



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 2016, the TCNWS administered the HNSS to 666 Texas hospitals. These included for-profit, nonprofit, 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. 345 (51.8%) hospitals responded to the survey.

This report summarizes the various measures reported in the HNSS reports as they pertain to critical access hospitals (CAHs) and other rural hospitals in Texas. The salient findings presented here highlight points of concern and differences between rural and non-rural nurse staffing measures and those in other hospitals.

Rural Designations

The HNSS asks respondents to identify whether or not their facility is a rural hospital. Rural hospitals must have 100 or fewer beds, 4,000 or fewer admissions, or be located outside a metropolitan statistical area. Rural hospitals do not receive federal funding unless they are also designated critical access hospitals.

Critical Access Hospitals

A facility that meets the following criteria may be designated by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services as a CAH:

- Is located in a state that has established a Medicare rural hospital flexibility program with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and
- Is located in a rural area or is treated as rural; and
- Is located more than a 35-mile drive from any other hospital or CAH (in mountainous terrain or in areas with only secondary roads available, the mileage criterion is 15 miles); and
- Maintains no more than 25 inpatient beds; and
- Maintains an annual average length of stay of 96 hours per patient for acute inpatient care; and
- Complies with all CAH Conditions of Participation, including the requirement to provide 24-hour emergency care services seven days per week; and
- Has been designated by the State as a CAH; and
- Is currently participating in Medicare as a rural public, non-profit or for-profit hospital; or was a participating hospital that ceased operation during the ten year period from November 29, 1989 to

November 29, 1999; or is a health clinic or health center that was downsized from a hospital.

CAHs are located in 73 counties in Texas.

- 53 of 80 CAHs (66.3%) in Texas responded to the 2016 HNSS.
- The majority of the responding CAHs (41) were in non-metropolitan, non-border counties. Eight were in metropolitan, non-border counties and four were in non-metropolitan, border counties.
- Two of the reporting hospitals were designated as Pathway to Excellence hospitals. None were Magnet Hospitals.

Table 1 shows the overlap between CAHs and rural hospitals in Texas. All CAHs are rural hospitals, but there are 108 rural hospitals that do not have a CAH designation.

Table 1. Critical access hospitals and rural hospitals in Texas

	CAH	Non-CAH	Total
Rural	53	78	131
Non-rural	0	214	214
Total	53	292	345

This report will compare the 53 CAHs, 78 rural non-CAHs (hospitals that reported that they were rural but do not have a CAH designation), and 214 non-rural hospitals (hospitals that are not rural and do not have a CAH designation).

