Healthcare Workforce Regional Partnership (HWRP) Brightpoint Community College Foundation

Region 4 Education and Training Pathways: Nursing and Radiologic Technology

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Introduction:

This document outlines the education/training, and career pathways for nursing and radiologic technology programs in GO Virginia Region 4. These healthcare roles are critical to meeting the growing workforce needs of hospitals, clinics, and other providers across the region. By understanding the steps involved in training, credentialing, and advancing within these fields, educators, employers, and workforce development stakeholders can identify opportunities to strengthen pipelines and address persistent gaps in supply.

Nursing Pathway:

The nursing pathway provides a structure that allows individuals to enter the workforce at multiple points and continue to advance over time. Starting with entry-level roles like Certified Nursing Assistant, students can build experience and progress to Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Nurse, and eventually advanced practice and leadership positions. Each stage builds on prior experience, offering a practical route for career mobility that also aligns with employer demand. This makes nursing an ideal focus for scaling efforts across the region. However, despite high interest and demand, many programs face limitations due to a shortage of qualified faculty and a lack of clinical training capacity. Addressing these bottlenecks through targeted investment and partnership development will be key to growing the nursing workforce and filling vacancies in the years ahead.

Nursing Career Pathway Table:

Role	**Typical Training & Credential**	**Credentialing Exam**	**Advancement Options**
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	140-hour state-approved training (high school CTE, adult course, or community college).	State CNA certification exam (written & skills)	Gain experience; bridge to LPN programs or enter ADN/BSN (many nursing schools give admission credit for CNA experience).
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	~1-year practical nursing diploma/certificate (college or technical center). May require CNA or patient care experience to enroll (varies).	NCLEX-PN for LPN licensure.	Work as LPN in long term care center, clinics, or hospitals; many enter LPN-to-RN bridge (ADN or BSN) to become RNs. Some specialize (e.g. IV therapy) or take on lead LPN roles.

Role	Typical Training & Credential	Credentialing Exam	Advancement Options
Registered Nurse (RN) – ADN pathway	2–3 year Associate Degree in Nursing (A.A.S.), usually after completing prerequisites in science/general education. ACEN-accredited programs in Region 4 (Reynolds, Brightpoint, Southside College).	NCLEX-RN for RN licensure (required for all RNs).	Work as RN in acute care, ambulatory, etc. ADN grads often complete RN-to-BSN programs (usually ~1–2 years more, often online or part-time) to expand opportunities. Can pursue specialty certifications (e.g. in critical care, pediatrics).
Registered Nurse (RN) – BSN pathway	4-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at a university (e.g. VCU, Bon Secours).	NCLEX-RN (same licensure as ADN).	Work as RN with broader scope; eligible for supervisory roles. Can progress to graduate programs (MSN/DNP) for advanced practice, administration, or education. Employers may have clinical ladders recognizing BSN and certifications (e.g. RN Clin II, III).
Advanced Practice RN / Nurse Leader	Graduate degree (MSN or Doctor of Nursing Practice, etc.) in specialized field (NP, Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse Midwife, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Administrator/Educator).	National certification exams for APRNs (e.g. AANP or ANCC for Nurse Practitioners) plus additional VA licensure for APRNs.	Serve as primary care providers (NPs), anesthesia providers (CRNAs), clinical specialists, or take leadership roles (nurse managers, directors, chief nursing officers). Also, opportunities in academia as faculty (especially needed to address nursing faculty shortages).

Certified Nurse Aid Curriculum:

Typically, CNA programs include foundational courses in healthcare and hands-on nurse aide training. For example, Brightpoint Community College's Nurse Aide/Medication Aide career studies certificate comprises the courses below (total 16 credits):

Course	**Credits**	**Description**
HLT 143 – Medical Terminology I	3 cr	Introduces medical vocabulary, abbreviations, and terms for body systems and diseases.
HCT 101 – Health Care Technician I	3 cr	Teaches basic patient care skills, addressing patients' physical, social, and emotional needs. *Includes lab practice; co-requisite with HCT 102.*
HCT 102 – Health Care Technician II	4 cr	Continues nurse aide training with advanced skills. Applies theory through lab and clinical experience in home health, long-term, and short-term care facilities *(Includes a supervised clinical externship in a healthcare facility; co-requisite HCT 101.)*
Milestone: Eligible for CNA Certification Exam		*After HCT 101/102, students can take the Virginia CNA exam.*
HCT 115 – Medication Administration Training	3 cr	Prepares CNAs to safely administer or assist with medications in specific settings. Meets the Virginia Board of Nursing's curriculum requirements for Medication Aide training. *(Includes classroom, lab, and ~20 hours of clinical practicum; qualifies student for the Medication Aide exam.)*
HCT 190 – Coordinated Internship	3 cr	Supervised on-the-job training in a healthcare setting, applying nurse aide and medication administration skills. *Often combined with HCT 115's clinical hours.*

The CNA curriculum is standardized statewide. The Virginia Board of Nursing prescribes the content and skill competencies for all nurse aide programs. For example, all programs must teach core competencies like communication, infection control, safety/emergency procedures, basic nursing skills (bathing, feeding, vital signs, etc.), psychosocial needs, care of special populations, and legal/ethical aspects. Students must also complete a clinical placement, typically in a long-term care facility, to practice skills on patients under supervision. Programs may differ in

scheduling (e.g. an intense 5-week course vs. a high-school semester) but all must meet the minimum 120 hours and complete the Board-mandated curriculum.

While CNA is an entry-level role, many use it as a first step in nursing. There is no formal "credit" transfer from CNA to RN programs.

Licensed Practical Nursing Pathway (LPN) Curriculum

The Practical Nursing curriculum prepares students to become LPNs, who provide basic nursing care under the supervision of RNs or physicians. In Region 4, LPN programs are offered by public entities like community colleges (e.g. Brightpoint Community College's PN certificate program) and high school/adult education centers (e.g. Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing), as well as private career schools (e.g. ECPI University's PN diploma). Most LPN programs in Virginia are 1 to 1.5 years in length and lead to a certificate or diploma. Graduates must pass the NCLEX-PN exam for licensure. While each school historically had its own curriculum, all LPN programs cover a very similar set of courses and clinical competencies defined by the Board of Nursing and NCLEX-PN test plan. In 2025, Virginia mandated the development of a common practical nursing curriculum across the community college system that aligns with RN programs. This common PN curriculum (to be in place by July 2026) will standardize course content at every VCCS college and facilitate transfer from PN to RN programs.

Below is the curriculum for Brightpoint Community College's Practical Nursing Certificate. It is representative of LPN programs statewide

Course	**Credits**	**Description**
Prerequisite General Courses	14 cr (Total credits for 5 courses)	*The following 5 Prerequisite General Courses are listed and described below:* *BIO 141 – Human Anatomy & Physiology I* *ENG 111 – College Composition I* *MTH 154 – Quantitative Reasoning* *PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology* *SDV 100 – College Success Skills*
BIO 141 – Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4 cr	Study of human anatomy and physiology, including body systems, structure and function.

Course	Credits	Description
ENG 111 – College Composition I	3 cr	Introductory college writing and composition. *(Placement in college English required.)*
MTH 154 – Quantitative Reasoning	3 cr	College-level mathematics focusing on quantitative literacy. Nursing students often take this or another math to meet math competency for dosage calculations.
PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology	3 cr	Overview of human growth and development across the lifespan.
SDV 100 – College Success Skills	1 cr	Student development course to build college study skills, time management, and an orientation to the program/college resources.
Practical Nursing Core Courses	30 cr (Total credits for 6 courses)	*The following 6 Practical Nursing Core Courses are listed and described below:* *PNE 162 – Nursing in Health Changes II* *PNE 174 – Applied Pharmacology for Practical Nurses* *PNE 158 – Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing* *PNE 151 – Medical-Surgical Nursing I* *PNE 145 – Trends in Practical Nursing* *PNE 164 – Nursing in Health Changes IV*
PNE 162 – Nursing in Health Changes II	10 cr	Major medical-surgical nursing course (often spanning first semester). Students learn to assist patients with "special needs" resulting from illness or surgery.
PNE 174 – Applied Pharmacology for Practical Nurses	2 cr	Focuses on pharmacology concepts for LPNs. Topics include medication calculations, common drug classifications, and legal aspects of medication administration.
PNE 158 – Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing	2 cr	Introduction to mental health concepts in nursing.

Course	Credits	Description
PNE 151 – Medical-Surgical Nursing I	4 cr	Continuation of medical-surgical nursing focusing on specific disorders.
PNE 145 – Trends in Practical Nursing	1 cr	Capstone theory course on the role of the LPN.
PNE 164 – Nursing in Health Changes IV	11 cr	Final comprehensive nursing course (often second year or final semester). Covers complex or advanced medical-surgical and specialty nursing care.
Total Credits – Practical Nursing Certificate	44 cr	*Graduates are eligible for NCLEX-PN licensure exam*

LPN-to-RN Bridge: This is a key pathway for LPNs to advance to Registered Nurse. All Region 4 community colleges offer an LPN-to-RN transition option. In these bridge programs, the LPN's prior education and license may count/transfer toward part of the RN program. This typically credits/transfers the LPN for any first-year accredited nursing courses. The LPN must then complete a truncated RN curriculum: usually a one-semester transition bridge course plus the remaining three semesters of the RN program. For instance, Reynolds Community College's LPN-to-RN track is a 3-semester accelerated program (vs. 4 semesters for the traditional RN), and they highlight that students "receive credit for prior learning and clinical hours" from the LPN program.

Registered Nursing (RN) Curriculum

The RN pathway in Region 4 can be pursued via two main routes: an Associate Degree in Nursing (A.A.S.) at a community college (Brightpoint CC, Reynolds CC) or a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) at a four-year institution (e.g. Virginia Commonwealth University, Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing, ECPI University's BSN). Both routes prepare graduates to take the NCLEX-RN licensure exam and become Registered Nurses.

Community College RN programs are typically 2 years (after prerequisites) and focus on core clinical nursing education, while BSN programs are 4-year degrees including more liberal arts, public health, and research coursework in addition to the nursing core. All RN programs must meet standards set by the Virginia Board of Nursing and nursing accreditation bodies.

Below is the curriculum for Brightpoint Community College's Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Nursing program. It includes general education courses and nursing courses over four semesters.

Course	Credits	Description
General Education & Pre/Co-requisites	~21 cr (Total credits for 8 courses)	*The following 8 Prerequisite General Courses are listed and described below:* *BIO 141 – Anatomy & Physiology I* *BIO 142 – Anatomy & Physiology II* *BIO 150 – Introductory Microbiology* *ENG 111 – College Composition I* *ENG 112 – College Composition II* *or HLT 230 – Medical Communication* *PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology* *Humanities Elective* *SDV 100 – College Success Skills*
BIO 141 – Anatomy & Physiology I	4 cr	Human Anatomy & Physiology I (same as in PN program).
BIO 142 – Anatomy & Physiology II	4 cr	Human Anatomy & Physiology II. Required before or by second semester of program.
BIO 150 – Introductory Microbiology	4 cr	Fundamentals of microbiology, including microorganisms, infection, and immunity.
ENG 111 – College Composition I	3 cr	College writing course.
ENG 112 – College Composition II *or* HLT 230 – Medical Communication	3 cr	Second semester of composition (research and writing skills) or a healthcare communication course, depending on program option. Brightpoint allows either ENG 112 or HLT 230 as a requirement.
PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology	3 cr	Lifespan Development Psychology (same as for PN).
Humanities Elective (e.g. PHI *Ethics* or CST *Communication*)	3 cr	A Humanities/Fine Arts elective.
SDV 100 – College Success Skills	1 cr	Student success course

Course	Credits	Description
Practical Nursing Core Courses	~46 cr (Total credits for 11 courses)	*The following 11 Practical Nursing Core Courses are listed and described below:* *NSG 100 – Introduction to Nursing Concepts* *NSG 106 – Competencies for Nursing Practice* *NSG 130 – Professional Nursing Concepts* *NSG 152 – Health Care Participant* *NSG 170 – Health/Illness Concepts* *NSG 200 – Health Promotion and Assessment* *NSG 210 – Health Care Concepts I* *NSG 211 – Health Care Concepts II* *NSG 230 – Advanced Professional Nursing Concepts* *NSG 252 – Complex Health Care Concepts* *NSG 270 – Nursing Capstone*
NSG 100 – Introduction to Nursing Concepts	4 cr	Introductory nursing course. Covers basic nursing concepts and an introduction to the nursing process. *Clinical:* Supervised lab and first patient-care experiences in long-term care or simulation.
NSG 106 – Competencies for Nursing Practice	2 cr	Clinical skills lab course. Focuses on psychomotor skills and clinical judgment in skill performance. Students learn and demonstrate core nursing skills (e.g. wound care, injections, IV therapy, catheterization). Clinical/Lab: College nursing lab and simulation.
NSG 130 – Professional Nursing Concepts	1 cr	Introduction to professional role. Introduces the role of the professional nurse and fundamental concepts in professional development, focusing on professional identity, legal/ethical issues, and contemporary trends.
NSG 152 – Health Care Participant	3 cr	Population and wellness concepts. Focuses on the health and wellness of diverse individuals, families, and the community throughout the lifespan.
NSG 170 – Health/Illness Concepts	6 cr	Basic Medical-Surgical Nursing. Addresses common health and illness concepts across the lifespan. Clinical*:* Hospital and/or community rotations in adult care and introductory maternal/childcare.
NSG 200 – Health Promotion and Assessment	3 cr	Health assessment across the lifespan. Introduces assessment and health promotion for individuals and families, emphasizing health history and physical exam skills.
NSG 210 – Health Care Concepts I	5 cr	Intermediate Medical-Surgical Nursing. Focuses on care of clients across the lifespan with physiological health

Course	Credits	Description
		alterations and reproduction (maternal/newborn complications).
NSG 211 – Health Care Concepts II	5 cr	Intermediate Medical-Surgical Nursing. Focuses on care of clients with psychological and more complex physiological health alterations, across the lifespan.
NSG 230 – Advanced Professional Nursing Concepts	2 cr	Nursing leadership and management. Develops the role of the professional nurse in the healthcare environment in preparation for practice as an RN.
NSG 252 – Complex Health Care Concepts	4 cr	Advanced Medical-Surgical Nursing. Focuses on management of patients with complex, multisystem health problems.
NSG 270 – Nursing Capstone	4 cr	A final capstone course where students integrate all learned concepts in a comprehensive preceptorship experience Clinical*:* Typically, a preceptor-guided practicum where the student works one-on-one with an RN in a clinical unit for a set number of hours.
Total Credits – A.A.S. Nursing	~67 cr	Graduates earn an associate degree and are eligible for the NCLEX-RN.

Radiologic Technology Pathway:

Scaling the radiologic technology pathway is a longer-term opportunity due to the more rigid structure of imaging programs and the need for systematic changes to enable growth. Expanding this pipeline may require investments such as the use of hybrid or online delivery for didactic content, and stronger clinical training partnerships to accommodate more students in imaging departments. Many programs are at capacity due to limited clinical site availability and rigid instructor-to-student ratios required by accrediting bodies.

Radiologic Technology Career Pathway Table:

The Radiologic Technology pathway trains students to perform medical imaging (X-rays, CT scans, etc.) and leads to certification as a radiographer by the ARRT (American Registry of Radiologic Technologists). In Virginia's Region 4, radiography programs are offered by Brightpoint Community College (A.A.S. in Radiologic Technology) and private hospital-based colleges such as Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital’s School of Radiologic Technology. Graduates of either must pass the ARRT national exam.

Role/Level	Typical Education & Training	Credentialing	Advancement/Specialties
Radiologic Technologist (Entry-Level)	2-year Associate Degree in Radiologic Technology (or hospital-based certificate program). Must be JRCERT (Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology)-accredited for ARRT eligibility. Includes ~1,500+ clinical hours rotating through general radiography.	ARRT Radiography Certification and Virginia licensure.	Work as X-ray technologist (radiographer). Can cross-train into other imaging areas (CT, MRI, etc.) via employer training or short courses. Often obtains ARRT (CT) or ARRT (MR) post-primary credentials after documented clinical experience in those modalities.
Advanced Modalities Technologist	Additional on-the-job training or structured certificate in a specialty modality. A.A.S. programs may include exposure to CT/MRI; formal post-graduate certificate programs exist for modalities like MRI.	ARRT post-primary certification exams in CT, MRI, Mammography (M), Bone Densitometry (BD), etc., as applicable.	Functions as a specialist (e.g. dedicated CT Tech or MRI Tech). Could also train in Interventional Radiology (invasive imaging procedures) or Cardiac Catheterization Lab imaging.
Senior/Lead Technologist	Experience-based advancement; sometimes a Bachelor's is necessary.	Possibly additional certifications (Quality Management, PACS administration) but not required.	Oversees other technologists, coordinates scheduling, ensures quality control. Can move into departmental management.
Radiologist Assistant (RRA) / Imaging Manager	RRA: Bachelor's degree + specialized R.R.A. program (approximately 2 years) for advanced clinical role; requires ARRT's R.R.A. certification. Manager: often a Bachelor's (e.g. in Healthcare Administration	R.R.A. certification for Radiologist Assistants (plus state license to practice as R.R.A.under radiologist supervision).	Radiologist Assistant – works as mid-level practitioner performing fluoroscopy and initial image evaluation (under an MD Radiologist). Imaging Manager – handles administrative leadership of imaging services, could

Role/Level	Typical Education & Training	Credentialing	Advancement/Specialties
	or Imaging Sciences) plus leadership experience.		progress to director roles over multiple departments.

Radiologic Technologist Curriculum:

The American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) provides a standardized curriculum that most programs follow. The ASRT Curriculum 2022 outlines required content areas that programs incorporate (e.g. radiographic procedures for each body system, radiologic science, equipment, image evaluation, ethics, etc.) Whether a student attends Brightpoint or Bon Secours, they will encounter very similar courses and clinical competencies, as required for JRCERT accreditation and the ARRT exam readiness.

Course	Credits	Description
Prerequisite General Education Courses	15 cr (Total credits for 5 courses)	*The following 5 Prerequisite General Courses are listed and described below:* *ENG 111 – College Composition I* *PSY 200 – Principles of Psychology* *or PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology* *BIO 141 – Anatomy & Physiology I* *BIO 142 – Anatomy & Physiology II* *SDV 100 – College Success Skills*
ENG 111 – College Composition I	3 cr	College writing skills. Important for healthcare documentation and professional communication.
PSY 200 – Principles of Psychology *or* PSY 230 – Developmental Psychology	3 cr	Introduction to psychology (general principles of human behavior) or lifespan development. *(Either PSY 200 or PSY 230 is required).*
BIO 141 – Anatomy & Physiology I	4 cr	Human Anatomy & Physiology I.

Course	Credits	Description
BIO 142 – Anatomy & Physiology II	4 cr	Human Anatomy & Physiology II. Completes the anatomy foundation, including cross-sectional anatomy which is vital for interpreting imaging planes. *(Must be recent within 10 years).*
SDV 100 – College Success Skills	1 cr	Student skills course.
Core Radiography Courses	57 cr (Total credits for 16 courses)	*The following 16 Radiography Core Courses are listed and described below:* *RAD 100 – Introduction to Radiology & Protection* *RAD 125 – Patient Care Procedures* *RAD 121 – Radiographic Procedures I* *RAD 131 – Elementary Clinical Procedures I* *RAD 111 – Radiologic Science I* *RAD 132 – Elementary Clinical Procedures II* *RAD 221 – Radiographic Procedures II* *RAD 112 – Radiologic Science II* *RAD 246 – Special Procedures* *RAD 190 – Coordinated Internship* *RAD 205 – Radiation Protection & Radiobiology* *RAD 231 – Advanced Clinical Procedures I* *RAD 270 – Digital Image Acquisition & Display* *RAD 232 – Advanced Clinical Procedures II* *RAD 256 – Radiographic Film Evaluation* *RAD 280 – Terminal Competencies in Radiography*
RAD 100 – Introduction to Radiology & Protection	2 cr	Provides an overview of the radiologic technology field and fundamental safety. Students learn the roles of imaging professionals and basic radiation safety practices.
RAD 125 – Patient Care Procedures	3 cr	Covers patient care skills specific to imaging. Topics include patient communication, transferring and positioning patients safely, infection control, contrast media administration, managing

Course	Credits	Description
		medical emergencies in the radiology department, and ethical/legal considerations in patient care.
RAD 121 – Radiographic Procedures I	4 cr	Imaging Procedures I: Introduces procedures for positioning the patient's anatomical structures relative to the X-ray beam and image receptor, focusing on routine exams of the chest, abdomen, spine, etc. Lab: Positioning practice with phantoms/equipment.
RAD 131 – Elementary Clinical Procedures I	3 cr	Clinical Education I: First clinical practicum course. Students begin supervised practice in a radiology department. They perform basic radiographic exams (chest, extremities, etc.) under technologist supervision, developing competency in those studied in RAD 121.
RAD 111 – Radiologic Science I	4 cr	Radiographic Physics I: Covers the principles of radiation physics and imaging science.
RAD 132 – Elementary Clinical Procedures II	3 cr	Clinical Education II: Continuation of clinical practicum. Students advance in performing exams with moderate supervision, now including studies covered in the second semester didactic (e.g. more complex positioning).
RAD 221 – Radiographic Procedures II	4 cr	Imaging Procedures II: Continues radiographic positioning instruction for more advanced or specialized exams.
RAD 112 – Radiologic Science II	4 cr	Radiographic Physics II & Equipment: Continuation of imaging science. Topics include advanced imaging equipment operation, exposure technique formulation, image quality factors (contrast, density, resolution), and an introduction to digital imaging technology.
RAD 246 – Special Procedures	2 cr	Introduces specialized imaging procedures and contrast studies not fully covered in basic procedures courses.
RAD 190 – Coordinated Internship	3 cr	Clinical Education III: A mid-program extended internship.

Course	Credits	Description
RAD 205 – Radiation Protection & Radiobiology	3 cr	Focuses on radiation safety and the biological effects of ionizing radiation.
RAD 231 – Advanced Clinical Procedures I	5 cr	Clinical Education IV: Advanced clinical practicum. Introduces more intricate contrast media procedures.
RAD 270 – Digital Image Acquisition & Display	2 cr	Covers the principles of digital imaging in radiology.
RAD 232 – Advanced Clinical Procedures II	5 cr	Clinical Education V: Final clinical rotation. Students demonstrate mastery of all radiographic procedures, rotating through any remaining specialty areas.
RAD 256 – Radiographic Film Evaluation	2 cr	Teaches how to critically evaluate radiographic images for diagnostic quality.
RAD 280 – Terminal Competencies in Radiography	2 cr	Capstone seminar course. Students ensure all mandatory and elective ARRT competencies are completed. The course includes a comprehensive program review to prepare for the ARRT certification exam.
Total Credits – A.A.S. Radiologic Technology	72 cr	Graduates earn an associate degree and are eligible for the ARRT radiographer exam. Brightpoint's program = 72 credit Bon Secours' program = 83 credits

Bon Secours' hospital-based program divides the content into slightly different courses (they use course codes like RAD 1101, PRO 1101, RSC 1101, CRS 1101, etc., as seen in their curriculum above). Bon Secours requires 21 credits of general education (A&P, College Algebra, Psych/Soc,

English, etc.) completed prior to the professional program, then delivers the radiography content in an intensive format over five terms. Brightpoint embeds general education within the degree.

Conclusion:

This document outlines the education, training, and career pathways for nursing and radiologic technology in Region 4, highlighting how individuals move from entry-level roles into advanced positions. Strengthening these pathways is essential to meeting the region's healthcare workforce needs. Nursing offers multiple entry points and clear advancement routes, but program growth depends on addressing faculty shortages and clinical training limits. Radiologic technology presents a more rigid structure that will require longer-term investment in clinical capacity and innovative delivery models. By tackling these challenges, Region 4 can expand employment opportunities while ensuring hospitals and clinics have the needed workforce.

Sources:

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