



*THE CHANGING
DEMAND FOR
REGISTERED NURSES
IN OREGON*

IS THERE A NURSING SHORTAGE IN OREGON?

Recent media coverage of the nursing shortage has focused on the difficulty recent nursing graduates face finding employment, leaving many to ask “Is there still a nursing shortage?” The Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) answers this question in its 2011 report, “Nurses Wanted: The Changing Demand for Registered Nurses in Oregon.”

In 2010, OCN conducted surveys of nurse employers to determine their current need, or demand, for nurses. Data from four key

industry sectors, hospitals/health systems, long term care, home health/hospice and public health, illustrates how the demand for nurses has changed in the past six years.

Each sector faces its own unique challenges in recruiting and retaining well-prepared nurses. Policymakers, employers, nurses and students must understand the different demands in each sector to make informed decisions about career plans, hiring and education options.

Download a complete copy of
Nurses Wanted: The Changing Demand for Registered Nurses in Oregon
at **www.oregoncenterfornursing.org**

NURSING DEMAND BY EMPLOYER TYPE

HOSPITALS / HEALTH SYSTEMS

- Sixty percent of RNs work in hospitals.
- Low vacancy and turnover rates result in a low demand for nurses in this sector.
- Hospital employers are challenged to fill positions requiring nursing experience or leadership skills.

LONG TERM CARE

- Six percent of RNs work in long term care.
- Long term care employers struggle to recruit and retain RNs.
- An increased need for nurses with Master's degrees in management/administration is expected for this sector.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Almost 3 percent of RNs work in public health.
- Nearly one-half of public health nurses are nearing retirement.
- The lack of state funding has seriously impacted the public health nurse workforce.

HOME HEALTH / HOSPICE

- Five percent of RNs work in home health and hospice.
- Demand for RNs in this sector is expected to increase 109 percent in the U.S. by 2020.
- High turnover and the need for experienced RNs make recruiting in this sector difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Give incentives to encourage nurses to complete baccalaureate and graduate degrees.
- Address the critical need for nurse faculty to educate all levels and all types of nurses.
- Create strategies to retain experienced practicing nurses.
- Develop transition to practice programs to help all nurses, especially new graduates, adapt to unfamiliar practice settings.
- Support the preparation and education of nurses for leadership and management positions.

“A well-educated nurse workforce must be developed, nurtured and retained to support the transformation of health care in Oregon.”