Nursing is a multidimensional profession. Nursing reflects the needs and values of society, implements the standards of professional performance and the standards of care, meets the needs of each client, and integrates the current research and evidence-based findings to provide the highest level of care. Although nursing has a specific body of knowledge, socialization into the profession and practice are essential components of the discipline. Clinical expertise takes time and commitment. According to Bender, an expert nurse passes through five levels of proficiency when acquiring and developing generalist or specialized nursing skills.

Nurses use the competencies of critical thinking to integrate information from the scientific and nursing knowledge bases, derive knowledge from past and present experiences, apply critical thinking attitudes to a clinical situation, and implement intellectual and professional standards. Providing well thought out care with the compassion and caring attributes of the profession enables nurses to provide each client with the best of the science and art of nursing care.