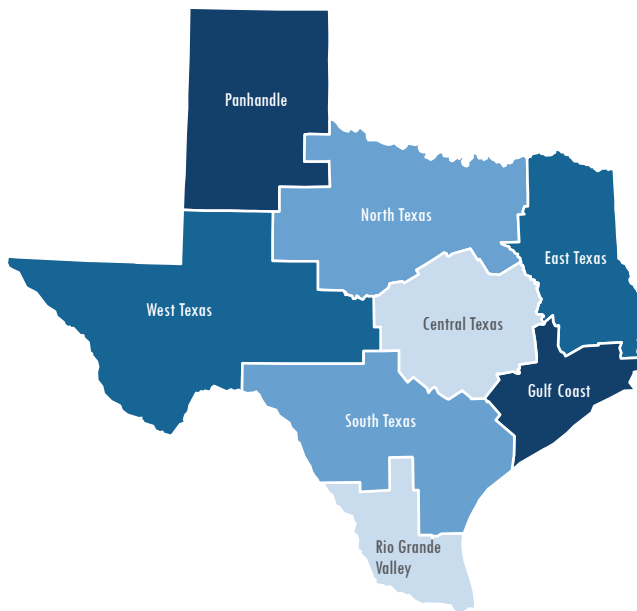




The Hospital Nurse Staffing Survey (HNSS) assesses the size and effects of the nursing shortage in hospitals, Texas' largest employer of nurses. During the spring of 2014, the TCNWS administered the HNSS to 619 Texas hospitals. These included for-profit, non-profit, public, and Texas Department of State Health Services-operated hospitals, as well as hospitals linked to academic institutions; military hospitals were not surveyed. The facilities surveyed were general acute care, psychiatric, special, and rehabilitation hospitals. 428 (69.1%) hospitals responded to the survey. The hospitals that completed the 2014 HNSS were representative of all Texas hospitals by region and bed size.

This report presents data on how hospitals use varying methods of interim staffing to provide direct patient care by licensed nursing staff including RNs, LVNs, APRNs, and NAs, as well as the costs of these methods.



Methods of Interim Staffing

To replace sick or absent registered nurses (RNs), cover budgeted but vacant positions, and handle unusual workloads, hospitals reported using voluntary overtime, managerial staff in patient care positions, and in-house staffing pools, among others methods of interim staffing.

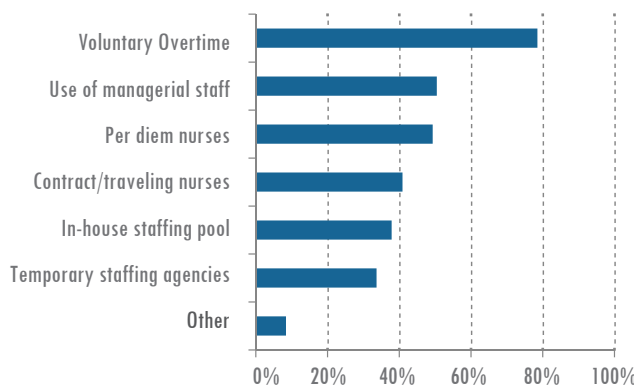
Figure 1 shows the percentage of the 428 responding hospitals using each type of interim staffing method.

- Voluntary overtime was used as a method of interim staffing in 336 (78.5%) hospitals.
- Staff not directly employed by the hospital, either through temporary staffing agencies or contract/traveling nurses, were used by 144 (33.6%) and 175 (40.9%) hospitals, respectively.

Data in Table 1 show the number of hospitals using each type of interim staffing method in each region.

- Voluntary overtime was the most used method of interim staffing for hospitals in all regions.
- The Panhandle had the highest percentage of hospitals using managerial staff (75.7%) while the statewide rate was 50.5%.

Figure 1. Percentage of responding hospitals using methods of interim staffing



- Over two-thirds of hospitals (69.4%) using other unspecified methods of interim staffing were located in either North Texas or East Texas. The most often cited other methods included floating staff and overtime bonuses.



Table 1. Number and percentage of hospitals using each method of interim staffing by region

Region	n	Voluntary Overtime		In-house Staffing Pool		Contract/Traveling Nurses		Per Diem Nurses		Temporary Staffing Agencies		Use of Managerial Staff		Other	
Panhandle	37	31	83.8%	6	16.2%	13	35.1%	16	43.2%	16	43.2%	28	75.7%	0	0.0%
North Texas	128	103	80.5%	56	43.8%	59	46.1%	69	53.9%	41	32.0%	63	49.2%	16	12.5%
East Texas	35	28	80.0%	17	48.6%	14	40.0%	21	60.0%	16	45.7%	19	54.3%	9	25.7%
Gulf Coast	78	58	74.4%	27	34.6%	27	34.6%	47	60.3%	33	42.3%	29	37.2%	2	2.6%
Central Texas	47	39	83.0%	22	46.8%	24	51.1%	16	34.0%	6	12.8%	27	57.4%	4	8.5%
South Texas	41	31	75.6%	18	43.9%	17	41.5%	13	31.7%	11	26.8%	23	56.1%	2	4.9%
Rio Grande Valley	23	18	78.3%	7	30.4%	10	43.5%	15	65.2%	10	43.5%	7	30.4%	3	13.0%
West Texas	39	28	71.8%	9	23.1%	11	28.2%	14	35.9%	11	28.2%	20	51.3%	0	0.0%
Texas	428	336	78.5%	162	37.9%	175	40.9%	211	49.3%	144	33.6%	216	50.5%	36	8.4%

n = number of responding hospitals

Hours and Cost* of Interim Staffing

Hospitals were asked to detail the types of interim staffing methods they had used in the past year, as well as the hours and costs of each method. Of the 428 hospitals that responded to the survey, 351 (94.1%) reported using at least one method of interim staffing. 285 hospitals (66.6%) provided information on the hours and costs of these methods. The response rates for each method of interim staffing varied as many hospitals do not track this information.

Table 2 includes the total hours and cost* for each interim staffing method for all licensed nursing staff. Hospitals using interim staffing reported:

- A total of more than 16 million hours of interim staffing coverage at a cost of over \$635 million.
- Over \$218 million in expenses for over 6.4 million hours of voluntary overtime.
- The use of temporary staffing agencies and contract/traveling nurses cost an average of \$47.89 and \$58.65 per hour, respectively.
- In-house staffing pools had the lowest per hour cost (\$32.46).

Table 2. Hours and cost* of interim staffing in Texas

	n	Hours	Cost*	Cost/Hr
Voluntary Overtime	244	6,447,640	\$218,691,861	\$33.92
In-house Staffing Pool	86	5,287,081	\$171,632,519	\$32.46
Contract/Traveling Nurses	104	2,234,474	\$131,046,964	\$58.65
Per Diem Nurses	114	1,916,971	\$73,314,746	\$38.25
Temporary Staffing Agencies	74	569,603	\$27,275,935	\$47.89
Use of Managerial Staff	62	193,058	\$10,003,293	\$51.82
Other	11	76,652	\$3,144,068	\$41.02
Total	-	16,725,478	\$635,109,386	\$37.97

*The analysis on cost of interim staffing is to demonstrate the cost differential between staffing methods, and is not intended for use in estimating nurse wages.

n = number of responding hospitals



Table 3. Average hourly cost* of interim staffing by region

Region	n	Voluntary Overtime	In-house Staffing Pool	Contract/Traveling Nurses	Per Diem Nurses	Temporary Staffing Agencies	Use of Managerial Staff	Other
Panhandle	23	\$40.23	\$17.56	\$58.90	\$39.29	\$18.62	\$43.57	-
North Texas	84	\$29.05	\$30.53	\$56.11	\$35.07	\$42.25	\$46.64	\$41.88
East Texas	25	\$27.49	\$24.48	\$45.13	\$33.30	\$43.95	\$36.38	\$15.00
Gulf Coast	55	\$45.54	\$46.81	\$60.19	\$43.84	\$55.99	\$54.88	-
Central Texas	31	\$31.60	\$44.53	\$58.96	\$35.43	\$51.07	\$37.21	\$42.00
South Texas	28	\$36.98	\$29.05	\$78.52	\$38.23	\$52.16	\$42.71	-
Rio Grande Valley	16	\$29.19	\$39.06	\$61.45	\$41.30	\$53.74	\$48.51	\$40.86
West Texas	23	\$41.59	\$29.46	\$55.73	\$40.01	\$52.99	\$40.53	-
Texas	285	\$33.92	\$32.46	\$58.65	\$38.25	\$47.89	\$51.82	\$41.02

*The analysis on cost of interim staffing is to demonstrate the cost differential between staffing methods, and is not intended for use in estimating nurse wages.
n = number of responding hospitals

Data in Table 3 show the average hourly cost* of methods of interim staffing for all licensed nursing staff in Texas by region.

- In all eight regions, contract/traveling nurses were the most expensive option.
- Voluntary overtime was the least expensive method in Central Texas and the Rio Grande Valley.
- The cost of voluntary overtime was highest in the Gulf Coast (\$45.54) and lowest in East Texas (\$27.49).
- The Panhandle had the lowest per hour costs for temporary staffing agencies (\$18.62), while the Gulf Coast had the highest (\$55.99).

Figure 2 shows the average hourly cost of all interim staffing methods from 2006 to 2014.

- Average per hour cost of interim staffing has remained relatively steady, with a high of \$38.96 in 2010 and a low of \$34.72 in 2008.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of interim staffing hours used by each method since 2010. 2010 was the first year that the same seven interim staffing methods were offered as choices on the survey, although in 2012 numbers for in-house staffing pools and per diem nurses were combined.

- Voluntary overtime peaked in 2012, with 50.7% of all interim staffing hours used. Use of in-house staffing pools/per diem nurses hit a low point this same year, at 32.3% of all hours.
- Use of temporary staffing agencies decreased from 7.2% of all hours in 2010 to 3.4% in 2014.

Figure 2. Average hourly cost of interim staffing, 2006-2014

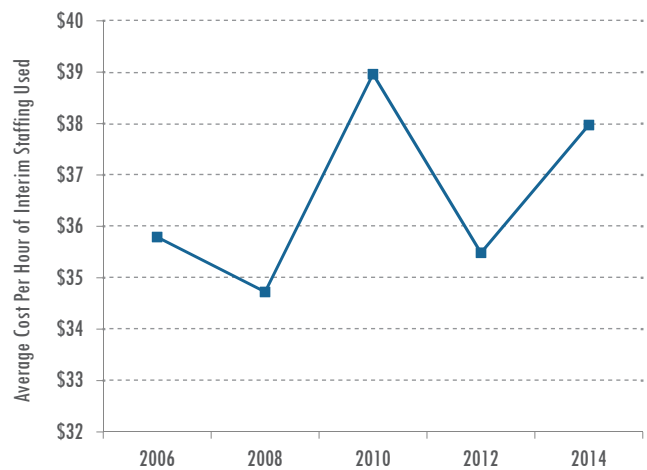
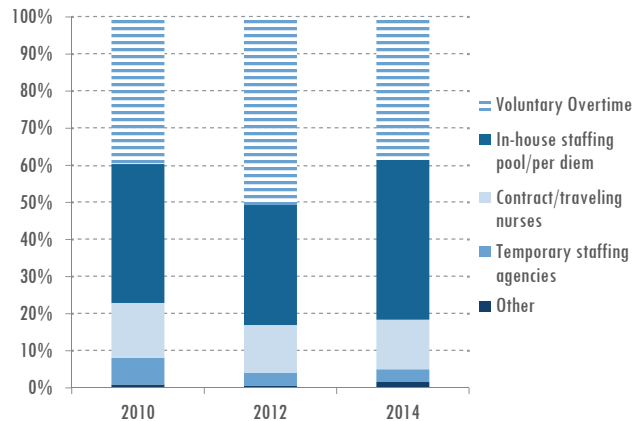


Figure 3. Usage and distribution of interim staffing methods, 2010-2014



Note: Due to low numbers, “use of managerial staff” was combined with the “other” category.

