

# Introduction to Legal Nurse Consulting

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# Objectives

1. Learn what Legal Nurse Consultants are.
2. Learn the history of Legal Nurse Consulting.
3. Learn why Legal Nurse Consultants are needed.
4. Learn what Legal Nurse Consultants do.
5. Learn who Legal Nurse Consultants can work for
6. Learn your career options as a Legal Nurse Consultant.
7. Learn about what types of cases Legal Nurse Consultants can expect.
8. Learn why you should become an Independent Legal Nurse Consultant.
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11. Learn about roadblocks you may face when practicing as a Legal Nurse Consultant.
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# Introduction

By Lynn A.

Just like many of you, I went into nursing with a passion to make a difference. My grandmother was a nurse in the mountains of western North Carolina. I grew up watching her go to work in her starched white uniform (which, of course, was a dress), her perfectly polished, white lace up “clinic” shoes, and her “halo” – her nurse’s cap.

My daddy always said she had the reputation of “giving the best shot” around. She was a single parent most of the time and raised four children, two boys and two girls, on an LPN’s salary during the 1940’s and 50’s.

“Pete,” as she was lovingly called by the area doctors and nurses, was tough; she had to be. Times were hard and being a nurse was sometimes harder. I remember hearing tales of long hours, being the only nurse on a floor, and on several instances, having a Deputy from a nearby Sheriff’s Department actually come and take her up the icy mountain road to work, where she would be the only nurse in the hospital. She would work wherever; OR, ER, L&D, Med/Surg... it didn’t matter... she was a nurse, period, and a “damn good one”. She loved what she did until the day she retired at the age of 75.

I had just started working in a small L&D unit when our family and her mountain community of “Happy Top,” in Andrews, North Carolina celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. She didn’t have a clue where she was, or that she had probably either delivered or helped deliver half of the people in the room. But, when she asked me where I was working, and I told her L&D, she said something that I will never forget. It was in a language only a nurse, and especially an L&D nurse, would understand. As I knelt down by her wheelchair, she gave me some advice; probably the same advice that she had received 40 years earlier. She said, “Honey, you gotta watch those babies... they can go bad quick.” I began at that point to realize that we do not choose to become nurses, but that nursing chooses us.

So, here I am, 12 years later, wondering what went wrong. I’ve done most of what I call the “Adrenaline Circuit” – Open Heart, CVICU, CCU, ICU, ER/Trauma, and

L&D. I give a great shot and am a “damn good nurse,” just like “Pete”. But, I’m tired, just as I am sure she was.

Like my sweet “Nana,” I am the single parent of a beautiful, talented and smart teenager, Samantha. She’ll be going to college in a couple of years. It seems as though it was just yesterday when I would take her to the Cath Lab with me after being called back in for emergencies.

How long ago was it when the first thing she would ask me over the phone, while my mom was taking her to kindergarten, and I was driving home from working 7pm shifts, was “how many babies did you help deliver last night, Mommy? Were any of them little girls?”

When I look back on those years, I often find myself wondering what happened. The passion for being a nurse, the same passion that had once been so strong that a 4-year-old little girl could share it with me, wasn’t really there anymore. Or at least, I didn’t feel as though it was. I felt as if I were turning into one of those old crotchety nurses with whom we have all worked and have all wished would retire during our lifetime. Was I becoming a (gasp!) “bad” nurse? Did my Nana ever feel this way? Surely not! What in the world would I do if I weren’t a nurse, sell cosmetics at the Estee Lauder counter?

I started looking at my options. There I was, a 40-ish-year-old single parent with not much to show for the past 12 years except a bad back, a bad ankle, bad hearing, a continually worsening latex allergy, and a little nursing knowledge. Then, I found Veronica. Actually, I called another Legal Nurse Consulting course first, but soon realized I could not afford their prices.

I searched the Web and found Veronica from RN MARKET. After talking with her the first time, I suddenly began to feel that old spark again. I began to get excited about being a nurse once more, and I began the journey that has truly changed, and will continue to change, my life. My once forgotten oyster, my passion for making a difference, started to produce a pearl. Not only has becoming a Legal Nurse Consultant brought me back to life again, my friendship with, and my love and respect for the entire RN MARKET team has restored my faith in people as a whole. This group of incredibly talented, creative, and giving individuals has proven to me and everyone else that they have helped us “get our groove back” in the nursing field, that we are important, we do have something to offer, and that we can once again make a difference.

Thank you all for the love, kindness, and acceptance you each give so freely to all of us who come through your doors.

By the way, now my teenager calls me and says, “Hey, Mom, how many cases did you get today?”

# What Are Legal Nurse Consultants?

Legal Nurse Consultants are nurses who utilize their years of medical expertise in legal cases. They can assist in any legal case that involves medical records.

Legal Nurse Consulting may be defined as a specialty involving the knowledge and experience of nursing applied to the comprehensive review of medical-legal issues. Nurses receive advanced education to provide a greater service to attorneys, insurance companies, government agencies, healthcare organizations, and other organizations. Nurses complement the direction of a case by providing knowledge from experience, education, and research.

Legal Nurse Consultants review and analyze medical records, detect tampering in medical records, offer assistance with demonstrative evidence, evaluate medical information, and provide professional nursing opinions regarding the causation of injuries and the assessment of damages to individuals. They interview witnesses under the direction of their attorney clients to help elicit the truth in cases. Legal Nurse Consultants also conduct medical research and educate their attorney clients about their results and other findings. They provide reports and other presentations to the attorney to help in determining how to further find the truth in the case at hand.

Nurses are more familiar with patient charting than physicians and can recognize errors or omissions in these charts. They can also recognize signs of tampering that were used to cover up mistakes within the patients' charts and records. However, they need the tools and advanced training necessary to recognize what may be missing in the chart, replaced in the chart, or when a chart has been altered significantly. There are other tools and advanced strategies needed when working cases of that magnitude.

## **Areas of Practice:**

- Medical & Nursing Malpractice
- Personal Injury
- Toxic Torts & Environment
- Negligence

- Workers' Compensation
- Product Liability
- Any case where health, illness, or injury is an issue

**Legal Nurse Consultants:**

- Offer services to organizations in need of medical records review, interpretation, or analysis.
- Offer services for plaintiff as well as defense clients.
- Can locate testifying experts.

# What Do Legal Nurse Consultants Do?

Legal Nurse Consultants can participate in a case from the beginning to the end. They can bridge the gap for non-medical parties, extract facts from medical records, and place them in an organized report. They can create graphics that demonstrate visually important points, help interview clients, locate experts, research important pertinent facts, identify Standards of Care, identify missing medical records, and more. However, these will likely be the most common and requested services.

When first entering this field, the chronology data extraction will be the most requested service. Often, they find the paralegal with no medical background doing these for the attorney or the attorney doing these themselves. Once the paralegal has long standing experience, he or she will often do a good job for the average case. Legal Nurses are not usually called for the average cases. They are called to review the cases with unusual circumstances or perhaps the cases involving large volumes of records that need a more experienced person with a medical background to review. These types of records can monopolize office staff time.

Legal Nurse Consultants are a great resource of information when reading medical records. They read every page and question inconsistencies. Chronologies are based on reviewing every page and extracting the facts in an unbiased fashion. Once the sequence of facts are determined, a list is made of missing records, important timing of certain events, relationships between one fact and another, and questions or details that need to be clarified.

Once all of the information is collected, a summary letter with a brief description of the key points is prepared. This will incorporate the legal elements of duty, breach of duty, causation, and damages or injuries. With that in mind, a reliable source of written Standards of Care is located to support the impression. Visual aides to support the summary may also be used. Examples of these are calendars,



timelines, or graphics that depict an accurate representation of the elements that most impact the case.

Once having been in this field long enough to understand the process, new roles will emerge. The attorneys gain trust in the nurse's abilities and begin asking for their attendance at depositions, mediations, or court appearances. Legal Nurses may even participate in the client interviewing process to improve our overall understanding of the case and how the events unfolded. By asking a client questions, they may find relevant facts in a medical record or about the case that may have been missed otherwise.

### **Common Services Provided:**

- Assist with obtaining medical records.
- Identify, interpret, and review medical records for merit.
- Identify missing records.
- Screen medical records for tampering.
- Review hospital policies and procedures.
- Define adherences to applicable Standards of Care.
- Define deviations to applicable Standards of Care.
- Consult with health care providers.
- Develop brief or comprehensive written reports.
- Develop outlines, timelines, calendars, or chronologies of events.
- Conduct medical and nursing literature searches.
- Analyze and compare expert witness reports.
- Attend depositions, trials, review panels, arbitrations, and mediation hearings.
- Help interview plaintiff and defense clients, witnesses, and experts.
- Identify factors that caused or contributed to the alleged damages or injuries.
- Identify and locate expert witnesses.
- Assist in exhibit preparations.
- Prepare interrogatories.
- Review and analyze medical reports.
- Conduct medical research.
- Create demonstrative evidence.
- Act as a testifying expert.
- Locate a testifying expert.
- Locate a consulting expert.

## **Types of Reports Offered:**

- Verbal
- Narrative
- Outline
- Timeline
- Calendar
- Chronological

Reports can be created with comments or without comments. They can be made and presented electronically or in paper format. They can also be made searchable, where certain terms or words can be easily found throughout the electronic document.

## **Typical Length of Legal Nurse Reports:**

- Brief – 1-15 pages.  
Preparation time is approximately up to 20-25 hours.
- Moderate – 16-50 pages.  
Preparation time is approximately up to 25-50 hours.
- Comprehensive – 50 pages or more.  
Preparation time is approximately 50 or more hours.

# History of Legal Nurse Consulting

Since the late 1960's, nurses have been utilized by attorneys to assist them with medical malpractice, personal injury, and other medically-related cases in dispute. Attorneys began to understand their limitations regarding the knowledge of the inner workings of the world of medical practice, and began to look to nurses to help them fill the gap. Attorneys also began to realize that a physician's review of a medical chart or case was costly and oftentimes not as detailed in their assessments as may be needed to substantiate a particular claim.

Nurses have general and specialized medical knowledge that can give attorneys insight into the overall aspect of a case. Nurses have all reviewed and audited more patient charts than they care to remember; therefore, who better than a nurse to enable the attorney to see more of the "whole picture" in a medically-related case.

Hospitals have relied on nurses to be involved in various specialties such as Case Management, Utilization Review, and Risk Management. Nursing specialties outside of the hospital have progressed to nurses having advanced training and certifications in fields such as Life Care Planning, Legal Nurse Consulting, Forensic Nursing, Sexual Assault Examining, and Legal Nurse Investigating. More recent advancements in the industry include Product Safety Specialists and Forensic Criminal Evidence Analysts. Insurance companies, managed care organizations, physicians, hospitals, and government agencies also rely heavily on nursing knowledge of the medical record to solve their problems.

# Why Are Legal Nurse Consultants Needed?

In a study released in 2000, by the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine's report "To Err is Human", estimated as many as 98,000 hospital patients in America are killed annually as a result of preventable medical mistakes.<sup>1</sup> These are only the ones that were properly reported.

A survey of a 1992 national pharmacy database found over 400,000 medication errors from a little over 1,000 hospitals and that a minimum of 90,000 patients annually were harmed by medication errors in the country as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

There are many more statistics and studies that have been reported involving injuries or deaths caused to patients through deliberate, reckless, or negligent actions of people in the healthcare field. Medical and nursing malpractice has been the term generally used to denote mistakes made in the medical field which cause injuries or deaths to patients.<sup>3</sup>

Nurses have all seen practitioners who offer and perform substandard care. The majority of these types of incidents are the result of this smaller population of people who need to be held accountable for their actions and/or their omissions. Nurses are the best judge of what should be contained in a medical record. They are experts within their own field and offer insight into the nursing process. If a nurse is to be held accountable for proper sterile technique or assessment of critical changes in a patient's condition, who best to ask but another nurse in that same field or level of care.

Legal Nurse Consultants can offer more hands-on assistance by way of writing reports in an organized manner to assist with depositions of medical experts or witnesses and to organize medical records. Assisting in live deposition or court situations enables the attorney-nurse team to catch discrepancies as they are being said, and allows the attorney to ask questions in direct response to the statements based on a medical professional's input. Legal Nurse Consultants can help visually demonstrate the details to a jury by charts, graphs, or demonstration of how a procedure should be performed. They are accustomed to teaching in a way that bridges the gap for non-medical people. How many hours of patient education have

they performed during their careers? This is what their patients expect of them, and most of them find great satisfaction in teaching and helping others. That is why they became nurses.

# Who Can Legal Nurse Consultants Work For?

Legal Nurse Consultants are found in places such as health management organizations, hospitals, independent practice, insurance companies, law firms, and government agencies.

Legal Nurses in the hospital setting are usually working in or with the Risk Management department. They are the people telling other nurses how to complete the required documentation on their patients. They are also telling nurses scary tales of other nurses who have made mistakes. Nurses hate those stories because usually one of them seems like just dumb luck, and it could just as easily have been anyone that it happened to. Nurses know that they need to fill out papers for state requirements and others for Joint Commission, etc. Often it seems as if all of the required documentation is for everyone except the patient.

Risk Management nurses often review incident reports involving procedures and analyze how to remedy a situation. Usually, either the practitioner needs more education on a particular subject or procedure, or the process itself needs to be improved in order to prevent the mistake from being made again. For example, nurses have heard of surgery being performed on the wrong extremity due to the improper or lack of marking the correct body part. This usually has more to do with a failure in the actual process. If the process for marking a surgical site is double or triple checking and marking the site in a manner which can be seen even when draped, it is unlikely that mistakes involving the wrong operative site will occur. If all nurses form the habit of asking about patients' allergies and checking allergy bracelets, it would be a rare instance that a patient is given a medication that they know they are allergic to. Risk Managers have the often thankless and frustrating task of trying to make hospitals a safer place for the patient, employee, and visitor.

Legal Nurse Consultants in the law firm and independent practice settings essentially do a lot of the same things. Legal Nurse Consultants work directly for the attorney client to review cases and organize the medical information regarding these cases. They can also prepare courtroom demonstrative evidence, deposition questions, and interrogatories.

Think outside the box. Where can a nurse review medical records? Anywhere. Random chart audits for quality might be something a smaller office, nursing home, or assisted living facility hasn't thought of yet. Remember that Legal Nurse Consultants are held to a standard. If they are reviewing a medical record for merit, they should be hired by an attorney. If they are reviewing a medical record for quality of care, this is a little different, and may fall into more of a Risk Management role.

The idea is that nurses are needed everywhere. Trying all of those places that come to mind, the nurse might find a new niche. However, they shouldn't spend a great deal of time on something that isn't proven to produce income. The idea is to produce income, not to lose their shirts chasing things that do not produce.

# Your Career Options as a Legal Nurse Consultant?

If you are considering Legal Nurse Consulting, you will have three options when it comes to deciding how you will work. Your first option is to find a full or part-time job. This type of Legal Nurse is called an In-House or Staff Legal Nurse Consultant. In-house Legal Nurse Consultants cannot be expert witnesses. This would be a conflict of interest, because they cannot be unbiased in their opinion on the stand, due to a possible fear of losing their job. It may not be a real fear, but the opposing attorney would certainly paint a lovely picture for the jurors. They may be able to assist in interviewing experts, but independent legal nurses more often network and can locate those experts. In this type of Legal Nurse Consulting, you can typically expect an hourly pay of \$20-\$60 per hour. But, you may also expect extra benefits that are offered with the job. The pay and benefits for this option would likely be similar to comparable autonomous nursing positions in your region.

Your second career option is to start your own practice where you would work on a consulting basis. Most nurses prefer this route because they no longer want to work for someone else. The other main benefit is the difference in pay. While an In-house Legal Nurse can expect to earn \$20-\$60 per hour, an independent Legal Nurse can earn \$125-\$200 per hour. As an independent Legal Nurse Consultant, you can choose whether or not to accept a case. After reviewing a record, you can take a side. If it happens to not be the side of the attorney who hired you to review the case for merit, you will discuss with him or her your thoughts. At that point it will be decided whether or not you should proceed with the case from a data extraction perspective. Independent Legal Nurse Consultants can act as expert witnesses during a trial because they are not employed by their client. On average, you can earn \$300-\$500 per hour when acting as an expert witness.

Your third option is to subcontract for other Legal Nurse Consultants. With this option, you will work with other Legal Nurse Consultants or other types of nurses that have hired you to work their cases. You will probably make part of their fee on the case when you do the work for them. Subcontractors can make more money than In-house Legal Nurse Consultants, but less than independently practicing Legal Nurse Consultants who work directly with attorneys. You would have to rely



on other Legal Nurses to secure work for you. Therefore, your work load will not be as regular as you may want.

You can chose one of these career options or any combination of the three. Many Legal Nurse Consultants successfully work independently with attorneys and subcontract with other Legal Nurse Consultants on the side.

Decide which direction you would like to pursue in your Legal Nurse Consulting career. Do you feel that you have the drive and motivation to pursue new cases to work on, or would you rather work a job where they tell you what cases to do and how to do them? Most nurses choose to start their own practice and work independently. However, the choice is yours.

The idea of better income with freedom and flexibility is appealing to nurses, which is why most choose to start their own practice. The process of finding a job as an In-house Legal Nurse is the same as finding any other job. Therefore, this book will focus heavily on starting your own independent Legal Nurse Consultant practice.

# What Types of Cases Can Legal Nurse Consultants Expect?

Nurses can review any medical record. Medical records that need to be reviewed are primarily seen in cases involving personal injury, medical and nursing malpractice, and workers' compensation.

Legal Nurse Consultants are often called upon for medical and nursing malpractice cases, because they know how the hospitals, doctor's offices, and nursing homes generally function. This allows the nurses to easily navigate through medical charts and find issues that many non-medical reviewers miss. They know what to expect when a patient is admitted with a diagnosis of chest pain, abdominal pain, or shortness of breath. There are universal standards that should be followed for these cases, and nurses can spot them when they are missing. The same practice is used when reviewing records for outpatient or long term care. There are general standards that all nurses should know. Even if the Legal Nurse Consultant has never worked in a nursing home, they still have medical knowledge to be able to pull facts from a situation and organize it to provide an attorney insight. They may find that they need to ask a question or two from someone who has worked in a nursing home. Those same nurses may call you with questions about your specialty. Asking the questions that help them with the case makes them better Legal Nurse Consultants, not weaker ones.

In personal injury and workers' compensation cases, they may find that they are reviewing many years of medical history plus the treatments for the injury. Usually they will be asked to review those cases that are clouded with past medical issues that make it difficult to know causal relationship. An example would be someone who has a history of neck or back problems. If that person was in an auto accident and had neck pain, how would they differentiate what was caused by the accident? They would list prior diagnostic findings and treatments and compare those to the post-injury list. Then, they would try to find a way to highlight the important differences with graphs, charts, or calendars.

# Why Become an Independent Legal Nurse Consultant?

Legal Nurse Consulting is a way to use your knowledge and expertise in a new environment. What's the appeal? Most Independent Legal Nurse Consultants seek similar things for different reasons. The money is good, potentially great. The freedom experienced from taking control of when and where you work and the personal satisfaction that comes when you see the difference that you can make in a client's life are all part of the benefits.

As an Independent Legal Nurse Consultant, you can make on average \$125-\$500/per hour depending on which part of the country you live in and how many years you have been working in the field. This is great money. The reality is that you have to get the work and be able to bill for your time. Even though the money is good, you may not start out billing 40 hours a week. It takes persistence, but you will see great rewards for your hard work and diligence.

You may find a wide range of income when asking those who work in this field. Independent Legal Nurses will have larger ranges due to different variables. The obvious variables can be:

- How many hours do you want to work?
- How many hours can you work?
- How good are you at marketing?
- Do you follow through with client requests?
- When you are busy, will you subcontract?

An independent Legal Nurse Consultant can make great money if you are skilled, confident, and have a sense for business. Some say they aspire to make \$200,000 annually. It has been done. Several Certified Public Accountants have stated that the Legal Nurse Consultants that they are hired by have produced six figure incomes. Nurses who have utilized certain advanced training have made over one to two million dollars.

Money helps, but isn't everything. Independence is what most nurses seek. They all look for this for various reasons. Their most compelling reasons are usually their children and families. Many nurses are finding that they "want their cake and eat it too". Being a nurse allows you a vast number of working environment options, but nothing like those allowed by being Legal Nurse Consultants. You can work when you choose, around dance recitals and soccer games. It is hard work, but you can make the most of your time and get the job done. Independence is great, but it is not without hard work.

You can not forget that you are a nurse at heart. You chose this profession and eagerly embraced the rewards of the job satisfaction. It feels great when you see the acute MI patient through CPR and defibrillation, and after recovery, watch as he walks out of the hospital holding hands with his wife. It is exhilarating when you push the IV thrombolytic for the 45-year-old woman who came into the ER dysphasic with right-sided paralysis, and when she later sends your department a note of thanks with a picture of her at her daughter's wedding.

The rewards for Legal Nurse Consultants are a little different. Your services are called upon usually because something went wrong. You may not be the ones to save the day but you can help discover the truth. This is where the problem or mystery solver in you plays a part. When you review a medical record, you are first looking for the step-by-step events as they happened. Until you understand the course of events, duty is not always clear. If a patient arrives with complaints of abdominal pain and dies, you want to know what happened to the patient every step of the way to know where, or if, his practitioners breached their duty to diagnose and treat him.

You can also help the victim of injury. If you have ever seen someone chronically affected by an automobile collision, you know that the victim will never be the same again. Nothing can change the suffering that the victim has endured. However, by helping the attorney, you can help the victim obtain some peace of mind by getting reimbursement for expenses and suffering from the accident, and even help improve quality of life. Satisfaction can be felt in finding the missing piece of the puzzle in a case that may have been difficult to win. This applies to defense, as well as, plaintiff cases.

# Qualities of Legal Nurse Consultants

Legal Nurse Consultants practice in a variety of areas all across the country, but there are common threads among those who succeed. Some of the best qualities to have are confidence, persistence, consistency, attention to the details, desire to find the answers, and the diligence to pull it all together.

The misconception among many nurses is that Legal Nurse Consultants need to know everything. The truth is that they need to be willing to work hard to find what is needed when reviewing and analyzing the medical records. It's impossible to know it all, but nurses have a lot of overall knowledge that leads them to locate the answers and tie all of the facts together.

Confidence is one of the more important qualities to have. It can be learned, but it takes time. Many nurses have low self-esteem after working in hospitals for so many years and not being appreciated. Some of the best self-help authors promote techniques for success. Simply accepting that you are only in control of your reactions to life, not the actions of others, can alone promote confidence. An example of this would be that you cannot be in control of whether or not an attorney calls you for a case, but you can control yourself and your reaction. You can call the attorney on a regular basis, send information so he or she remembers your name, and call the intake specialist to reinforce your desire to help. All of these things will turn the tides of control. Eventually, he or she will need someone to help and you will have laid the foundation.

Instead of focusing on the things you don't know, you need to pride yourself in what you do know. If you have never worked in OB, dialysis, oncology, or orthopedics, don't think of it as something you don't know. Think about how fun it will be to explore these new frontiers and apply what you learn. Most nurses think of themselves as "average" nurses. Attorneys do not know that "average" nurses can help them as much as they can. However, the truth is that you know more than they do about what they need. That's a start. You have a faster ability to learn something new in the field of medicine than they do. You don't see terminology as an obstacle. They do. Your experience is valuable and you need to think, feel, and breathe that thought. Believe it and those attorneys will give you the chance to prove it.

# What Training is Required?

As Legal Nurse Consultants began to form associations in order to promote the networking and training of nurses in the medical-legal field, this led to certificate and certification programs across the United States. These programs are in place to provide a form of standardized education and advanced training. However, not all programs are the same.

There are differences between obtaining a certificate and obtaining certification within a specialized program. When obtaining a certificate, a person is usually exposed to new information in an educational environment. The course content is determined by the specific institution and is not standardized. The certificate shows that the person attended the training and has knowledge of that specific course of instruction.

When obtaining certification, the person will have professional experience in the areas of instruction provided. An assessment of the person's skills, knowledge, and competency are required for the certification (usually through a comprehensive examination), and the assessment is usually completed by a third party organization who is involved in setting and maintaining standards for the particular industry or profession. The certification process has requirements concerning on-going education and training to be performed in order for the person to stay current in his or her profession. The certification usually provides the opportunity to use the certification credentials after the person's name.

- Nurses do not need a certificate or certification to practice as Legal Nurse Consultants.
- Nurses can practice as Legal Nurse Consultants in any state.
- Nurses do not need nursing licenses in any other states to practice as Legal Nurse Consultants in that state.
- Nurses need to have current nursing licenses to practice as Legal Nurse Consultants. They can then place Legal Nurse Consultant or LNC on their marketing items.
- There are no formal requirements to practice as Legal Nurse Consultants.

- Nurses may want to get formal training so that they can learn what is expected while working as Legal Nurse Consultants.

Formal training is not required but is recommended. Nurses benefit from a structured introduction to Legal Nurse Consulting course and a skilled hands-on course. Courses range across the country and may take anywhere from one day to as long as two years to complete.

Some courses are orientation courses or beginning courses and may only help to identify what you might want to do or may help you to recognize that you want to pursue a career as a Legal Nurse Consultants.

You need to know the difference between courses that will merely offer an introductory level of knowledge in Legal Nurse Consulting and those that will teach you the skills that you need to possess in order to get cases and make money as a Legal Nurse Consultant. You need a course that not only can give you an introduction into the field, but will also provide you with what attorneys want and expect. You will need to be educated, confident, and ready to embark into your new career with coaching along the way.

There are programs out there that do not explain exactly what you need. These courses give you many examples of what to do, but never give you the full details on how to do them. They lack the opportunity to practice or apply the techniques of report writing. You won't learn how to organize, tab and paginate a medical record, or even how to assist the attorneys in developing evidence which could be crucial to the cases. You need a program that will provide you with the knowledge you need and the means to utilize that knowledge to practice with success as a Legal Nurse Consultant.

Some courses are certificate courses. A certificate states that nurses have taken a course. However, it does not prepare them for certification and it does not guarantee that they will get a case. Many of these certificate courses are really teaching nurses how to be a paralegal and are not truly teaching Legal Nurse Consulting. You will find most of these programs are being taught in colleges and universities across the country, as well as by some private organizations and institutions. With these programs, you can expect less support when you need help since it is often in a collegiate learning atmosphere.

Other courses are not being taught by full-time practicing Legal Nurse Consultants. If the teacher is only teaching and not practicing as a full-time Legal Nurse

Consultant, where is his or her training coming from? Legal Nurse Consulting is an evolving field and should be taught by nurses who actually practice daily. At RN MARKET, we provide the LNC STAT course where those who graduate receive the Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) certification. Each of our instructors currently practice, have actual cases, and are there to support and assist you all the way through your career as a Legal Nurse Consultant. You get to talk directly to them at your convenience.

Still, other courses are being taught by attorneys or trial attorneys. If attorneys can do Legal Nurse Consultant work better than a nurse can, why would they need nurses to work on cases for them? Why do they call it Legal “Nurse” Consulting if they don’t need a nurse to do the work? If it is a nursing specialty, only a nurse currently practicing in that specialty should teach it. Why are they teaching Legal Nurse Consulting in the first place? Shouldn’t they be practicing law instead?

There are also some physicians teaching Legal Nurse Consultant courses to nurses. Again, this is a nursing specialty and should be taught by a current practicing Legal Nurse Consultant. After all, we wouldn’t dare try to instruct doctors or attorneys in their areas of expertise.

At present, nurses who take a beginning course still need to take another course if the goal is to own their own independent practice. Others, if they did not take a course with the right foundation to begin with, will still need to take additional coursework to have the motivational, marketing, and interviewing skills required to get the cases as well as real hands-on report writing skills to get a second case. To start your own independent Legal Nurse Consulting practice, you need a course that gives you the added confidence to succeed and the tools to carry it out. Often, nurses are given false expectations initially and find that they have succeeded by investing their time, energy, and money in an inferior program that did not offer the training they needed to achieve success. These Legal Nurses often end up never receiving their first case and giving up.

The field of Legal Nurse Consulting is NOT saturated. This is a common misconception. Most nurses who go into this field do not receive the right tools to succeed and they just decide to give up entirely. These nurses go back to their mundane jobs and further pursue other certifications and courses when they need continuing education to keep their license as a nurse. How many certifications do you have? How many can you get in your field of nursing?



Most of the nurses that take a beginning course and receive a certificate or certification do not even practice past their first year. Why? They were missing necessary elements to succeed that they did not get from the course that they took.

Any course can improve upon your education level, but are you taking a Legal Nurse Consulting course for educational purposes alone, to make a career shift, or to supplement your income? If you want to change your current status, you must be serious about what you truly are getting in the course that you take. Do you think that you learn better with only 5-10 students in your class or do you think that having over 200 students at a time will give you the personal attention that you need to succeed?

Many people who have taken these beginning courses are desperate. They land on our doorstep as a last ditch effort while trying to get their first case. They have taken other programs and have decided that they need the hands-on training that our course, the LNC STAT course, can give them. They feel they need the complete marketing and motivational skills as well as the report writing software and tools, and the guided interviewing techniques that RN MARKET also provides. Once this is completed, our students are walking away having had a great learning experience, are well on their way to getting and completing those first cases, and are receiving additional cases from the same attorneys.

You need personal attention to succeed. You need to have the right tools to succeed. You also need to have the skills, marketing knowledge, and drive to get going and stay on the right track to increase your business and keep you motivated.

When deciding which course is right for you, here are some questions that you may want to ask yourself:

- What is the fair market value of the course that you are planning to attend?
- What are you getting compared to the tuition dollars you are spending?
- What will it enable you to do when you have completed it?
- Is it really giving you the physical tools needed for you to use on your own?
- What are you going to have at the end of the program that you can use to create your own business?
- Will you need to purchase other tools?
- Will you need to take other courses?
- Can you make the money back that you spent by getting just one case?

- And, most importantly, what is the success rate of the course graduates? A high success rate is a direct indicator of the quality of the training.

The field of Legal Nurse Consulting is changing rapidly. Keeping up with what is new in education will help you excel in your Legal Nurse career. RN MARKET teaches the current standards of Legal Nurse Consulting that are used by nurses across the country and throughout the world.

RN MARKET offers continuing education and current information to help Legal Nurses know their basics when trying to start out on their own, or when trying to improve their current practice. The LNC STAT course helps to provide the links that most Legal Nurse Consultants starting out are missing. LNC STAT is a course that was created to tackle the frustrations and failures that Legal Nurse Consultants were facing in their practice. Many Legal Nurse Consultants across the country who have completed LNC STAT, and who are using the marketing tools provided by RN MARKET, are getting cases within a week after the completion of the course. You don't have to face these failures and frustrations because the LNC STAT course helps you tackle them before they happen. After reading this book, you will be ready to start the LNC STAT Course and get certified as an Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant.

# Roadblocks When Practicing As A Legal Nurse Consultant

Why do many Legal Nurse Consultants fail at becoming successful Legal Nurse Consultants? RN MARKET has compiled over the past seven years the four most common roadblocks causing nurses to fail at getting their businesses off the ground as Legal Nurse Consultants.

We started by creating marketing packages for many nurses across the country that had taken many other courses. While doing this, we learned that they were not getting a case after going to an initial consultation. Some were getting a case but not getting repeat cases. Others were doing a case and not getting a second case from the same attorney. Some were not getting paid after turning the case in to the attorney. These are the four most common roadblocks causing Independent Legal Nurse Consultants to fail:

## 1) Marketing Skills –

- They don't know how to market.
- They don't know what kind of marketing materials to use that are effective.
- They don't know how to make these marketing materials.
- They don't know what works best.
- They don't know how to get a case.

## 2) Interviewing Skills –

- They don't know how to get an initial consultation with an attorney.
- They don't know how to go conduct the initial consultation.
- They don't know how to get the attorney on the phone.
- They don't know how to bypass the gatekeeper.

- They don't know how to answer the questions from the attorney to get the attorney to give them a case.

### **3) Report Writing & Case Analysis –**

- They don't know how to do the report writing and case analysis.
- They don't know how to organize, tab, and paginate.
- They don't know how to do many different types of reports using their computer and other software.
- They don't know how to create demonstrative evidence with ease.
- They don't know how to WOW the attorney into giving them a second case even before they are finished with the first one.

### **4) Contracts & Fee Schedules –**

- They don't know how to present their fees to the attorney.
- They don't know how to determine their fees.
- They don't know how to make an invoice.
- They don't know how to bill the attorney.
- They don't know how to set the amount with the attorney from the beginning so that the attorney is not surprised with the outcome.
- They don't know how to be paid on time or how to even collect on their case when the attorney does not want to pay.

# Legal & Ethical Aspects of Legal Nurse Consulting

When working on cases, the Legal Nurse Consultant's role is one of a nurse. They are there to provide education and interpretation of medical records and medical issues. They are not allowed to practice law without a license. They should provide factual information and opinions regarding the medical records or medical issues in the case. They should not offer their expertise in areas that should be left to the attorneys and should stick to what they are experts in.

- Do not give legal advice.
- Work strictly for the attorney in the case.
- Do not work for the patient themselves. If a patient asks you for legal advice, you need to direct that patient to the attorney on the case.

As a Legal Nurse Consultant, you are held accountable for your work at all times. You should always give accurate information to the attorneys that retained you, regardless of whom the information may benefit.

Advanced Legal Nurse Consultants (ALNCs) are required to adhere to a specific standard of conduct at all times when working on cases with attorneys. Here are some of those standards.

## **Duty:**

Did the Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) have a duty to conform to a specific standard of conduct and was there a relationship between the plaintiff and the Legal Nurse Consultant during the time of the incident which has made the basis for the lawsuit?

A nurse must stick to the Legal Nurse Practice Standards when retained as an Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) for a case.

## **Breach of Duty:**

Or, in other words, negligence is defined as a departure from the Legal Nurse Practice Standards for an Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC). This would look at what a reasonable and prudent Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) in the same or similar skill set and level of expertise would do in the same or similar circumstance.

A nurse must act in good faith and follow the Legal Nurse Practice Standards when consulting on a case without causing damages to the attorney or to the client that the attorney is representing.

## **Damages:**

The plaintiff would need to prove the damages that resulted from the Legal Nurse Consultant's negligence. They would most likely argue both the economical and non-economical damages as a result of the judgment or verdict against the client due to the Legal Nurse Consultant's negligence.

A nurse wants to make sure that they follow strict guidelines when consulting on cases.

## **Causation:**

That there was a reasonable connection between the actions of the Legal Nurse Consultant and the alleged damages. The plaintiff would need to prove two items:

### **1. Causation in Fact –**

- “But for” test - The plaintiff must prove that in all reasonable probability the damages would not have occurred “but for” the negligence of the Legal Nurse Consultant.
- “Substantial Factor” test – The plaintiff would need to prove that it was the Legal Nurse Consultant's negligence that played a substantial factor in the outcome of the case.

## **2. Foreseeability –**

- The plaintiff would need to prove the Legal Nurse Consultant should have foreseen that their negligence could result in the alleged damages.

There are things that you are able to do and also things that you are not able to do as a Legal Nurse Consultant. The most important thing that you can do is perform all standard Legal Nurse Consulting functions found in the Legal Nurse Practice Standards. You should not practice outside of your realm.

### **Ethical:**

Ethical is defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary as acting in accordance rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad.

- ✓ The Legal Nurse Consultant provides services free of prejudice and conflicts of interest.
- ✓ The Legal Nurse Consultant reviews all current cases before accepting them, making decisions, rendering opinions, or providing recommendations.
- ✓ Personal prejudices and conflicts of interest must be recognized, as they may interfere with the Legal Nurse Consultant's objectivity and adversely affect the performance.

### **Conflicts of Interest:**

Below are some things that should not be done as Legal Nurse Consultants:

- Do not consult on a case that you have already consulted on for the other side.
- Do not consult on a case against the hospital or entity which currently employs you.

- Do not consult on a case when you have information that is confidential regarding someone involved in the case.
- Do not change your opinions on cases or be coerced into changing your opinions. Be objective.
- Do not speak with anyone from the opposing side of the side that has hired you.

There are some things that should be done to avoid conflicts of interest:

- Keep records of all your cases to track any conflicts of interest.
- Never stay on a case when a true conflict of interest is identified.
- Let the attorney know you need to do a conflicts check before reviewing any confidential information or agreeing to consult on the case.
- Gather all the information you need to identify any conflicts of interest.

You should not work on a case where there may be a conflict of interest. If any conflict of interest is identified once you have accepted the case, you should notify the attorney immediately and remove yourself from the case.

### **Confidentiality:**

- Never speak to anyone about an open case other than the attorney you are working for.
- You can not be paid for a case by contingency.
- Never accept gifts or money from the client your attorney is representing.



**Fraud:**

- Do not represent yourself as anything else other than a Legal Nurse Consultant.

**Misrepresentation:**

- As with fraud, do not represent yourself to others as any type of legal professional. You work in a medical aspect on the case.
- Never suggest an attorney that the client should use.
- Never work with a client who does not have an attorney.
- Never conduct an interview of the potential client on behalf of the plaintiff or defense attorney.

**Attorney-Client Privilege:**

The attorney-client privilege is there to protect confidential communications between the client and the attorney. Legal Nurse Consultants should not reveal information concerning an attorney's client or former client to anyone other than the attorney.

While ALNCs are required to adhere to these strict standards of practice, other certification organizations often do not have the same requirements. This lack of control may indicate poor reputability and poor standards on the part of the certification. Attorneys and the legal system will definitely see this lack of standards as a major disadvantage. Look for a well-defined list of certification standards when choosing your Legal Nurse Consultant certification.

# What Makes Legal Nurse Consultants Successful?

Legal Nurse Consultants do not become successful overnight. Time, money, and a plan are needed to start a successful business.

## **Tips for All Legal Nurse Consultants:**

- ✓ Do not let anything or anyone knock you down from reaching your goals.
- ✓ Fight for what you want.
- ✓ Accept rejection in style and continue with your plan.
- ✓ Do not procrastinate.

## **Tips for Independent Legal Nurse Consultants:**

- ✓ Begin by getting your resources together to determine how much money you will need to start your business.
- ✓ Create a plan of action to get your business off the ground and to determine what skills you will need to make your business successful.
- ✓ Make time in your schedule and devote that time to your business without any interruptions.
- ✓ Market your business successfully.
- ✓ Deliver the message that you are trying to get across without running for cover.
- ✓ Do not wait for everything to be “just right” to start your business.

- ✓ Get rid of the fear to start your business.
- ✓ Market even when your business is doing great.

### **How do Independent Legal Nurse Consultants succeed?**

Learn what to say to the right people, at the right time, for the right money, in the right way.

- Learn how to get through the door to begin with.
- Learn how to answer their questions and what to say to their comments.
- Learn the right questions to ask to get them to give you a case.
- Learn what to say and what to do to get more cases from the same attorney.
- Learn how to get them to refer you to other attorneys so that you can get more cases.
- Learn how to get paid for doing your cases.

Nine out of ten people will need training to get a case. One out of ten will get the case on his or her own, but will not get a repeat case from the same client. That one will then need training as well.

### **The most important things to know when practicing independently are:**

1. It doesn't matter how many potential clients you have, it only matters if you know what to say to them to get the case.
3. When you get the case...it now begins.
4. Failure happens during the good times. When you think that you don't need to market, that is when failure occurs. You realize it afterwards.

5. You have to ask for what you want more than three times, even from those that are going to give you a case; they put you off.
6. Selling Persuasion: Delivery – face, voice, body. 55% voice, 38% body language, 7% words you use.
7. Benefit – what they want.
8. Fear of Loss – what they get when you show them what they will lose without going with you.
9. Never tell them something you can show them.
10. Show them reasons why they should use you.
11. Don't cut your prices. You'd rather be turned down than suffer for taking the case for less later on. Don't give away your profit. Would they do their job for less?
12. Build value. We pay more for value.
13. What are they willing to spend on you on this case and how much money are they thinking they will get on this case?
14. Most nurses lose the case over the phone even before the interview or initial consultation. The rest lose the case during the initial consultation. Some get the case at the initial consultation and then fail to get a second case from that same attorney.
15. When you send information in the mail, hold back. Don't send them everything. Don't put everything in your marketing items.
16. You need to sell yourself before you sell your fees.
17. Marketing is too much work for most nurses to do correctly.
18. Many people use their current marketing items and fail because their current items may be like not having marketing items at all.
19. Working hard is not what gets you the case.

20. Present facts – ask questions, this is how you get a case.
21. Knowing what to say to the right people, at the right time, the right way, this is how you get the case.
22. Your “positive attitude” is why they are giving you the case.
23. Your cost becomes negligible if they think that they are getting value and benefit from what you are giving.
24. What would it take to get them to give you a case? Find out and do it.
25. Give them a solution and they will choose you.

**Never Use Common Cop-Outs:**

1. You don't believe that you could possibly fail with your current marketing tools.
2. You want to try it by yourself first to save money.
3. You want to wait until after the...
4. You want to think about it some more before you start.
5. You do not want to pay for anything else to start your business. You've spent enough.
6. You have a friend or family member that is going to help you.
7. Someone else charges less so you want to go with them to help you get started.
8. You have made your own marketing tools and they are good enough.
9. You have a marketing or sales background and so you think that you can do it your way.

10. You have a certain way that you want to market.
11. You think you have done everything to try to get a case.
12. There are no cases in “your area”.
13. The gatekeepers or secretaries will never let you through.
14. Attorneys only use doctors.
15. Attorneys have their own nurses.
16. Attorneys use their paralegals and don’t need you.
17. You have nothing to offer the attorney.
18. You don’t want to make a call to the attorney.
19. You can’t be home to take a call from the attorney.
20. You don’t believe in yourself enough to do the case.
21. You don’t think that you can do the case or that you have anything to offer the attorney.
22. You don’t believe that there are cases out there.

**How much “Wait Time” are you using up? Are you procrastinating?**

*Wait Time*

Most nurses take 3 months to 5 years when deciding to complete a Legal Nurse Consulting course determining which one they need. Do your research and make your choice without procrastinating.

### *Marketing Time*

Expect to spend one to five years attempting to get a case when using marketing tools you created, rather than going with an expert. Go with marketing experts who know the Legal Nurse Consulting industry.

### *Adjusted Marketing Time*

Have you put your new marketing tools to work or are you procrastinating. If you are procrastinating, just remember that there will never be a perfect time to get started.

Some people will try to make perfect items or wait until the perfect time to start their business. Many say that they don't have the money or the time to start. No one has the time, no one has the money to start, but they still start and they still take chances. The ones that are taking chances are the ones who become successful. You can't make money if you don't start. You can't get a case if you don't have a business. Why are you really waiting? Fear to start.

According to Zig Ziglar: "Turning points become learning points."

For a more complete program in Legal Nurse Consulting, you should attend the LNC STAT course, which includes the Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) Certification. This course also contains the MARKET FOR SUCCESS workshop which has been proven to enhance your chances of success. This program provides a hands-on and interactive way to learn what to do and how to become a successful Legal Nurse Consultant.

# What Are the Steps to Starting A Legal Nurse Business?

Here are some the things that you may need to consider before opening your business:

- ✓ You will need to check to see if you have to obtain a state, business, or professional license from your state.
- ✓ You may need to file for a fictitious name registration or corporate business structure such as a Limited Liability Company (LLC), General Partnership, Limited Partnership, or Corporation.
- ✓ If you are selling products or services, you may need to obtain a Sales Tax Certificate and you may need to collect sales tax. However, most states don't require that you collect sales tax on a consulting service.
- ✓ If you have any employees that you hire either full or part-time, you need to file a "New Hire Reporting Form" for each employee.
- ✓ If you have employees, you will also need to file quarterly unemployment tax and federal employment tax reports to the Department of Revenue.
- ✓ Check to see if you need an occupational license or zoning permit.
- ✓ You will need to open a business checking account under your business name in order to cash checks. Be sure to keep your business and personal records and accounts separate.
- ✓ You need to have a record keeping system to be able to balance your books for accounting purposes.
- ✓ You will need to have a marketing and business plan with present and future projections.



- ✓ Check into the types of insurance that you may need. You may want to have liability insurance with errors and omissions included.
- ✓ You will need to research the name that you are choosing to use for your business name to make sure that it is not already in use.
- ✓ Develop a marketing plan. Determine who your potential clients are and locate them. Put them into a database and research the backgrounds of their companies.

### **Find ways to reach your client:**

- Send out marketing packages by direct mail marketing.
- Send press releases to publications or periodicals to which they subscribe.
- Write articles or letters to the editor that may get published and give you exposure.
- Frequent trade shows, conferences, or political events that your potential clients may be attending.
- Market your business through networking, referrals, and by your Web site.

Pick a name for your business that is easy to pronounce, spell, and remember. Check name availability and register your name. Get and upkeep needed licenses for your business. Decide on trademarks, copyrights, or patents. Register your business name by either forming a limited liability company (LLC), incorporating your business (INC.), or by filing a statement of partnership. Obtain an employer's identification number (EIN) if you have employees, are a partnership, or if you are incorporated. If you are going to be a partnership and have no employees, you can use your social security number for your business.

Design your logo to reflect your image. Do not use common symbols that everyone else in the industry uses; it will not distinguish you from others. If you don't want

to pay for a custom design, create your materials giving them a fresh and professional appearance.

Make a business plan or proposal with start-up costs analyzed and written out using objectives and goals. Include a mission statement, a vision, and some core values which keep you focused on your goals and which let others know the direction you plan to take.

Your business plan should include direct costs, overhead, your salary, and your margin of profit. Start-up costs may consist of expenses associated with licenses, fees, certifications, education, computer, printer, fax, telephone, telephone lines, Internet hookup and monthly fees, office equipment, office supplies, marketing materials, organizational dues, insurance, professional fees, Web site dues and needed services.

Set up a schedule, and try to stick to it. Let others in your family know that you are “going to work”. Start your day the same way. Make time for family and friends. Take a break when needed. Get a lawyer, an accountant, someone that can fix your computer when it breaks or needs updates, and back up all your work religiously!!!

# Where Do You Begin?

**Marketing:** The process or technique of promoting, selling, and distributing a product or service. Source: Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014

You will need to advertise, sell your service, and brand your business appropriately to be successful. Marketing is what takes you there.

- It is your image – how others see your company.
- It is your company.
- It distinguishes you from others in your market.
- It determines whether or not someone will give you a case.
- It is how others will remember you.
- It is how you will make your money.

There are over one million attorneys in the United States. There is approximately one practicing Legal Nurse Consultant for every one hundred to one thousand practicing attorneys in the United States. You need only about one to five attorneys as regular clients to have a steady income as a Legal Nurse Consultant.

## **Planning your successful business:**

Time, money, and a plan are needed for any business to be successful. It's as easy as one, two, and three.

- 1) Time – you need to make a schedule. Use your time wisely.
- 2) Money – determine your budget and make a financial plan.
- 3) Plan – write out your goals with deadlines and rewards. Write short and long-term goals. Write a marketing, business, and personal plan.

## **Execute Your Ideas:**

- ✓ Get others to help you with what they do best.
- ✓ Focus your time on building your business.
- ✓ Pay affordable prices for quality work that meets your needs and gets you business.
- ✓ Achieve your objectives in planning your successful business.
- ✓ Do not procrastinate.
- ✓ Make things happen NOW!
- ✓ Find your motivation and use it to fuel your drive.
- ✓ Get yourself together and get started!

## **What do you do first?**

- Name your business. Make it simple. Not too long or too hard to pronounce, and not too hard to spell.
- You can have a title and a subtitle.
- Using your name as part of your business name can give you direct recognition.

## **Some other starter items:**

- Telephone

- Computer/Printer
- Necessary Computer Software
- Business Email Address
- Mailing Address
- Web site

These items are needed so that you can print your materials for your promotional packages or for your business tools.

### **Business tools:**

The first business tools needed are your stationery sets which should include business cards, letterhead, envelopes, and labels.

Marketing packets and introduction brochures are needed to introduce your business and build your clientele.

These items need to be made professionally.

Do not use an ink jet printer! The ink will run if it gets wet and the print quality is not as nice as a laser printer.

You will need to have a vision statement, mission statement, a logo or design with color, and a slogan for your business.

- A vision statement tells others what direction your business is going.
- A mission statement helps others to know what it is you are trying to accomplish with your business.
- A logo or design identifies your business.
- A slogan will add further detail to the main goal of your business. This individualizes your business and creates recognition among your clientele.

## **Marketing Plan:**

- Determine your target market.
- Establish your niche.
- Market directly to your potential clients.
- Follow-up.
- Contact your clients on a regular basis.

The average consumer needs to see a name 27 times until they recall it in their time of need. You need to have them associate your name with what you do.

It doesn't matter what you know, it doesn't matter who you know, it only matters who knows you, and how they can contact you.

Monthly newsletters containing info your clients need will keep you in their minds and on their desks.

## **The Four Most Effective Forms of Marketing:**

- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Direct Mail Marketing
- ✓ Web Site
- ✓ Referrals

## **Other Ways to Market Your Business:**

- ✓ Press Releases
- ✓ Publications or Periodicals
- ✓ Exhibits
- ✓ Articles or letters to the editor
- ✓ Attorney Listservs & Forums
- ✓ Newsgroups
- ✓ Trade Shows
- ✓ Conferences
- ✓ Political Events

Market to attorneys, insurance companies, other Legal Nurse Consultants, hospitals, government agencies, and managed care organizations.

There should be nothing more important to do than that which you were meant to do. Market and make it happen!

A few words about success – No matter what, you will fail without positive thinking. If you always have positive thoughts, you will become more motivated to apply those thoughts to action to carry them through to success. A winning attitude is the most important motivator for success. Have confidence and believe in yourself!

# What to look for in a Legal Nurse Certification

There are several organizations which offer Legal Nurse Consulting certifications and training. It is extremely important that you do your research and learn enough about each organization so that you can choose the program that will fit you best and offer the most opportunity for success. Each organization offers detailed information on their Web sites. Take the time to read through the sites to get a feel for what they have to offer.

Remember the following important considerations when researching a course:

- How successful are the course graduates?  
This is the key indicator of the all-around quality and effectiveness of a course. If your goal is to make money as a Legal Nurse Consultant, you need a course that boasts a large amount of graduates who have been able to take what they learned and make money. Without a high success rate, you may be just wasting money on training that you cannot use.
- Who teaches the course?  
The ideal course instructor is one who currently practices in as a Legal Nurse Consultant. This way, you know that their methods are effective and up-to-date because they are in use in their own practice. Some courses are taught by attorneys, doctors, or Legal Nurses who have not practiced recently. If an attorney is teaching Legal Nurse Consulting, that is usually a clear indicator of how good of an attorney they are. Shouldn't they be practicing law instead? It doesn't make sense that an attorney or doctor teach a nursing topic where they have little or no experience.
- How much support do you get?  
When you need help getting a case or working a case, are you able to contact someone for mentoring? Many organizations require extra fees or minimum purchases for access to mentoring, if they offer it at all.
- How up-to-date and effective is the curriculum?  
The Legal Nurse Consulting industry is constantly changing. It is imperative, that your training is current and proven. Paying good money for



an outdated or ineffective curriculum is definitely not going to help you find the success that you probably desire.

- Is the course hands-on and interactive?  
Some courses are taught in large ballrooms with little or no interactivity. To learn the tools and techniques necessary to be successful, you need to be able to practice the entire process yourself. You should be able to practice how to get a case, how to do that case from start to finish using your computer, and how to secure more cases afterwards. There should be no extra costs required. This should be included with the main curriculum of the course.
- How reputable is the certification?  
Some certifications have bad reputations among the legal community. This is because their graduates did not receive the proper training and did not provide a quality service. Therefore, many attorneys and organizations avoid these certifications.
- What is the price and what is included?  
Some certifications require you to purchase several different items to receive the necessary training. Look for a course that has everything in one package. The pricing of a reputable Legal Nurse certification course should be fair—not overpriced but not too cheap. Resist shell shock when looking at certification prices. Remember that the cost of starting a Legal Nurse Consulting practice pales in comparison to starting any other business. For example, the average cost of starting a restaurant is \$100,000. Your business start-up cost will typically be no more than 10% of that.

# Consider the LNC STAT Course

Visit [www.LNCSTAT.com](http://www.LNCSTAT.com)

When doing your research of Legal Nurse Consulting certifications, please consider the LNC STAT course by RN MARKET. By completing the LNC STAT course, you can earn the Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) certification.

Why the LNC STAT course may be your best option:

- **95% Success Rate:** An estimated 95% of nurses who complete the LNC STAT course, follow its recommendations, and put the system to work, have received a case. All you have to do is put what you learned to work.
- **Veronica Castellana:** Veronica is the course creator, an instructor, and a currently practicing Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant. She practices what she preaches, so you know the system works.
- **Case Guarantee:** The LNC STAT course offers a Case Guarantee. If you do not get a case after putting the system to work, you will receive additional training at no additional cost.
- **Unlimited Mentoring:** Call for help before, during, or after a case. It doesn't matter what package you purchase. RN MARKET was the originator of unlimited mentoring.
- **Most Reputable:** Advanced Legal Nurse Consultants are behind some of the biggest cases in legal history. There have also been instances where ALNCs were court ordered to work specific cases.
- **Hands-On & Interactive:** Practice a case from start to finish using your computer. Learn where to find the cases and exactly what you must do to get them. A free live review is also included with each package. There you can work directly with Veronica and learn her proven secrets to success.
- **Highly Effective Marketing Tools:** Get custom made marketing tools that are created using market research and data from attorneys and nurses. These tools are much more effective than traditional methods such as using tri-fold

brochures. The Ultimate Marketing Tool Kit comes ready to use with detailed instructions on how to implement it.

- **Additional Training is Available:** While the LNC STAT course includes all the training you need to begin practicing as a Legal Nurse Consultant, there are more specialties within the field of Legal Nurse Consulting that you can expand into. For example, RN MARKET also offers the Certified Forensic Criminal Evidence Analyst (FCEA) certification that can expand your expertise in forensic investigations and offering useful knowledge that can be used in your cases. RN MARKET also offers the Certified Product Safety Specialist (CPSS) certification that shows you how to find and work class action law suits. Other training is available, all offering detailed information in specific medical legal specialties.

### **Why is LNC STAT different?**

The unique feature about the LNC STAT program that singles it out from the rest is the devotion to the needs of nurses and Legal Nurse Consultants around the country. RN MARKET strives to take an interactive role in the education and success of nurses, not just certify them and send them on their way to fend for themselves. The goal at RN MARKET is to ensure that each of its nurses get the same opportunity for success. Every product and service offered by RN MARET is designed with this premise in mind. RN MARKET designed the LNC STAT course to focus on the weak points where most Legal Nurse Consultants go wrong in their business. LNC STAT is set up so that you actually have all of the tools you need to get all the cases you want.

Many more exclusive benefits are available with the LNC STAT course. Please visit [www.LNCSTAT.com](http://www.LNCSTAT.com) to explore them all. An exciting new career as an Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant (ALNC) may be just what you need.

# Conclusion

Do you think Legal Nurse Consulting is for you? As a Legal Nurse Consultant, the opportunity is limitless. A life where you earn \$125-\$300 per hour, are your own boss, and have more freedom for yourself and your family is a true reality. While this life may seem somewhat unattainable, it is closer than you think with the right training and a desire to succeed.

You now have an introduction to what life would be like as a Legal Nurse Consultant. It is up to you to decide what you want to do with your Legal Nurse training and what other tools, books or courses you will purchase to become a Legal Nurse Consultant. You will need to determine the cost and how you are going to finance your new venture. Taking a course that is very expensive does not mean that you are getting all the tools that you need to succeed. There are many nurses all across the country who take Legal Nurse Consulting courses ...but, the majority of these nurses are not even getting their first case. This is the reason RN MARKET created the LNC STAT course. Research your options and ask questions. Find the course that fits your best and offers the most chance of success. Make the decision to make a positive change in your life. Set your goals and achieve.

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Veronica Castellana** RN, BSN, EMLS



Veronica Castellana has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, and a Degree in Arts. She is a Registered Nurse and freelance writer. She had been involved with Emergency Care since 1995. She is certified as an Advanced Legal Nurse Consultant, is certified as an Expert of Medical Legal Specialties (EMLS), and is the founder and director of the Legal Nurse Consulting Firm (LNC Firm).

Her Web site is: [www.LNCFirm.com](http://www.LNCFirm.com). She has consulted on cases for numerous attorneys in the Florida area and for the Attorney General's office as well as cases across the world in Asia and Canada.

She provides mentoring and advanced training for seasoned as well as beginning Legal Nurse Consultants, Legal Nurse Investigators, Product Safety Specialists & Forensic Analysts. She has created the only Certified Legal Nurse Investigator and Certified Product Safety Specialist programs. She hosts seminars, workshops, and conferences all over the United States. Most of her home study programs are available on DVD or online through [www.LNCSTAT.com](http://www.LNCSTAT.com).

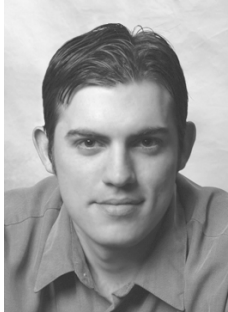
She considers herself to be a Diabetes Nurse Expert and Educator where she has hosted online shows, written many online and print articles listed online. Her diabetes and Legal Nurse Consulting articles have been seen in publications such as Vital Signs, Today's Nurse, Opportunities in Nursing, National Nurses in Business, and Nursing Spectrum, XPro News and medical legal journals across the United Kingdom. She has also authored over 50 books related to the Legal Nurse industry.

Veronica owns RN MARKET LLC and created the LNC STAT course. She previously was an instructor at Louisiana State University in New Orleans, Louisiana where she taught marketing, design and Web sites.

She has been a speaker for the National Nurses in Business Association, American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants, the American Diabetes Association, Medipro Seminars, the International Life Care Planning Conference and several other organizations and conferences. She is available for speaking engagements.

## **Ryan Sanchez**

BSME, Marketing Expert



Ryan Sanchez graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering. As a Mechanical Engineer, he has designed and custom built many items. One of his most prized achievements includes designing and building a custom water ski for a teenager with cerebral palsy which allowed him to water ski with minimal effort and coordination.

Ryan came to RN MARKET in 2003 possessing many skills in graphic design and as a Webmaster. He has a tremendous amount of marketing, computer programming, writing and designing skills. He has written many articles for RN MARKET NEWS that have been published and distributed throughout the United States. He works at RN MARKET LLC side by side with Veronica as the Director of Marketing where he works to promote both RN MARKET and nurses in the Legal Nurse Consulting field. He has also authored several books.

He was an instructor at Louisiana State University in New Orleans, Louisiana where he taught Marketing, Graphic Design and Web sites. He has also been a speaker for the National Nurses in Business Association, American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants, and several other organizations. He is available for speaking engagements.

Ryan is currently the Director of Marketing for RN MARKET. In that position, he oversees and manages the production of all marketing tools for RN MARKET's nurses, the marketing of all RN MARKET products and courses, and the development of all new products and courses.

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