

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses in Vermont

2011 BOARD OF NURSING RELICENSURE SURVEY

Summary prepared by: University of Vermont AHEC Nursing Workforce Research, Planning, and Development
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Board of Nursing APRN License Information

As of April 1, 2011 there were 452 active Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) licensed in the state of Vermont. The types of APRNs are:

- Nurse Practitioners (71%): 162 Family; 65 Adult; 27 Pediatric; 24 Psychiatric; 19 Women’s Health; 9 Acute Care; 7 Gerontological; 7 Neonatal
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (11%)
- Certified Nurse Midwife (9%)
- Clinical Nurse Specialist (9%)

Relicensure Survey Purpose

The UVM Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program Nursing Workforce Initiative conducted a relicensure survey of Vermont’s APRNs in order to provide Vermonters, healthcare employers, educators and policymakers with useful information on the status of this important segment of the nursing workforce.

Methods

The invitation to participate in the electronic survey was included in relicensure materials sent out by the Vermont Board of Nursing to 554 APRNs licensed in Vermont as of January 1, 2011. A follow-up paper survey was also mailed to all APRNs who did not initially participate in the electronic survey. The survey was completed by 244 APRNs (54% response rate of those licensed by April 1, 2011).

Sample Demographics

- 91% female; 8% male (1% missing)
- 90% Caucasian
- Mean age of 51.61 years
- Most commonly reported years as an APRN was 11-15 years (21%)

Education

Being licensed first as LPN or RN (with diploma or associate degree) led to advanced practice nursing for only 30% of this sample. The majority started with a baccalaureate in nursing (47%), and 19% entered nursing at the master’s level. The master’s degree in nursing was the most common (70%) highest degree earned, with only 3% having a doctoral degree in nursing and 4% with a doctoral degree in another field. One percent of this sample is enrolled in doctoral education programs.

Practice Setting for Direct Patient Care*

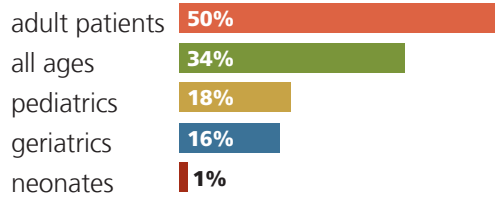
Response	Percent*	Response Count
Physician/APRN Practice	42.3%	93
Hospital-Based – Outpatient	28.6%	63
Hospital-Based – Inpatient	18.2%	40
Community Health Center	12.3%	27
Solo APRN Practice	5.5%	12
APRN Practice Group	3.6%	8
School or College Health Center	3.6%	8
Extended Care/Nursing Home	2.7%	6
Business or Work Site	0.9%	2
Home Health Agency	0.5%	1
Other		6

*more than one setting chosen by 220 who answered this question

The most commonly reported number of years working in their current position was 1 to 5 years (28%). Twelve percent have worked in their current positions for more than 20 years. Full time employment is reported by 61%. The majority (68%) reported working in only one position. Eighty-five percent (85%) reported working in Vermont. Two percent reported being “traveling” nurses. Hospital privileges were reported by 34%. Eighty-nine (89%) percent reported that they will accept new patients, with 81% accepting new Medicare patients and 88% accepting new Medicaid patients.

Primary Job Responsibilities

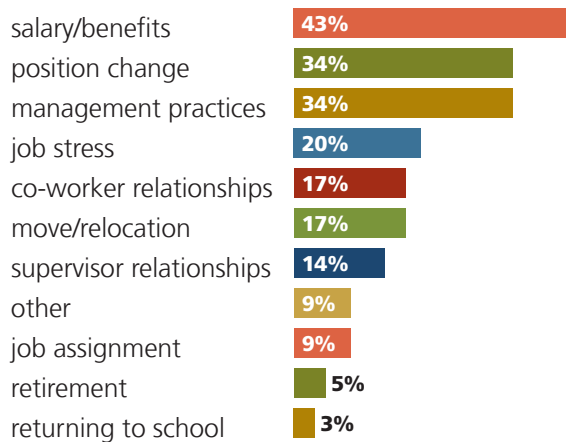
- 91% reported direct patient care as their primary activity
- Populations that APRNs work with include: adult patients, all ages, pediatrics, geriatrics, and neonates.



Please note that more than one response could be chosen.

Job Satisfaction

- 92% reported satisfaction with their APRN position with 65% reporting being “very satisfied”
- 83% stated that they were unlikely to leave their current APRN position in the next 12 months
- Of the 15% who said that they were likely to leave their current position in the next year, only 0.8% 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 = 35), the most common reasons were:



Please note that more than one response could be chosen by these 35 individuals.

Discussion

Although the response rate for this survey (54%) was less than in previous years (62–91%), the results reveal no significant change in trends observed in APRN workforce since 2003¹. The average (mean) age of the VT APRN has increased to 51 years and preparation at the Master’s level continues to climb (70%). The majority of APRNs are nurse practitioners and the most common specialty is family nurse practitioner (39%); this has been consistent over the past decade. In this sample, working in one employment setting was slightly more common (68%) than it had been in the past (57–63%). APRNs continue to report high satisfaction with their current position and the vast majority remain unlikely to leave their position in the next year. However, compared to the previous three surveys, more report “salary/benefits” as a reason for leaving.

Summary

The Vermont APRN Workforce is stable, but aging. APRNs provide care to all ages of Vermonters in a variety of settings with differing healthcare needs. This workforce will undoubtedly be important to increasing access to healthcare for all Vermonters in the years ahead.

References:

¹ Palumbo, MV, Marth, N., Rambur, B. *Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) supply in a small state: trends to inform policy (2011)*. *Policy, Politics & Nursing Practice*. May 25, 2011 online publication, DOI: 10.1177/1527154411404244.

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