

# Findings From The 2014 NLN Biennial Survey Of Schools Of Nursing Academic Year 2013-2014

## *Executive Summary*

Policy-makers, planners, governmental agencies, regulators, nursing programs, and others use NLN workforce data as they formulate long-range nursing education goals, secure funding for nursing workforce development, and influence legislation related to nursing workforce issues and the faculty shortage. The 2014 NLN Biennial Survey of Schools of Nursing was conducted in spring 2015 to provide such data. This report provides the main findings from the survey.

### DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The survey finds that African American enrollment in pre-licensure RN programs dropped while Hispanic representation continued to increase. According to NLN data, the percentage of racial-ethnic minority students enrolled in pre-licensure RN programs increased from 26 percent in 2012 to 28 percent in 2014, due mainly to a 1.3 percent increase in the percentage of Hispanic students. Hispanic enrollment, which was 6.8 percent in 2012, increased to 8.1 percent in 2014, while African American enrollment dipped slightly, from 12.9 percent to 12.2 percent. Asian or Pacific Islander enrollment in pre-licensure programs increased by only 0.3 percent, and American Indian enrollment remained constant at 0.8 percent.

Enrollment of men in basic RN programs remained unchanged in 2014 compared to enrollment in 2012, representing 15 percent of the total enrollment; women represent 85 percent. BSN programs had the highest percentage of men enrolled (15 percent); PN/VN programs had the least percentage of men enrolled (9 percent).

Findings from the 2014 NLN Biennial Survey indicate that the age of doctoral students in nursing programs continues to fall. The proportion of doctoral students over age 30 declined from 87 percent in the 2011 NLN survey to 84 percent in 2014. This indicates that the trend toward late entry into doctoral programs in nursing may be reversing.

### PROGRAMS THAT TURNED AWAY QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

The percentage of PN/VN pre-licensure programs that turned away qualified applicants dropped by 11 percent. For ADN and diploma (RN) programs, the drop was 6 percent and 7 percent, respectively. The percentage for BSN programs remained unchanged between 2012 and 2014, while the percentage for BSRN (RN to BSN), MSN, and doctorate programs increased by 6 percent, 8 percent, and 4 percent, respectively. (See Figure 1.)

If the trend in the number of qualified applicants turned away from

BSN programs remains the same as from 2012 to 2014, this could have a potential impact on the IOM's recommendation in the *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* (2011) for an increase in the proportion of nurses with baccalaureate degrees from 50 to 80 percent by 2020.

### QUALIFIED APPLICATIONS NOT GRANTED ADMISSION

While the proportion of programs that turn away qualified applicants in pre-licensure programs is declining, the biennial survey still indicates that a number of qualified applications are being rejected due to various constraints encountered by nursing programs. ADN programs had the highest percentage of rejected qualified applications at 37 percent in 2014, down from 45 percent in 2012, followed by BSN programs at 31 percent in 2014 down from 36 percent in 2012. BSRN (RN to BSN) had the least percentage of rejected qualified applications at 3 percent in 2014, down from 8 percent in 2012. (See Figure 2.)

### MAIN OBSTACLES TO ADMITTING QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

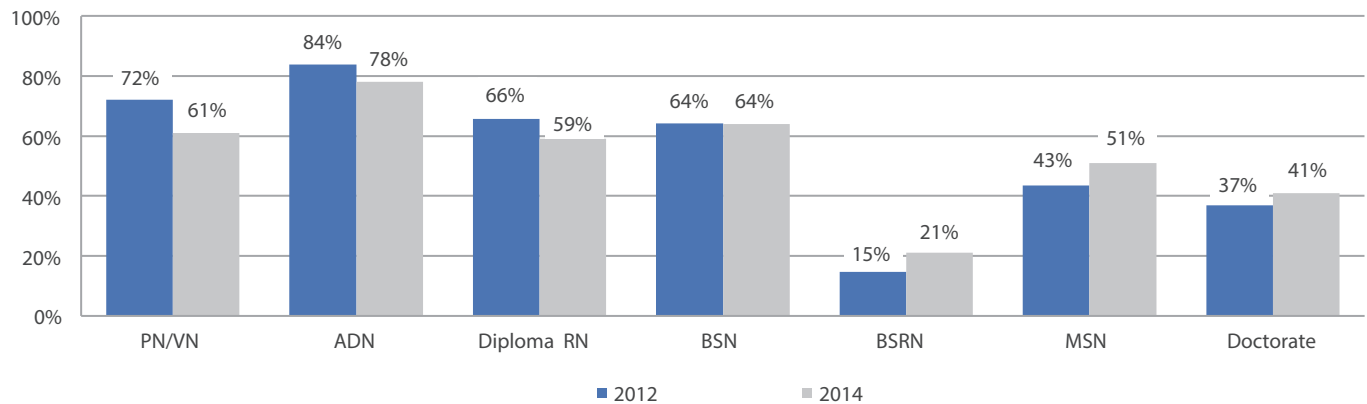
A lack of clinical placement settings continues to be a critical constraint, cited as the primary impediment to admitting qualified applicants by almost one half of ADN programs (49 percent), 46 percent of master's programs, 43 percent of PN/VN programs, 41 percent of BSN programs, 15 percent of diploma programs, and 12 percent of BSRN (RN-to-BSN) to programs as indicated in Figure 3. Lack of faculty also remains a key obstacle to expanding the capacity of nursing programs in almost all programs, as indicated in Figure 3. The lack of faculty is more noticeable for doctoral programs; more than half of the doctoral programs (53 percent) reported lack of faculty as the main obstacles, while lack of classroom space is mainly cited by diploma programs.

The National State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) (2014) recently released the results of a landmark national, multi-site, longitudinal, randomized controlled trial exploring the role and outcomes of simulation in pre-licensure clinical nursing education in the United States. Conclusions from this study state that there is substantial evidence that simulation can be substituted for up to 50 percent of traditional clinical experiences under conditions comparable to those described in the study. Thus, simulation is an effective alternative for students' providing care to patients in traditional clinical settings. In addition, continued support for legislation for Title VIII funding is critical to address the faculty shortage in nursing programs.

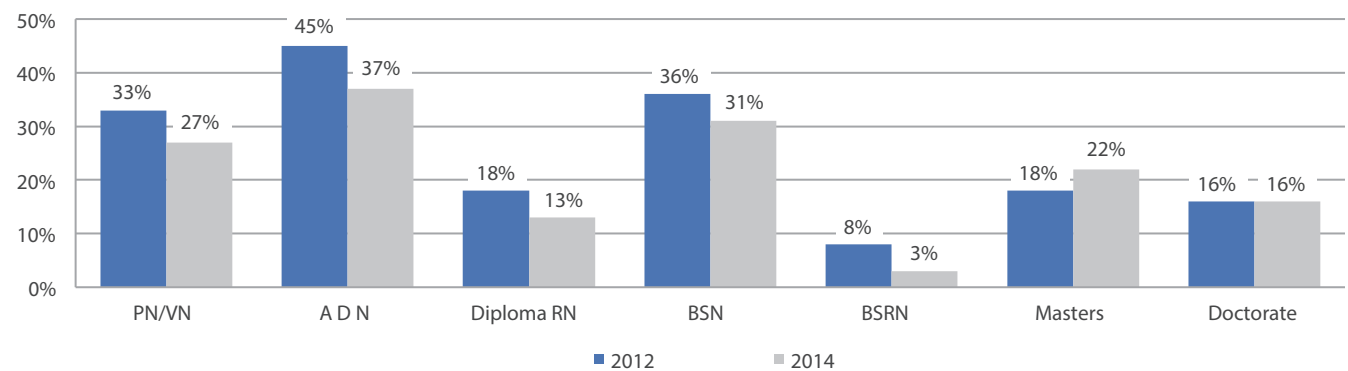
### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The NLN is grateful to the schools of nursing that contribute their time and effort each year to make these invaluable data available.

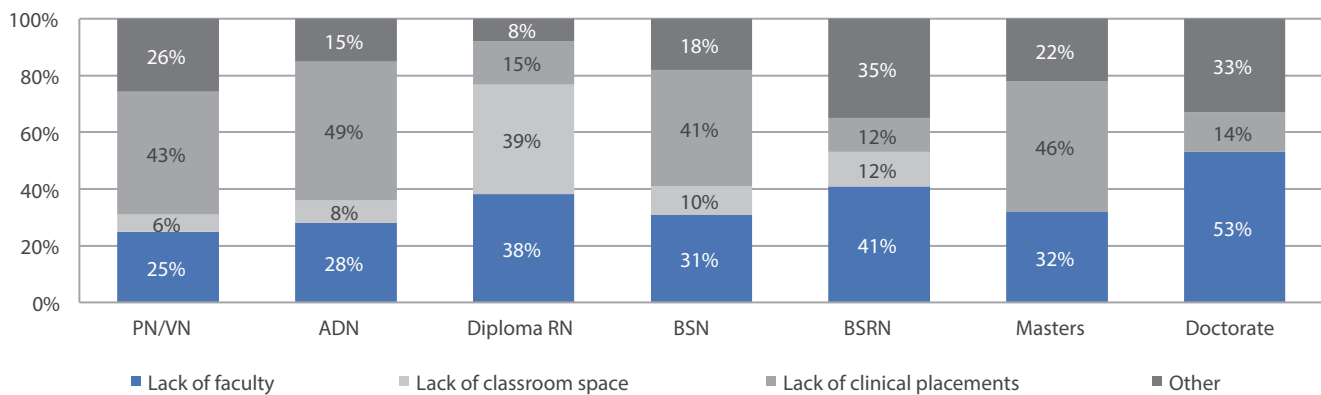
**Figure 1: Percentage of Programs that Turned Away Qualified Applicants by Program Type, 2012 and 2014**



**Figure 2: Percentage of Qualified Applications Turned Away by Program Type, 2012 and 2014**



**Figure 3: Main Obstacles to Admitting Additional Students by Program Type, 2014**



**REFERENCES**

Hayden, J. K., Smiley, R. A., Alexander, M. A., Kardong-Edgren, S., & Jeffries, P. R. (2014). The NCSBN national simulation study: A longitudinal, randomized, controlled study replacing clinical hours with simulation in prelicensure nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Regulation, 5*(2), Suppl, S3-S40. doi:10.1016/S2155-8256(15)30062-4

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