



Licensed Practical Nurses in Vermont

Board Of Nursing Relicensure Survey: May 2010

Summary prepared by:
University of Vermont AHEC Nursing Workforce Research, and Development
Funded by: Vermont Agency of Human Services Center for Nursing Grant
For more details: (802) 656-0023 or *email:* mpalumbo@uvm.edu

Background

AHEC’s Nursing Workforce Research, Planning and Development has prepared this report to provide Vermonters with useful information on the status of the state’s nursing workforce. The information provided here are the results of a survey that was included in relicensure materials sent out by the Vermont Board of Nursing in November 2009 and returned by March 1, 2010. Completion of the survey was not mandatory and was only sent to LPNs with Vermont addresses. The survey was returned by 1,071 LPNs (71% response rate). Only those LPNs who indicated that they worked in Vermont were included in this analysis (n=813). The study was supported by the Vermont Board of Nursing and Vermont Agency of Human Services.

Demographics:

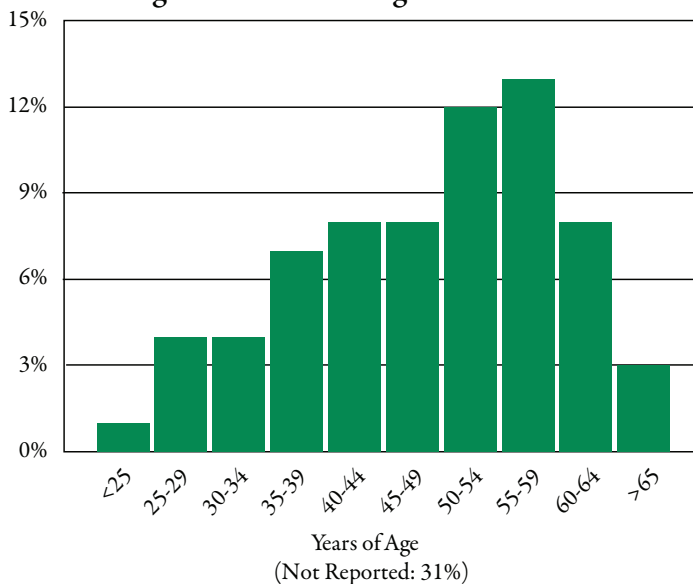
- 87% of Vermont’s LPNs are female and 5% are male (8% no response)
- 91% are Caucasian
- Mean age – 48.72 years

Employment Setting:

- Long-term care 33%
- Hospitals 13%
- Ambulatory/outpatient 11%
- Independent practice 11%
- Assisted living 6%
- Home health 5%
- Other settings 5%
- Community health center 4%
- Schools. 3%
- Correctional facility. 3%
- Mental health 2%
- Public health. 0.5%
- Nursing education. 0.1%

The most commonly reported job duration in current positions was 1 to 5 years (38%) among respondents. A small number (10) reported they were not employed at the current time and were looking for an LPN position (1.2%).

Age of LPNs Working in Vermont



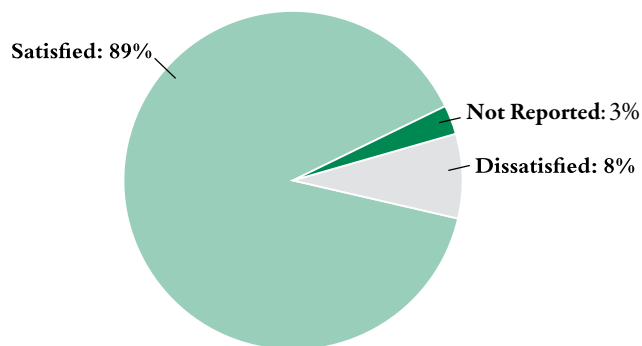
Primary Job Responsibilities

- 70% reported direct patient care as their primary activity
- 11% reported responsibilities as a nurse manager/head nurse
- Primary responsibilities also included teaching/instruction (3%), quality assurance (1.5%), public health (1%), and nursing administration (1%). In addition, 9% reported “other” primary responsibilities.
- 36% reported working with geriatric patients

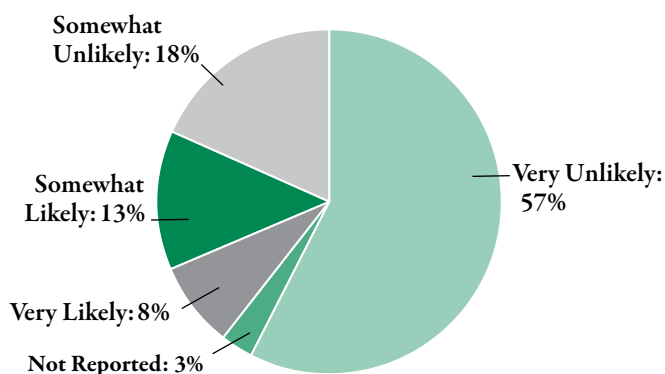
Job Satisfaction

- 89% reported satisfaction with the LPN position.
- 74% stated that they were unlikely to leave their current LPN position in the next 12 months.
- Of the 22% who said that they were likely to leave their current position, only 3% said that they would be likely to leave nursing altogether.
- Of those reporting they were likely to leave their position in the next year (n = 175), the most common reasons were “position change” (46%); “return to school” (27%); and “job stress” (29%); eighteen percent (18%) also reported “salary/benefits” as a reason for leaving (more than one response could be chosen).

Satisfaction with Current Position



Likelihood to Leave Position in the Next Year



References:

1. Florida Center for Nursing (2010) Florida's LPN Supply: Growth, Demographics, and Employment Characteristics. Retrieved from http://www.flcenterfornursing.org/files/LPN_Supply_2010.pdf.
2. New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing (2008). New Jersey Practical Nursing Education Programs-2008. Retrieved from http://www.njccn.org/pdf/LPN_Final_Report_2008.pdf.
3. Walburn, C., & Kelley, C (2006). Nebraska LPN Survey Report. Retrieved from http://www.center4nursing.com/workforce/2006_LPN_Workforce_Survey.pdf
4. Washington Center for Nursing (2008). Washington State Licensed Practical Nurse Supply and Demand Projections: 2007-2026. Retrieved from http://depts.washington.edu/uwrhrc/uploads/CHWS_FR129_Skillman.pdf.

Education

Eleven percent (11%) of respondents said they were currently enrolled in a formal nursing education program:

- 7% (59) were enrolled in an associate degree program
- 2.2% (18) were enrolled in an out-of-state diploma program
- 1.6% (13) were enrolled in a baccalaureate program

Discussion of Vermont Findings

During this recession year for the Vermont economy, fewer LPNs reported a likeliness to leave a current job just for a position change or because of salary and benefits. There were greater percentages of males and LPNs from under-represented groups compared to 2008: 94% female (in 2008) to 87% (in 2010) and 95% Caucasian (in 2008) to 91% (in 2010). A higher percentage LPNs reported that they were not working in VT as LPN: 17% (in 2008) to 22% (in 2010) and only a small number were currently looking for LPN positions. Vermont's LPN workforce is primarily a stable, satisfied segment of the nursing workforce who plays an important role in the care for older adults and others in a variety of settings.

Comparison to Other States

Several other states have performed recent assessments of their LPN workforce, including Florida, Washington, New Jersey, and Nebraska. The overwhelming concern among these states is the increasing age of the LPN workforce. The majority of these LPNs are now in the 50-60 year age group. With retirement for this group anticipated in 10-15 years, other states are evaluating the adequacy of their LPN educational programs to re-populate this segment of the workforce. In its report, Washington State noted that a considerable expansion of its LPN educational programs will be needed to prevent a large LPN shortage by 2026. Florida's 2010 report stated that their LPN shortage has been reduced during the recent economic recession, due to nurses re-entering or remaining longer in the workforce. However, the Florida report also noted that as the recession eases, many of these LPNs will leave the workforce or retire, requiring a shift in focus to retention of current nurses as well as education of new nurses.

Compared to other states, Vermont's LPN population is similar in terms of age, gender, hours of work, work settings, and types of work. A majority of LPNs are female, work in long-term care, hospital, or physician office settings, and provide direct patient care. Vermont has considerably less racial diversity in its LPN workforce than Washington, New Jersey, and Florida.

In summary, the contribution of LPNs to our nation's healthcare is particularly valued for the unique contribution to care of the elderly and as a nursing career entry point for non-traditional students from a variety of backgrounds.