There are various roles within registered nursing that have a leadership component, which is where you may hear the term “Nurse Leader”. Leadership positions for RNs can include the following, amongst others:

- Nurse Manager
- Director of Nursing
- Nurse Administrator
- Nurse Executive

Each of these roles has differing responsibilities and functions but plays an important role in the leadership of nurses within a hospital organization, department, or group.

A nurse executive holds the most senior administrative role in a nursing organization. They lead the nursing team, oversee the management side of patient care services, and make administrative decisions that support the organization’s goals.

The Certified Nurse Manager and Leader (CNML®) credential by AONL is designed exclusively for nurse leaders in the nurse manager role. With the CNML certification, you will become recognized as a leader in your health care community.

The Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP®) by AONL is for nurse leaders who are engaged in executive nursing practice. With the CENP certification you will become recognized as an executive in the health care community.

The Nurse Executive Certification (NE-BC) by the ANCC Nurse Executive board certification examination is competency based and provides a valid and reliable assessment of the entry level knowledge and skills of nurses with unit, team, service line, department, or program influence. Typically, these nurses are accountable for a single group of nurses and/or non-nursing staff and focus, in part, on daily operations, staffing, staff development, and individual and group performance. They make day-to-day, tactical decisions and are visible to the workforce.

The Nurse Executive, Advanced Certification (NEA-BC) by the ANCC Nurse Executive Advanced board certification examination is a competency-based examination that provides a valid and reliable assessment of the entry level knowledge and skills of the nurses with system-wide or organization-wide influence. Typically, these nurses are accountable for multiple groups of nurses and may be accountable for non-nurse personnel and operations. They focus, in part, on strategy, high-level finance, resource management, and system integration. They make higher-level decisions and serve as external representatives of the organization.

Learn more about NEPIN at www.nepincollaborative.org and Careers in Nursing at www.nepincollaborative.org/careermapping