Currently, the provision of medical care is undergoing drastic changes. The healthcare system must develop therapeutic activities, attend to an increase in patient demand, accommodate the necessity for coordinating with other social services, pay more attention to preventative care and the promotion of healthy lifestyles, develop cross-sector policies and respond to a higher demand for rehabilitation and social reintegration, and all of this, within very complex organizations. In this context, if one wants to provide a high quality of patient care which is more generalized in contrast to the current much more specialized attention, it is necessary to discover new ways of providing healthcare. It is necessary to reassess the functions of many healthcare professionals, including those of nurses.

Just as the systems of patient healthcare have endured modifications, this is equally true for the role of nurses. It has evolved in a way so that nurses are providing more services which results in a demand for an increase in skill level. As a result, it is necessary that their role as healthcare providers be more relevant. In order to do that, together with the introduction of organizational and cultural changes that allow for a greater leadership role within nursing, they should also provide new focuses is their education, preparation and skill development.

The way nurses were educated in the last century no longer suffices to deal with the realities of patient care in the 21st century. Because the needs of the patients and their surroundings have become more complex, nurses now need to obtain the necessary skills that permit them to offer a higher level of patient care. Moreover, nurses must have a clear understanding of the technological tools and information management systems, while at the same time collaborating with and coordinating patient healthcare teams.

In this context, the school of nursing at the University of Navarra understands the need for its students to obtain these higher levels of skills training through new ways of education. Therefore, in 1998-99 this center, with its clear vision of the future about the importance of the development of new roles and responsibilities of nurses, introduced a notable change in the nursing curriculum and the demarcation of the role of each of the participants in the teaching process. This newly designed curriculum subsequently was incorporated into graduate level training.

With the introduction of this teaching focus, the School of Nursing demonstrates a promise to its students to help them not only in the acquisition of professional skills, but also the development of their own personal skills. In addition, it completes its goals of providing a quality education that improves the results of the health of the nurses and the enhancing the role that they must perform.