Louisiana Nurse Workforce Fact Sheet

Louisiana like many states is facing shortages of nurses, particularly in rural and inner city areas. The Louisiana Health Works Commission serves to address workforce issues within the Louisiana health care industry through the work of the Nursing Supply and Demand Commission committee.

- In 2009, there were a total of 54,366 licensed RNs in Louisiana. 46,828 or 86% were residents of Louisiana.
- There were 3,692 APRNs licensed in 2009.
- In a workforce analysis of years planned to work in nursing, the responses included 15% at 0-5 years, 21% 6-10 years, and 64% 11-20 years.
- The acute care hospital was the workplace of 52% of the licensed nurses.
- The average age of RNs in Louisiana is currently 44 years, while the nationwide average age for RNs is 47 yrs.
- In 2009, the number of RNs 60 and older represented 8% of Louisiana’s available RN workforce, whereas in previous years (2005-2008), they accounted for approximately 5% of the RN workforce.
- In 2009, the majority of the RN workforce licensed to practice in Louisiana (48%) received their basic nursing education at the baccalaureate level, which is higher than the nation at 33.7%, while 41% reported that their initial RN educational preparation was an associate degree in nursing. Only 10% of the RNs licensed in Louisiana in 2009 received a diploma in nursing.

Approximately 1/3 of all qualified candidates for admission to pre-RN licensure programs in Louisiana were denied admission each year between 2005 and 2009 due to a lack of budgeted faculty positions, the non-competitive nature of faculty salaries, and a lack of available qualified faculty.

- There were 4,898 qualified applicants applying to pre-RN licensure programs in Louisiana in 2009, which reflects a 4% decrease between 2008 and 2009.
- Of the 4,898 qualified applicants, only 67.5% (3,306) were admitted to pre-RN licensure programs in Louisiana in 2009.
- The number of qualified applicants denied admission to pre-RN licensure programs over the past five years has increased by 15%.
- The number of RN graduates produced by Louisiana pre-RN licensure programs increased by 30% over the past five years.
- The passage rate on the NCLEX-RN for graduates from Louisiana’s pre-RN licensure programs exceeded that of the nation for the last 3 years (2007-2009).