APNA Transitions in Practice Certificate Program (ATP) is an online curriculum that will improve the retention, job satisfaction, and basic psychiatric-mental health nursing knowledge of RNs. This continuing education is intended especially for new RN graduates and RNs transitioning to inpatient psychiatric practice settings. It consists of four self-paced modules (15 hours of content) covering foundational aspects of psychiatric-mental health nursing practice and presented by recognized experts in the field. Focusing on the most up-to-date best practices and evidence-based nursing knowledge, it will optimize success in nursing practice and improve healthcare outcomes for persons with mental health disorders.

### Program Objectives

1. Introduce evidence-based strategies for providing safe and effective nursing care for people with psychiatric-mental health disorders.
2. Provide education that promotes the acquisition of foundational evidence-based knowledge related to psychiatric-mental health nursing through case study analysis and post-test questions.
3. Provide evidence-based tools and strategies to facilitate nurses developing a person centered plan of care for people with mental health disorders.

# Why the ATP Certificate Program?

## THE NEED

There is a need for best practices training to ensure consistent quality of care and reduce the turnover rates of new nurses.<sup>1</sup>

**25%**

of new nurses leave a position within their first year of clinical practice<sup>1</sup>

**>40%**

of new nurses report making medication errors<sup>1</sup>

**1.05 million**

RN positions needed by 2022<sup>2</sup>

*Institutions with transition programs see a drop in attrition and improved patient outcomes.<sup>1</sup>*

Psychiatric-mental health nursing requires the development of specialized skills and knowledge, yet many nurses lack the foundational knowledge needed to provide mental health care to a diverse population across the lifespan.

The ATP Certificate Program will:

- **Cover foundational topics** like therapeutic engagement, psychiatric-mental health disorders, psychopharmacology, risk assessments, addictions, co-morbid disorders, recovery, and the therapeutic environment.
- **Deliver 15 contact hours** of psychiatric-mental health content towards meeting the continuing education requirement for American Nurses Credentialing Center certification (PMH-RN-C).
- **Support nurses** as they transition from the classroom to clinical practice or from another specialty into psychiatric-mental health settings with safe, evidence-based knowledge, tools, and best practices.
- **Promote effective communication** to meet The Joint Commission (TJC) safety standards.
- **Highlight the importance** of mental health care provided by RNs in a way that is highly visible to institutions, consumers, health care professionals, and the public.

## THE ANSWER

## THE EVIDENCE

**100%**

of participants agree that the APNA Transitions in Practice Certificate Program increased their awareness and understanding of psychiatric-mental health nursing.

**60%**

of participants say they will modify their practice as a result of what they learned.

**40%**

of participants say that the program reinforced their current practice.

**100%**

of participants agree that the ATP Certificate Program content is:

- Well organized and clearly presented
- Easily understandable
- Presented objectively
- Easy to navigate

1. National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2013). *Transition to practice*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsbn.org/transition-to-practice.htm>

2. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2014a). *Nursing shortage fact sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/NrsgShortageFS.pdf>

# How the ATP Certificate Program Works



The ATP Certificate Program online platform tracks where users are in the program and remembers where they left off after their last log in. Its user-friendly graphics visually tell users what they have completed, what they're in the process of completing, and what is left to complete in order to earn their certificates. In addition to the faculty presentations, case studies, evaluations, and post-tests that make up each module, participants also have access to handouts, glossaries, extensive references, and a discussion board.

## FACULTY PRESENTATIONS

**1.3 Medication Management in Psychiatric-Mental Health Settings**

**Basic Pharmacological Principles**

- Pharmacokinetics:** What the body does to the drug.
  - Absorption.
  - Metabolism.
  - Distribution.
  - Elimination.
- Pharmacodynamics:** What a drug does to the body at specific targeted sites.
  - Receptors.
  - Ion channels.
  - Enzymes.
  - Carrier proteins (re-uptake pumps).
- Pharmacogenomics:** How drugs respond in interindividual and interethnic differences (newest area).
  - Genetic testing assists in gene identification involved in pharmacokinetics to aide in the development of personalized medicine.

APNA Your Resource for Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing

## CASE STUDIES

**1.2 Psychotic Disorders**

**Case Study**

Terry F., a 36-year-old single white male diagnosed with schizophrenia 18 years ago, presents for follow-up treatment in the clinic after being discharged from his 13<sup>th</sup> hospitalization

- Lives in a room at the local YMCA
- Unemployed, with a 12<sup>th</sup> grade education
- On SSI
- Few identifiable supports in the community; sister lives in VA
- Sporadic ETOH abuse
- Past history of arrested development
- Be in love with his sister

## GLOSSARY

Glossary for Module 2: Risk Assessments, Addictions and Co-morbid Disorders

The following definitions come from a variety of resources, including Medline Plus, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institute of Mental Health. Our goal is not to invent new definitions where they already exist, but to compile all of these definitions into a resource that can be used by participants in this ATP program. The definitions are not in alphabetical order but are listed in the order they are used in each individual module.

To search the glossary, hit Ctrl-F on your keyboard and input your search term.

**2.1 Mental Status Exam and Risk Assessment**

**SAFE-T Suicide Assessment**  
Suicide Assessment Five-step Evaluation and Triage - assessment includes identification of risk factors, identification of protective factors, conduct suicide inquiry, determine risk level/intervention, and document. <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/safe-t-card.pdf>

**Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)**  
The nation's only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the "National Strategy for Suicide Prevention"; they provide technical assistance, training, and materials to increase the knowledge and expertise of suicide prevention practitioners and other professionals serving people at risk for suicide. [http://www.sprc.org/about\\_sprc](http://www.sprc.org/about_sprc)

## HANDOUTS

Overview Forward Module 1 Module 2 Module 3 Module 4

Document Center Glossary References Discussion

- Syllabus
- 1.1 Depressive and Anxiety Disorders
- 1.2 Psychotic Disorders
- 1.3 Medication Management in Psychiatric-Mental Health Settings
- 2.1 Mental Status Exam and Risk Assessment
- 2.2 Substance-Related Disorders

Overview Forward Module 1 Module 2 Module 3 Module 4

Document Center Glossary References Discussion

Rich text editor interface with options for bold, italic, underline, link, and text color.

Yes, I want to receive emails when anyone else posts a comment here.

## DISCUSSION

Module 3 References

**3.1 Using the Recovery Model in Nursing Practice**  
Kris Lambert, PhD, MSN, RN

References

- Ashcraft, L. & Anthony, W. (2009). What a recovery organization looks like. *Behavioral Healthcare*, 25, (6), 10-13.
- Brown, C., (Ed.). (2002). *Recovery and wellness: Models of hope and empowerment for people with mental illness*. New York, NY: Hawthorne Press.
- Burns, S. & Bulman, C. (Eds.) (2000). *Reflective practice in nursing: The growth of the professional practitioner*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Science, Inc.
- Caldwell, B., Sclafani, M., Swarbrick, M. & Piren, K. (2010). Psychiatric nursing practice and the recovery model of care. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing*, 48, (7), 42-48.
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (2006). *Practice guidelines for recovery oriented behavioral health care*. Hartford, CT: Author.
- Craig, T. (2006). What is psychiatric rehabilitation? 3-17. In G. Roberts, S. Davernport, F. Holloway, & T. Tattan (Eds.), *Enabling recovery, the principles and practice of rehabilitation psychiatry*. (pp. 3-17). London, England: The Royal College of Psychiatrists.
- Copeland, M.R. (2002). *Wellness recovery action plan*. West Dummerston, VT: Peach Press.
- Davidson, L., O'Connell, M., Tondora, J., Slyron, T., & Kangas, K. (2006). The top ten concerns about recovery encountered in mental health system transformation. *Psychiatric Services*, 57, 640-645.

## REFERENCES

# The *ATP* Certificate Program Content

Overall Program  
Pre-Test



Program Foreword



Evaluation: Program  
Foreword



1.1 Depressive and  
Anxiety Disorders



1.2 Psychotic  
Disorders



1.3 Medication  
Management in  
Psychiatric-Mental  
Health Settings



Post-Test: Module 1



Rationale: Post-Test  
Module 1



Evaluation: Module 1



2.1 Mental Status  
Exam and Risk  
Assessment



2.2 Substance-  
Related Disorders



2.3 Medical  
Comorbid Illness in  
Psychiatric Patients



Post-Test: Module 2



Rationale: Post-Test  
Module 2



Evaluation: Module 2



## **Program Foreword: Therapeutic Engagement**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify therapeutic use of self, including presence and engagement and how it affects patients' perceptions of their care and patient outcomes.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At a novice level, participants should be able to:

- Apply the principles of presence and engagement in the clinical setting.

## **Module 1:**

### **Psychiatric-Mental Health Disorders and Psychopharmacology**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify current best practices of care for persons with psychiatric mental health disorders.
- Identify current best practices for safe medication management, which involve monitoring for common side effects, drug interactions, and desired versus adverse effects.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Participants should be able to:

- Identify common signs and symptoms of selected mental health disorders across the lifespan.
- Identify and monitor for common side effects, drug interactions, and desired versus adverse effects of psychopharmaceuticals in individual patients.

## **Module 2:**

### **Risk Assessments, Addictions and Co-morbid Disorders**

### **OBJECTIVE:**

Identify appropriate screening tools and interventions for persons at risk for self-harm, suicide, and/or harm to others, substance-related disorders, and medical comorbid illness.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Participants should be able to:

- Perform a risk assessment for suicide with individuals in clinical settings using best practice assessment tools and communicate the risk and interventions to the treatment team.
- Develop a safety plan with persons at risk for suicide or self-harm.
- Identify patients at risk for substance use and apply SBIRT appropriately in clinical setting (SBIRT: Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment for Alcohol/Drug Abuse).
- Educate patients on topics related to self-management of comorbid/co-occurring illness for individuals with mental illness and chronic disease.

### Module 3: Recovery

#### OBJECTIVE:

Apply the principles of recovery-oriented nursing care to selected PMH scenarios.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Participants should be able to:

- Use de-stigmatizing language when working with individual patients.
- Identify and begin to develop a trauma-informed, strengths-based, person-centered plan of care.
- Discuss best practices related to the use of peer specialists in PMH settings.

### Module 4: Therapeutic Environment

#### OBJECTIVE:

Identify at least three strategies that incorporate the principles of safety, de-escalation, and/or boundaries that assist in developing/maintaining a therapeutic environment.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Participants should be able to promote a therapeutic environment by:

- Implementing strategies to improve safety in the PMH workplace.
- Recognizing when to set boundaries with patients and being aware of situations of potential boundary crossing.
- Applying basic de-escalation techniques and concepts of cultural humility when engaging with individuals.

## What participants say about the *ATP* Certificate Program

"This was an excellent course and provided a breadth of knowledge that increased my confidence and ability to successfully transition into my new position as a psychiatric nurse."

"All of the sections were very engaging and provided very practical, useful information that can serve to improve my practice as a mental health nurse and it has certainly built my confidence in returning to the inpatient setting."

3.1 Using the Recovery Model in Nursing Practice	✓
3.2 Cultural Humility	✓
3.3 Trauma and Recovery	✓
3.4 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Trauma Informed Care	✓
Post-Test: Module 3	✓
Rationale: Post-Test Module 3	✓
Evaluation: Module 3	✓

4.1 Risky Business: Walking the Boundaries Tightrope	✓
4.2 Therapeutic Engagement in De-Escalation	✓
4.3 Key Elements of a Safe Environment	✓
Post-Test: Module 4	✓
Rationale: Post-Test Module 4	✓
Evaluation: Module 4	✓
Overall Program Post-Test	✓
Overall Program Evaluation	✓
Certificate	✓
APNA Transitions in Practice Program Certificate	
You have earned 15.00 CE credits.	✓
<a href="#">View/Print Your Certificate</a>	



## Registration & Cost

Individual registrations can be completed online at [elearning.apna.org/atp](http://elearning.apna.org/atp).

- \$200 for APNA Members
- \$250 for Nonmembers
- Bulk purchase pricing is available to institutions interested in purchasing the program in blocks of 10 or more. Please email [atp@apna.org](mailto:atp@apna.org) for more information.

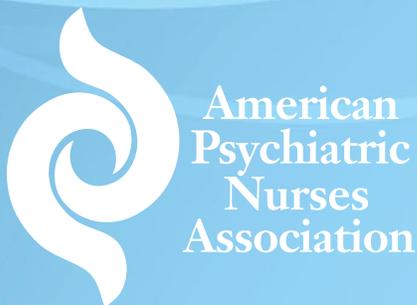
**Learn more and register at [elearning.apna.org/atp](http://elearning.apna.org/atp).**

## Continuing Nursing Education

The American Psychiatric Nurses Association Transitions in Practice (ATP) Certificate Program is a 4-module nursing education program that includes faculty presentations, case studies, post-tests and evaluations of the content. The ATP program is worth 15.0 continuing nursing education contact hours. In order to receive contact hours for the program, participants must: Complete the overall pre-test, view the program in its entirety (foreword, modules 1-4), complete the end-of-module evaluations, and earn a passing score of at least 80% on the post-test for each module during the allotted access period. Participants will have 5 tries to correctly answer the questions on the post-test. Once the overall post-test and evaluation have been completed, the certificate will be generated online, available to print immediately. Credit cannot be earned unless all steps are completed.

*The American Psychiatric Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.*

"This is the  
bread and  
butter of  
what we do."



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