

Doesn't experience account for anything?

Recently an experienced nurse, Sara, asked me how the pay for traveling nurses is determined. She had many years experience as an Emergency Room nurse and hoped that her experience would be considered in her pay rate. At first she was disappointed to find out that most companies pay a nurse based on their specialty and not on their experience. However, the more she looked at it she could see the advantages.

First of all, nurses in acute specialties such as the Emergency Room already pay very well. Her experience level makes her more competitive in getting the assignments she wants. The more experience she has, the more the hospitals want to utilize her over another traveler trying to fill the same spot.

Furthermore, traveling nurses, in general, will almost always make the maximum amount of pay for their position. In other words, they will make as much or more than the most experienced staff nurses at any facility. For example, if Sara takes a job at a facility where the highest paid ER staff nurse makes \$35 dollars an hour, Sara will more than likely make \$35 dollars or more (including her housing allowance). Often traveling nurses make more, especially if you consider the additional perks of housing and travel allowance, as well as numerous tax deductions.

The key is to position yourself in such a way as to maximize on the housing allowance benefits to its fullest potential by maintaining a permanent residence while you travel.

Therefore, I would have to say that a nurse's experience is not needed when considering his or her pay. The pay will be more than adequate. However, experience will be helpful in getting future assignments and negotiating for possible benefits associated with pay rates.