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**Nursing Interview Questions
& Answers**

Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult patient.

Sample answer: I was in nursing school, and we were working with patients who needed a high degree of attention. The patient was feeling uncomfortable and started to show aggression. I called in the other nurses and physicians for help immediately.

Why is this interview question asked? Dealing with patients is a core part of the nursing position. Not all patients are friendly. Some patients can be stubborn, upset, angry, or unwilling to work with the hospital staff and registered nurses because of chronic issues or ailments.

Tell me what you found the most interesting while getting your nursing degree.

Sample answer: Learning about anatomy and physiology and how that impacted our patients. To expand on this, it was about learning holistic medicine. I wanted to understand how behaviors or food choices can compound issues in our bodies. What I learned is that this is something that can be overlooked: diet, exercise, other habits that we have as humans. Being able to look at a patient holistically is a skill.

Why is this interview question asked? Passion is an important part of any job. About nursing, passion is even more important. Nursing jobs are not always “easy” and require the employee to have a strong will and patience for the role. Employers and hospital administrators want to know that the employee and nurse are passionate about the role.

Tell me what you know about our healthcare organization.

Sample answer: It appears you value the patient’s care the most. Since you hold your standards to every state regulation and the fastest emergency room wait times. This makes you one of the best healthcare organizations in the state. I appreciate the level of patient care the practitioners provide. I have been a patient at this hospital myself. And have seen the level of patient care first hand.

Why is this interview question asked? This qualifying question shows how well-prepared the nurse is. And shows comprehension of what the hospital values. This can be an effective question for hiring managers and hospital administrators. As they will want the nurse to carry out the hospital’s principles, procedures, ethics, and values.

How would you handle working with the other nursing staff?

Sample answer: I value coordination and communication while ensuring HIPAA laws are in everyday practice.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows whether the candidate has any prior nursing experience. Or comprehends what’s required of the nursing role.

What do you value most in the nursing field?

Sample answer: Simply put, being able to help people! I love being able to see people improve their daily lives and their daily habits. People would always come to me with questions that they had about health, anyway. It seemed like the logical next step for me; to get into nursing.

Why is this interview question asked? Once again, a qualifying question that alludes to the passion of the nurse. It helps to ensure the nurse is going into the field for “the right reasons.”

How would you ensure high-quality patient care?

Sample answer: Ensuring that each person is treated as their own unique self and their own individual. This means treating patients as humans and not as numbers. Philosophically, this is complex. And is something that we always have to be cautious of.

Why is this interview question asked? It shows whether the nurse has any prior working experience in the field. Or shows what the nurse may have learned during any clinical training or hospital hours.

What would you do if a patient were experiencing discomfort?

Sample answer: Figure out where that discomfort was coming from before administering any narcotics or other drugs. Then try to determine if the issue can be resolved without medical treatment. For example, assisting the patient with their blankets or pillows to help them with their discomfort.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. It also qualifies the nurse and ensures that the nurse knows the regular job duties and responsibilities.

How do you make sure physicians care for each patient?

Sample answer: As an RN (Registered Nurse), I see myself as an administrator as well. Coordinating with the physician can help ensure each patient is being treated well. Or ensuring that the patient is receiving proper care in the appropriate period. Coordinating with technicians, other nurses, doctors, and hospital staff members are vital for this position.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows coordination, teamwork, and the ability to carry out strong patient care amongst the hospital staff and nursing staff.

What are some of the most important things to consider in the nursing position?

Sample answer: How not everything can be solved with a drug. We need to look more closely at what’s happening with each patient and treat them individually.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows passion and consideration of entering into the field of medicine.

Why are interpersonal skills important in the nursing role?

Sample answer: Because speaking to patients in a way that makes them feel comfortable can be very beneficial. Communication can lead to a better understanding of what the patient requires in terms of treatment. For example, if the nurse isn’t actively listening to the patient, they can miss critical information provided to doctors.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows comprehension of what's required of the job duties and responsibilities. And how core competencies or traits in a nurse can play a pivotal role in carrying out high-quality patient care.

Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult situation and didn't have the support of others available.

Sample answer: I was in a difficult situation in my previous job. I worked under a tight deadline but couldn't get a few staff members to contribute to their work. Ultimately, what I did was had the deadline extended by using my communication skills. Asking our client for a day or two of more time was easy when I gave them all the facts.

Why is this interview question asked? A behavioral question that displays the type of work performance that the future employer can expect from the nursing candidate.

What are your career goals?

Sample answer: I'd like to become a nurse manager at some point in my career. Or have some experience in the private medical sector. I believe that one-on-one medical attention is something that shouldn't only be able to be provided to the wealthy. I believe that personal care can be standardized across the United States and with all types of healthcare systems.

Why is this interview question asked? Displays acknowledgment of what the job function can provide the candidate and what the hospital or health center experience can provide in return. Answer this question as a 5-year plan.

How would you handle a patient who doesn't have health care insurance?

Sample answer: Determine if they need to be treated. Then, we try to have our accounting department or finance department work with them on their needs. If it's an emergency, we should still treat the patient immediately.

Why is this interview question asked? Qualifies the nurse as comprehending what's required of the job function and how the hospital administration process works with insurance policies. Include references to training other nurses on EMR systems. Handling Medicaid reimbursements through HCAHPS scores.

Tell me about your previous job experience and how it relates to nursing.

Sample answer: I had to use my abilities as a communicator and person to address others' needs. I think that's how my previous job and this job align. Communication is a skill that should be developed over time—listening actively and then speaking with intent. Especially while under pressure.

Why is this interview question asked? Display's comprehension of the job requirements and an understanding of the role's traits, characteristics, and requirements.

How would you work with the charge nurse?

Sample answer: Coordination, clear communication, and planning. I would try to understand how that professional wanted to coordinate care together. Then learn about the patient's desired care requests. Then try to make the best decision I can with that information.

Why is this interview question asked? Shows coordination amongst the nursing staff and comprehension of other job titles that assist with the registered nurses.

What do you want to achieve with your nursing career?

Sample answer: I'd like to be able to have more experience with those who need holistic care.

Why is this interview question asked? Display's passion for the position and critical-thinking skills.

What appeals to you the most about the travel nursing position versus a regular practical nurse in a hospital setting?

Sample answer: Simply put, I love the idea of being able to help others when I can. I would love to be exposed to multiple working environments and conditions that can provide me with a better healthcare experience. I'm open to all types of opportunities.

Why is this interview question asked? Qualifies the candidate to display what key characteristics and values are most important to them. And how that will translate to high-quality patient care and job performance.

Why did you pursue the nursing profession?

Sample answer: As a child, I suffered from a lot of ailments. It was the experience of working with a select few great nurses that made me want to pursue this career.

Why is this interview question asked? It provides the opportunity for the candidate to share more about their personal background. And why they are compelled to enter into the field of nursing. Provides an opportunity for the candidate to qualify themselves through skills and experiences.

When did you know you wanted to become a nurse?

Sample answer: My path wasn't as straightforward as others. While I knew that I wanted to pursue nursing as a profession, it took me a few years into life to realize it. I come from a long line of nurses in my family. Both my mother and my grandmother are nurses. And growing up, I felt a draw to the profession. But it wasn't something I knew I wanted to do until after I graduated from college with another degree. It started to click for me later when I was inspired by my mother and grandmother once more.

Why is this interview question asked? Qualifies the candidate and determines whether the candidate has any prior job training or experience. Including any clinical hours, externships, or other opportunities to work closely with hospital staff.

What do you find rewarding about this job?

Sample answer: This is a job that is far more rewarding than others. You have the opportunity to be able to heal others. And being able to see patients go from long-term care to returning to their families is just incredible. Something is gratifying and satisfying about being able to heal someone.

Why is this interview question asked? Qualifies the candidate and determines whether the candidate has any prior job training or experience, including any clinical hours, externships, or other opportunities to work closely with hospital staff.

How would you deal with a patient who isn't satisfied with your patient care?

Sample answer: In my previous job, I remember a patient wasn't satisfied with our patient care. The first thing I needed to do in the situation was to take a step back from it. I wanted to understand what the patient was feeling. Was it my stubbornness that was blocking me from being able to see that patient care was lacking? Or was it something else? I realized the problem truly was myself. I was not feeling motivated at that time in my life. And I needed to focus back on work and the patient. I apologized to them for their unsatisfactory experience and explained to them my blockers. From there, I listened to their needs and concerns, then designed a much better path forward for delivering patient care to them.

Why is this interview question asked? Display's preparedness for the interview and ensures the candidate has read through the job description or job advertisement, understanding what's required of the job.

How do you handle the stress of this job?

Sample answer: This job demands long hours. It is something that all nurses need to be cautious of. The long hours that this job demands can make it easy to slip on patient care. The best way to deal with this is to make sure that I'm not overbooking my working hours. Inform the hospital administrator and the nursing manager that I've worked too many hours. And I am feeling burned out, and need to take a breath.

Why is this interview question asked? Ensures the candidate has a plan to deal with the stresses of working closely with patients. And who may have a stubborn, angry, or resentful attitude toward hospital staff due to pain, chronic illness, acute issues, or others.

What is the hardest part of being a nurse?

Sample answer: Honestly, for me, it's about not getting too close to the patient. It's best not to have an emotional connection with patients that might be clouding our judgment. We have to treat the patient with optimal care. But if, for example, a patient reminds of a parent, this can cause some complications in providing proper treatment. We have to stay professional and be aware of our mental state. That is the hardest part of being a nurse.

Why is this interview question asked? Ensures the candidate is aware of the situations they can experience operating as a registered nurse. Or as part of the hospital, emergency room, or health center.