



The Hospital Nurse Staffing Survey (HNSS) assesses the size and effects of the nursing shortage in hospitals, Texas' largest employer of nurses. During the summer of 2017, the TCNWS administered the HNSS to 713 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. 348 (48.8%) hospitals responded to the survey.

This report summarizes the various measures reported in the HNSS reports as they pertain to state hospitals in Texas. The salient findings presented here highlight points of concern and differences between state hospital nurse staffing measures and those of non-state hospitals.

State Mental Health Facility Characteristics

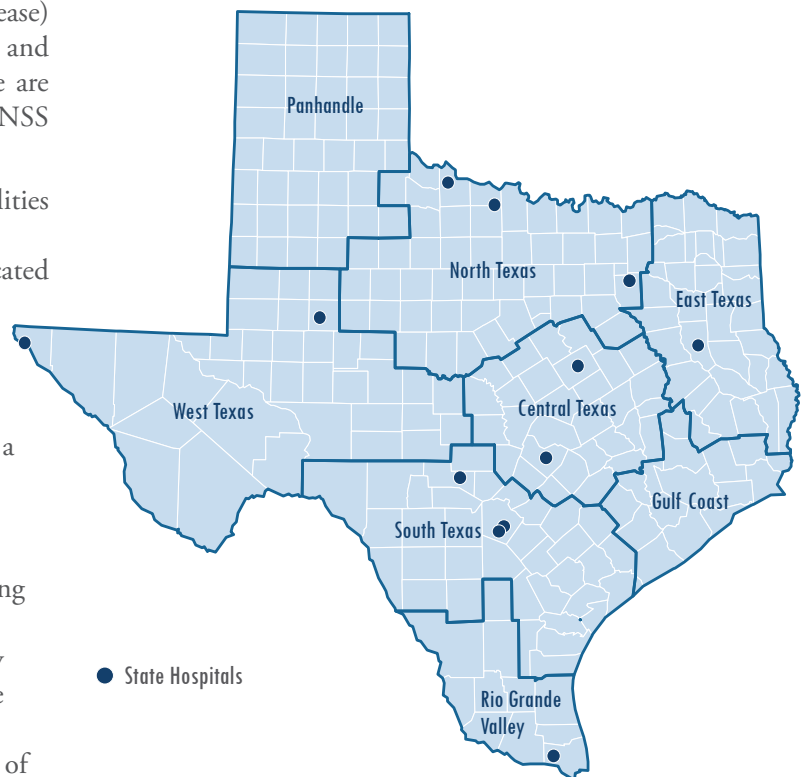
State hospitals are inpatient mental health facilities (with the exception of the Texas Center for Infectious Disease) operated using public funds from the State of Texas and controlled by an agency of state government. There are 12 state hospitals which are located in 6 of the 8 HNSS regions (see Figure 1).

- 7 out of 12 (58.3%) state hospital facilities responded to the 2017 HNSS.
- Four of the responding state hospitals were located in metropolitan, non-border counties. One hospital was in a metropolitan, border county and two were in non-metropolitan, non-border counties.
- Among responding state hospitals, there were a total of 2,130 staffed beds.

Staffing

- All responding state hospitals reported recruiting employees only in Texas.
- The hospitals reported recruiting only psychiatric/mental health/substance use registered nurse (RN) positions.
- Two hospitals reported the average length of psychiatric/mental health/substance use RN position vacancy to be 60 or fewer days while five reported the average length of vacancies to be greater than 60 days.
- One hospital reported an increase in the number of budgeted direct patient care RN FTEs on staff and six hospitals reported no change.

Figure 1. State hospitals in Texas



The state hospitals that responded to the 2017 HNSS reported the use of all 6 methods of interim staffing: 5 used voluntary overtime, 4 used managerial staff, 3 used contract/traveling nurses, 3 used temporary staffing agencies, 2 used per diem nurses, and 1 used an in-house staffing pool.

Table 1 includes the hours and costs* associated with the use of interim staffing methods.

- State hospitals reported spending less money per hour on interim staffing than non-state hospitals. State hospitals did not report using temporary staffing agencies, one of the most expensive methods.

Table 1. Hours and cost* of interim staffing in state hospitals

	n	State Hospitals Hours	State Hospitals Cost*	State Hospitals Cost/Hr	Non-State Hospitals Cost/Hr
Voluntary Overtime	1	15,652	\$413,560.50	\$26.42	\$41.20
In-house Staffing Pool	0	-	-	-	\$27.38
Contract/Traveling Nurses	2	12,033	\$600,944.50	\$49.94	\$66.36
Per Diem Nurses	0	-	-	-	\$39.63
Temporary Staffing Agencies	0	-	-	-	\$48.00
Use of Managerial Staff	1	416	\$14,560.00	\$35.00	\$37.12
Other	0	-	-	-	\$43.17
Total	-	28,100	\$1,029,065.00	\$36.62	\$43.68

*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.

Vacancy and Turnover

Table 2 compares position vacancy rates in responding state hospitals to those in non-state hospitals.

Table 2. Vacancy rates in state hospitals and non-state hospitals

	State Hospitals		Non-State Hospitals	
	n	Position Vacancy Rate	n	Position Vacancy Rate
RNs	7	13.4%	289	8.1%
First-year RNs	4	42.5%	152	12.2%
APRNs	5	21.9%	115	9.7%
LVNs	7	5.4%	216	7.0%
NAs	7	6.0%	253	7.8%

Note: First-year RNs are included in the “all RNs” totals.

- The position vacancy rates in state hospitals are higher for all nurse types except LVNs and NAs.

Figure 2 shows that the position vacancy rates for RNs, LVNs, and NAs in responding state hospitals have remained relatively stable since 2010, but the rates for all nurse types increased from 2016 to 2017.

Figure 2. Position vacancy rates in state hospitals, 2010-2017

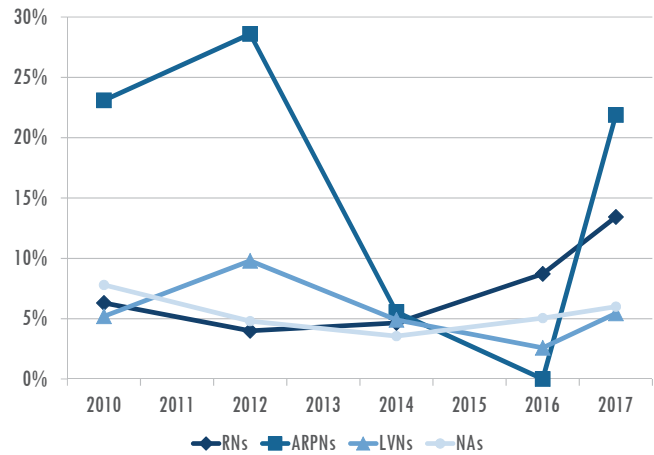


Table 3 shows turnover rates by nurse type in responding state and non-state hospitals.

- Turnover was higher at state hospitals among RNs, APRNs, and LVNs, but lower among first-year RNs and NAs.

Table 3. Turnover rates in state hospitals and non-state hospitals

	State Hospitals		Non-State Hospitals	
	n	Median Facility Turnover Rate	n	Median Facility Turnover Rate
RNs	7	30.7%	298	24.0%
First-year RNs	5	0.0%	183	21.1%
APRNs	5	15.4%	111	0.0%
LVNs	7	36.7%	245	18.2%
NAs	7	30.8%	267	34.5%

Note: First-year RNs are included in the “all RNs” totals.

Conclusion

7 out of 12 (58.3%) state hospital facilities responded to the 2017 HNSS. The hospitals reported recruiting only psychological/mental health/substance use RN positions. One hospital reported an increase in the number of budgeted direct patient care RN FTEs on staff and six hospitals reported no change. The state hospitals that responded to the 2017 HNSS reported spending less money per hour on interim staffing than non-State Hospitals.

Overall, the position vacancy rate for RNs in responding state hospitals was 13.4%, for LVNs was 5.4%, for NAs was 6.0%, and for APRNs was 21.9%. The position median facility turnover rate for RNs in responding state hospitals was 30.7%, for LVNs was 36.7%, for NAs was 30.8%, and for APRNs was 15.4%.