

2012



Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies HOSPITAL NURSE STAFFING SURVEY

Summary of Vacancy and Turnover Findings

Texas faces a continuing nursing shortage¹ and nurse vacancy and turnover rates are among the key measures for assessing its extent, severity, and change over time. High vacancy and turnover rates can lead to negative outcomes that can affect quality of care such as losing experienced staff and increasing the workload and stress levels of existing staff. High vacancy and turnover are also costly to hospitals due to the high cost associated with overtime or the use of agency nurses to fill vacant positions as well as the cost associated with recruiting qualified nurses.

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies' (TCNWS) uses the Hospital Nurse Staffing Survey (HNSS) to assess the size and effects of the nursing shortage in hospitals, Texas' largest employer of nurses. During the spring of 2012, the TCNWS administered the HNSS to 603 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. 373 (61.9%) hospitals responded to the survey. The hospitals that completed the 2012 HNSS were representative of all Texas hospitals by region and bed size.

This fact sheet presents the findings of the TCNWS' 2012 HNSS related to position vacancies and staff turnover at Texas hospitals. It includes rates of each across Texas geographic regions and nurse types.

For the full 2012 HNSS Vacancy & Turnover Report, other HNSS reports, or more information on Texas' nursing workforce, please visit: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/cnws/Publications/>

Regional* and Statewide Position Vacancy Rates by Nurse Type

| | # of Hospitals Reporting Data | Panhandle | North Texas | East Texas | Gulf Coast | Central Texas | South Texas | Rio Grande Valley | West Texas | Statewide Position Vacancy Rate |
|-------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| RNs | 351 | 4.1% | 5.2% | 7.6% | 7.1% | 11.0% | 12.6% | 22.2% | 9.0% | 8.1% |
| LVNs | 316 | 4.8% | 2.7% | 4.5% | 4.4% | 10.5% | 11.0% | 1.5% | 3.2% | 5.2% |
| NAs | 329 | 4.8% | 4.5% | 5.9% | 8.6% | 11.0% | 13.3% | 7.8% | 7.2% | 7.5% |
| NPs | 98 | 5.0% | 12.6% | 10.3% | 7.7% | 18.2% | 23.5% | 42.9% | 10.3% | 12.5% |
| CNSs | 28 | - | 16.3% | 16.7% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 60.0% | 17.9% |
| CRNAs | 62 | 0% | 5.8% | 0.9% | 1.3% | 0% | 25% | 0% | 0% | 3.5% |
| CNMs | 6 | - | 28.6% | 0% | 9.1% | - | - | - | - | 15.8% |

* Regional definitions are available at http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/cnws/2012-HNSS_Final_Appendices.pdf

Note: RN = Registered Nurse, LVN = Licensed Vocational Nurse, NA = Nurse Aide, NP = Nurse Practitioner, CNS = Clinical Nurse Specialist, CRNA = Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. CNM = Certified Nurse Midwife; A dash (-) indicates that there were no FTE positions reported in the region.

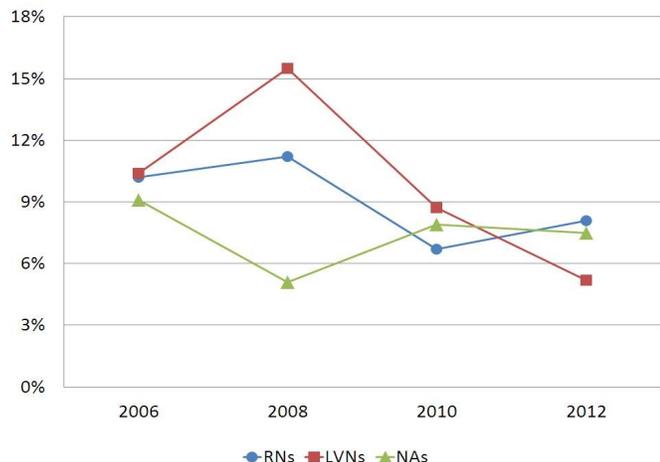
Highlights of Vacancy Rates:

- The Texas statewide position vacancy rate of 8.1% was higher than the rates in California and Florida.
- Just 25.6% of hospitals reported zero RN vacancies, while 69.3% reported zero LVN vacancies and 46.2% reported zero NA vacancies.
- NPs were the most common advanced practice nurse type in Texas and were employed in the most number of Texas hospitals. Over two-thirds of hospitals with NP positions had zero vacancies.
- The position vacancy rates in Central Texas and South Texas respectively exceeded the state rates for RNs, LVNs, NAs, and NPs.
- The CRNA vacancy rate was 3.5%, the lowest among all nurse types. 88.7% of hospitals had zero CRNA vacancies.

Source: ¹ Center for Nursing Workforce Studies, "Nursing Workforce in Texas—2011 Demographics and Trends", http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/cnws/2011_nursing_workforce.pdf

² American Association of Colleges of Nursing, "Nursing Shortage Fact Sheet", 2012, <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/NrsgShortageFS.pdf>

Statewide Position Vacancy Rates by Nurse Type, 2006-2012



The position vacancy rates for Texas from 2006-2012 for RNs, LVNs, and NAs are presented at left.

- From 2010 to 2012, there was a 20.9% increase in the overall position vacancy rate for RNs. However, the 2012 RN position vacancy rate remained lower than it was prior to 2010.
- Among LVNs, there was a considerable decrease (40.2%) in the position vacancy rate from 2010 to 2012. The 2012 LVN rate was roughly half of the 2006 rate.
- The 2012 position vacancy rate for NAs decreased slightly to 7.5% from 7.9% in 2010.

Regional and Statewide Median Facility Turnover Rates by Nurse Type

| | # of Hospitals Reporting Data | Panhandle | North Texas | East Texas | Gulf Coast | Central Texas | South Texas | Rio Grande Valley | West Texas | Statewide Median Facility Turnover Rate |
|-------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|---|
| RNs | 351 | 21.8% | 21.2% | 25.8% | 17.6% | 20.2% | 21.2% | 24.9% | 22.3% | 21.4% |
| LVNs | 316 | 26.7% | 19.4% | 40.0% | 21.3% | 10.0% | 18.5% | 22.2% | 22.9% | 20.0% |
| NAs | 329 | 34.9% | 36.0% | 30.2% | 21.0% | 28.7% | 28.6% | 31.3% | 31.3% | 30.7% |
| NPs | 98 | 14.8% | 0% | 0% | 6.4% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| CNSs | 28 | - | 10.9% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| CRNAs | 62 | 15.0% | 0% | 0% | 0.5% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| CNMs | 6 | - | 50% | 0% | 20% | - | - | - | - | 20% |

Note: RN = Registered Nurse, LVN = Licensed Vocational Nurse, NA = Nurse Aide, NP = Nurse Practitioner, CNS = Clinical Nurse Specialist, CRNA = Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. CNM = Certified Nurse Midwife; A dash (-) indicates that there were no FTE positions reported in the region.

Highlights of Turnover Rates:

- Overall, there was a 21.4% median facility turnover rate for RN positions among the 351 hospitals that responded to this question, a number higher than those of either California or Florida. This means that roughly half of all responding Texas hospitals had a turnover rate for RNs greater than 21.4% and roughly half had a turnover rate lower than 21.4%.
- The highest overall turnover rate was among Nurse Aides (30.7%). NAs also had the highest turnover rate in 6 of 8 regions.
- The Central and South Texas regions had turnover rates below the state rates for RNs, LVNs, and NAs. The turnover rates in the Panhandle, West Texas, and the Rio Grande Valley exceeded the state rates for these nurse types.

Recommendations

Based upon high vacancy and turnover rates reported by Texas hospitals, the recruitment and retention of nurses continues to be a challenge. Consistent with these findings, the TCNWS offers the following evidence-based recommendations:

- Employers of nurses should invite practicing nurses’ input to develop strategies to encourage nurses to extend their careers.
- Employers of nurses should invite practicing nurses’ input to promote recruitment and retention of nurses in the workplace.
- Through the Texas Hospital Association and Texas Nurses Association, establish a forum in which hospitals can share best practices for recruitment and retention of nurses.

Methods of Calculation

$$\text{Position vacancy rate} = (\sum \text{Vacant FTE positions being recruited, on hold or frozen}) / (\sum \text{Occupied and vacant FTE positions}) \times 100$$

$$\text{Facility turnover rate} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Separations}}{(\text{Average \# Full-time}) + (\text{Average \# Part-time})} \times 100$$