



CARE EDUCATION FORUM

Basic Information on Care Education in Hungary

The current state of healthcare education in Hungary presents a complex picture, marked by expanding training opportunities and modernization efforts alongside significant structural challenges.

1. The most basic and widely accessed healthcare-related training, oriented toward practical knowledge for laypeople, is the mandatory *first aid course for drivers* required for obtaining a first-time driver's license. This exam is organized and exclusively administered nationwide by the Hungarian Red Cross.

Legal background: Decree 31/1992. (XII. 19.) NM on certifying first aid knowledge for road vehicle drivers.
Source: <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=99200031.nm>

2. Numerous institutions in Hungary provide healthcare vocational training at the *secondary level*. Prospective healthcare professionals can enroll in various school types:

- Technical schools: five-year programs granting both a secondary school certificate and vocational qualification.
- Vocational secondary schools: four- or five-year programs also offering secondary certification and vocational training.

Currently, students can choose from 26 different healthcare professions or specializations at this level. Popular options include general nurse, infant and pediatric nurse, dental assistant, radiographic assistant, paramedic, and physiotherapy assistant.

List of institutions:

<https://apololeszek.aEEK.hu/egeszsegugyi-szakkepzest-folytato-intezmenyek>

MESZK's 2025 career guide:

https://meszk.hu/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2024/09/palyavalasztas_2025_22.pdf

3. *Vocational Training*

Most healthcare vocational programs require a high school diploma; some require professional background and health suitability. These typically last four semesters but may vary depending on the program and prior education. Practical training is emphasized and conducted in accredited healthcare institutions.

Important links:

National Office of Vocational and Adult Education (NIVE):

https://www.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1097

List of healthcare vocational programs:

<https://szakkesites.hu>

Accredited training sites:

<https://www.enkk.hu/index.php/hun/szakkepzes-tamogatasi-foosztaly/szakkepzhelyi-akkreditacio/akkreditalt-szakkepzo-helyek>



4. Higher Education:

In alignment with the Bologna system, since 2006, healthcare education programs have also adopted the three-cycle structure, which allows for transparency, international compatibility, and the development of structured academic pathways. From bachelor's (BSc) to master's (MSc) and doctoral levels, along with integrated and specialized postgraduate training programs, the range of healthcare education is extremely broad, offering excellent opportunities for further study—even for those coming from technical secondary schools. The sector is expanding rapidly in 2025 but still faces challenges. Decree 13/2025. (IV. 17.) BM defines the competency framework for healthcare professionals, aiming to improve efficiency, transparency, and patient safety, necessitating strong collaboration among training institutions.

Decree link: <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2025-13-20-0A>

- Bachelor's programs (BSc): 6-8 semesters. Popular fields: Nursing and patient care (specializations: nurse, midwife, physiotherapist, dietitian, paramedic), Healthcare organizer (specializations: health tourism, digital healthcare, health insurance), Medical diagnostics, public health and prevention (specializations: public health inspector, health visitor).
- Master's programs (MSc): 2-4 semesters. Typical programs: Health manager, Health educator, Advanced practice nurse, Clinical lab researcher.
- Doctoral program (PhD): Prepares for scientific research and academic careers. Entry requires MSc or equivalent.

Not all healthcare education programs were integrated into the Bologna system, medical, dental, and pharmaceutical training programs remain *undivided*. The duration of these programs varies: general medicine takes 12 semesters, while dentistry and pharmacy require 10 semesters. These are not separated into BSc/MSc levels and are designed to provide direct practical qualifications upon completion.

5. Continuing Education

During the validity period of their professional registration in Hungary, healthcare professionals are required to participate in continuing education programs aimed at maintaining and developing up-to-date professional knowledge. These programs are categorized into mandatory trainings related to the professional qualification and elective courses. The mandatory trainings are usually free of charge and provide 30 continuing education credits, while the elective ones can offer between 20 and 60 credits.

List of mandatory courses:

www.szaflex.aek.hu



General Nursing Education in Hungary

In Hungary, general nursing education is one of the key areas of healthcare vocational training, providing both theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for practicing the nursing profession. Organized nursing education has officially been conducted since 1872. Health Vocational Training Institutes were established in 1930, and after 1945 the training was elevated to technician level (Practical Nurse). Since 1989, it has been offered at the college level (Registered Nurse), while BSc-level undergraduate training has been available since the early 1990s, and MSc-level master's training has been offered since 2000.

The training aims to produce professionals who:

- Provide preventive, therapeutic, nursing, and rehabilitative care
- Assist in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures
- Monitor patient conditions and respond appropriately
- Offer psychological support to patients and families
- Maintain paper and electronic documentation
- Execute nursing tasks based on personalized care plans

General nursing education is available in multiple forms:

1. School-based vocational training: typically a 3-year program built upon a secondary school diploma
2. Adult education: intensive courses lasting 12-24 months depending on background

After completing general nursing education, several further education opportunities are available:

- Higher education: such as enrolling in a bachelor's degree program in Nursing and Patient Care (BSc).
- Specialized postgraduate training: in specific areas like intensive care, oncology, pediatric nursing, etc.
- Master's level studies: nurses can pursue Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) programs, where the additional knowledge enables them to perform complex nursing tasks independently, participate in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, and take on leadership roles in healthcare institutions. They may also continue their education through doctoral (PhD) studies. Available specializations include: intensive care nursing, emergency nursing, geriatric nursing, community nursing, perioperative nursing, and anesthesiology and extracorporeal organ support nursing.

I. Nursing Vocational Training

Since the 2020 vocational education reform in Hungary, the structure of nursing vocational training has been transformed. Based on the Vocational Education Act, the training is now integrated into the technician-level system. The former OKJ system has been discontinued, and training institutions now operate under the supervision of Vocational Training Centers.

Name of the program: Nurse (Healthcare Technician, 5 year training)

Training ID: 09133005

Duration: 5 years (starts after primary school, from grade 9)



Target group: students with a primary school education, starting from the 9th grade.

Qualification: Secondary diploma + technician degree, EU-compatible (EQF 4-5)

Curriculum:

Grades	Content	Comment
Grades 9-10.	General and healthcare basics	Biology, anatomy, communication, psychology
Grade 11.	Basic professional knowledge	Nursing knowledge, first aid, health preservation
Grade 12.	Clinical training + final exam prep	Start of clinical practice
Grade 13.	Intensive clinical practice + final exams	Department practice, final exam

Theoretical subjects:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Pathophysiology
- Nursing theory and practice
- Healthcare law and ethics
- Infection control
- Patient monitoring and documentation

Practical training:

- School demonstration rooms
- Clinical practice: in hospitals, outpatient clinics, nursing homes, and ambulance stations

Competencies after graduation

A graduate nurse is able to:

- Perform patient observation, basic nursing care, and documentation;
- Assist in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures;
- Provide care in both outpatient and inpatient settings;
- Communicate effectively with patients, their relatives, and members of the healthcare team.

Further education opportunities

A nursing technician can:

- Enroll in a university-level BSc nursing program (professional knowledge may provide an advantage);
- Find employment in healthcare institutions as a nurse or assistant;
- Participate in specialized postgraduate training (e.g., rehabilitation, geriatrics, emergency care).

Link:

www.szakkepzes.ikk.hu/kkk-ptt



II. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSc)

Program name: Nursing and Patient Care - Nursing specialization

Level: Bachelor's (BSc), EQF 6

Duration: 8 semesters (4 years)

Form: Full-time / part-time

Entry: High school diploma + recommended advanced biology or chemistry

Practical hours: Minimum 2300 hours (approx. 40% theory - 60% practice)

Curriculum:

Semester	Content	Comment
1-2.	Basics: anatomy, physiology, nursing theory, communication	Theoretical foundation
3-4.	Clinical topics: internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics	Theory + practical blocks
5-6.	Specialized nursing: geriatrics, psychiatry, intensive care	Practice in a clinic
7.	Comprehensive practice: ward rotation, case study writing	Preparation for independent work
8.	Thesis + final exam	Exam period, theory + practice

Subjects

Theoretical subjects:

- Anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology
- Nursing theory, history of nursing
- Health psychology, communication
- Legal and ethical knowledge
- Health promotion and prevention

Practical subjects:

- Learning clinical skills (e.g., infusion, catheterization, injections)
- Hospital practice in internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, etc.
- Participation in community healthcare services
- Simulation training (with patient simulators)

Competencies upon graduation

A registered nurse is capable of:

- Performing independent nursing activities
- Observing patients, assessing their condition, and documenting findings
- Collaborating within a multidisciplinary team
- Providing patient education and promoting health
- Carrying out training and mentoring tasks
- Applying EBP (evidence-based practice)

**Further education and career:**

Opportunity	Example
Master's (MSc)	Advanced Practice Nurse (e.g., intensive care, emergency nursing)
Teaching career	Health Science Teacher Education
Entering the workforce	Hospitals, clinics, outpatient care, general practitioners, specialist consultations
Working abroad	EU-compliant qualification, recognition (e.g., in Germany, Austria, England)

III. Master of Science in Nursing (MSc)

The master's program (MSc) represents the highest clinical and academic level of nursing education following the bachelor's degree. Its goal is to train nurses who are capable of performing more independent and complex tasks within the healthcare system and who can take on leadership or specialist roles.

Program name: MSc in Nursing

Duration: 4 semesters (2 years)

Degree: MSc in Health Sciences

Entry: BSc in Nursing or related field

Practice: Minimum 900 clinical hours

EQF: Level 7

The aim of the MSc program is to:

- Train nurses with advanced clinical knowledge and skills,
- Equip them to manage complex patient conditions,
- Prepare them to lead healthcare teams,
- Enable them to take on educational and research responsibilities as well.

Curriculum:

Semester	Content
1-2.	Theory: research methods, health policy, advanced nursing
3.	Specialization and advanced practice
4.	Thesis, final exams, practice completion

Available specializations (may vary by university):

- Advanced Practice Nurse (APN)
- Emergency care nursing
- Geriatric or rehabilitative nursing
- Mental health nursing
- Education and management specialization



Competencies upon graduation

A nurse with an MSc degree is able to:

- Prepare independent diagnostic and therapeutic decisions
- Perform therapeutic interventions without medical supervision, within defined frameworks
- Take on leadership and coordination roles in healthcare institutions
- Participate in health science research and publication
- Work as an instructor in nursing education

Career prospects:

Direction	Example
Education	Health science teacher training, Doctor of Nursing Practice
Management	Leadership roles in hospitals, clinics
Research	Clinical trials, research institutions
International	MSc preferred in EU/Anglo-Saxon countries

Simulation and Technology in Health Education

In the fields of medicine and health sciences, the use of Simulation-Based Education (SBE) has become indispensable. Through this training method, students and healthcare professionals can acquire the skills and competencies relevant to their specialty while prioritizing patient safety and practicing care scenarios as realistically as possible. In these settings, learners gain proficiency in clinical problem-solving, decision-making, and diagnosis under immediate feedback and with somewhat reduced stress compared to real-life situations. Additionally, simulation-based education is cost-effective and requires minimal instructor presence, enabling more efficient allocation of human resources while improving the quality of patient care.



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