



## Admissions, Enrollment, and Graduation Trends in Professional Nursing Programs

# 2014

**This update presents data for the 114 pre-licensure registered nursing (RN) programs that reported data for the 2014 reporting year, including:**

- 1 Diploma program,
- 68 Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs, including 58 generic ADN programs and 10 Licensed Vocational Nurse to Associate Degree in Nursing (LVN to ADN) programs,
- 44 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs, and
- 1 Master of Science in Nursing Alternate Entry (MSN AE) program.

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2014 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2014. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2013-2014 (September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

### Qualified Applications to Professional Nursing Programs

Table 1 presents data on qualified applications and admissions to professional nursing programs from 2004 through 2014. Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission.<sup>1</sup>

- 5 programs did not admit new pre-licensure applicants in AY 2013-2014.
- The enrollment capacity decreased by 5.4% from AY 2012-2013 to AY 2013-2014.<sup>2</sup>
- The number of qualified applications decreased by 3,831 (13.1% decrease), between AY 2012-2013

and AY 2013-2014.

- 16,031 qualified applications were accepted in AY 2013-2014. This was a 7.1% decrease from the previous academic year.
- 30 programs offered admission to all qualified applications, up from 27 programs in 2013.

The 79 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rate the importance of reasons why qualified applications were not accepted.

- Of those 79 programs, 55 (69.6%) reported that lack of clinical space was an important or very important reason why qualified applications were not accepted. This percentage has been increasing steadily since 2012, when 61.4% of programs listed lack of clinical space as an important or very important reason. Some of the specific problems cited regarding lack of clinical space included increased competition with other programs and BSN programs receiving priority for space over ADN programs.

**Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions & QANA, 2004-2014**

Year	Enrollment Capacity <sup>3</sup>	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission
2004	-	22,325	10,802	11,523 (51.6%)
2005	-	22,843	10,593	12,250 (53.6%)
2006	-	22,885	10,766	12,119 (53.0%)
2007	-	19,035	11,270	7,765 (40.8%)
2008	11,468	21,383	12,338	9,045 (42.3%)
2009	12,391	21,137	12,403	8,734 (41.3%)
2010	14,048	26,053	14,836	11,217 (43.1%)
2011	15,680	26,633	15,700	10,933 (41.1%)
2012	15,937	26,839	15,687	11,152 (41.6%)
2013	16,652	29,265	17,265	12,000 (41.0%)
2014	15,756	25,434	16,031	9,403 (37.0%)

<sup>1</sup>Qualified applications refers to applications submitted, not individual applicants, since candidates for admission may apply to more than one nursing program.

<sup>2</sup>Per the survey operational definition, enrollment capacity refers to the the maximum number of students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Enrollment capacity may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).

<sup>3</sup>The number of students offered admission may exceed enrollment capacity in order to account for students who apply to multiple programs. Data was not available for cells with dashes (-).

- Other important or very important reasons why qualified applications were not accepted were a lack of budgeted faculty positions (40 programs or

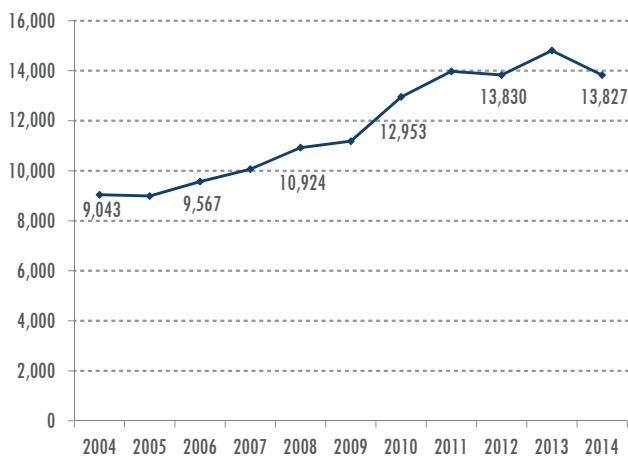
50.6%), a lack of qualified faculty applicants for budgeted positions (39 programs or 49.4%), and limited classroom space (31 programs or 39.2%).

## Newly Enrolled Students in Professional Nursing Programs

Figure 1 illustrates the number of newly enrolled, first year students from 2004 to 2014. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From AY 2012-2013 to AY 2013-2014, the number of newly enrolled students decreased by 6.6%.
- The number of newly enrolled students has increased by 52.9% from 2004 to 2014.
- However, the number of newly enrolled students was lower (by 1,929 enrollment spaces or 12.2% of enrollment capacity) than the total enrollment capacity of professional nursing programs.

Figure 1. Newly Enrolled Students, 2004 - 2014



<sup>4</sup>LVN to ADN numbers are based on the 10 stand-alone programs designated by the BON as LVN to ADN programs. These are separate from the 48 ADN programs that have LVN to ADN tracks.

Table 2 shows the number of newly enrolled students by program type.

- Newly enrolled students decreased in all program types except Diploma, which stayed the same, and MSN Alternate Entry, which increased by five students (10.4%).
- LVN to ADN programs experienced the greatest percentage decrease in newly enrolled students from AY 2012-2013 to AY 2013-2014 (26.9%).<sup>4</sup>
- There was also a considerable decrease (7%) in newly enrolled students to ADN programs from AY 2012-2013 to AY 2013-2014.

Table 2. Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students by Program Type, AY 2012-2013 & AY 2013-2014

	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2012-2013	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2013-2014	% Change from AY 2012-2013 to AY 2013-2014
ADN	6,955	6,471	-7.0%
BSN	6,321	6,175	-2.3%
Diploma	159	159	0.0%
LVN to ADN	1,326	969	-26.9%
MSN Alt. Entry	48	53	10.4%

## Total Enrollment in Professional Nursing Programs

Enrollment in professional nursing programs by program type is shown in Table 3 and Figure 2.

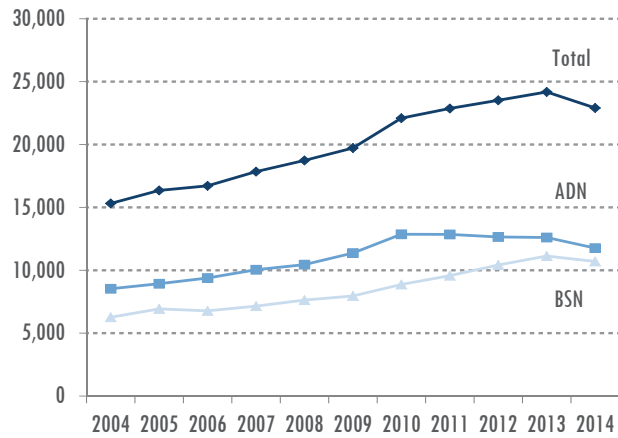
- BSN enrollment decreased by 3.9% from 2013 to 2014.

Table 3. Enrollment by Program Type, 2004-2014

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Diploma	396	354	407	505	536	261	280	270	281	281	277
ADN	8,534	8,934	9,387	10,043	10,449	11,371	12,867	12,850	12,651	12,610	11,970
BSN	6,268	6,930	6,773	7,148	7,626	7,957	8,874	9,571	10,422	11,130	10,701
MSN Alt. Entry	120	132	144	145	121	132	160	175	161	157	161
Total	15,318	16,350	16,711	17,841	18,732	19,721	22,095	22,866	23,515	24,178	23,109



**Figure 2. Enrollment by Program Type, 2004-2014<sup>5</sup>**



- Since 2010, enrollment in ADN programs has been decreasing slowly. From 2013 to 2014, ADN enrollment decreased by 5.1%.
- Diploma and MSN Alternate Entry each represent 1 program and therefore made up a small percentage of enrolled students.

On September 30, 2014, as shown in Table 4, there were 23,109 students enrolled in professional nursing programs.

- Since 2004, professional nursing program enrollment has increased by 50.9% overall.
- From 2013 to 2014, total enrollment in professional nursing programs decreased by 4.4%, the first time total enrollment has decreased since 2004.

- Of the 23,109 professional nursing students enrolled, 301 were transfer students from other professional nursing programs, and 1,050 were re-entry students.

**Table 4. Professional Nursing Program Enrollment, 2004-2014**

	Enrollment	Annual Enrollment Change	Enrollment Change from 2004
2004	15,318	-	-
2005	16,350	6.7%	20.8%
2006	16,711	2.2%	23.4%
2007	17,841	6.8%	31.8%
2008	18,732	5.0%	38.3%
2009	19,721	5.3%	45.6%
2010	22,181	12.5%	63.8%
2011	22,866	3.1%	68.9%
2012	23,515	2.8%	73.7%
2013	24,178	2.8%	62.9%
2014	23,109	-4.4%	50.9%

<sup>5</sup>The total enrollment in Figure 2 includes the Diploma program, the MSN Alternate Entry program, and all ADN, LVN to ADN, and BSN programs. The ADN enrollment includes LVN to ADN stand-alone program enrollment.

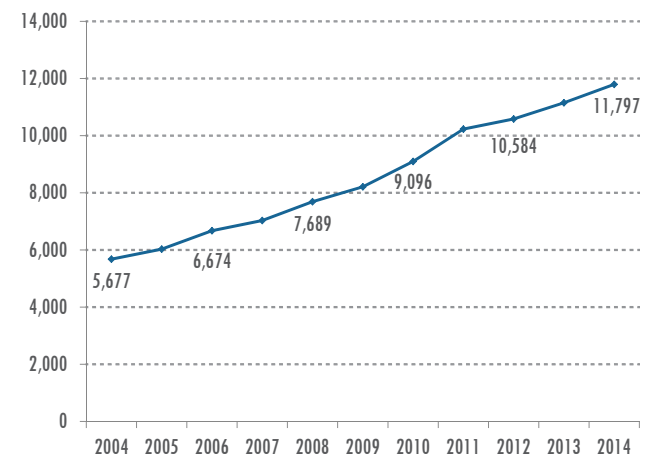
## Graduates from Professional Nursing Programs

The number of graduates from professional nursing programs has been increasing steadily over the past 11 years, as shown in Figure 3.

A total of 11,797 students graduated from professional nursing programs during the reporting period.<sup>6</sup> This number represents a 5.8% increase from AY 2012-2013 and a 107.8% increase since 2004.

- 59 of the 111 programs that reported graduates on both the 2013 NEPIS and 2014 NEPIS (53.2%) increased their number of professional nursing graduates during academic year 2013-2014.
- Programs that increased their number of graduates included 28 ADN programs, 8 LVN to ADN programs, 22 BSN programs, and 1 Diploma program.

**Figure 3. Professional Nursing Graduates, 2004-2014**



<sup>6</sup>The number of graduates reported is for the 2013-2014 academic year (September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2014). Most nursing curricula can be completed in 2 years following pre-requisite liberal arts and science courses; therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the graduates reported for the 2013-2014 academic year enrolled in the professional nursing programs during the 2012-2013 academic year.



Table 5 displays the number of professional nursing graduates by student type for the past 2 academic years.

- The majority of professional nursing graduates in 2014 were unlicensed students (79% of all graduates).
- Vocational nurses who graduated from a professional nursing program made up 18.5% of the professional nursing graduates in 2014.
- The number of paramedics who graduated from a professional nursing program decreased by nine students, while the number of allied health professionals who graduated from a professional nursing program more than doubled between AY 2012-2013 and AY 2013-2014.

**Table 5. Professional Nursing Graduates by Type**

	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2012-2013	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2013-2014	% Change in Graduates
Unlicensed Students	9,249	9,321	0.8%
Paramedics	109	100	-8.3%
Allied Health	57	133	133.3%
LVNs	1,680	2,182	29.9%
MSN Alt. Entry	55	61	10.9%

## Barriers to Increasing Pre-Licensure RN Graduates

Programs were asked to describe any barriers they faced in increasing pre-licensure RN graduates.

- Lack of available clinical sites was the number one cited reason programs were unable to increase the number of pre-licensure graduates (36 programs or 31.6%). Lack of clinical sites has been the number one cited reason since 2011.
- Lack of qualified faculty was the second most often cited reasons (29 programs or 25.4%).
- 12 programs (10.5%) reported a lack of classroom or lab space as a barrier to increasing pre-licensure RN graduates.

## Level of Difficulty for Graduates to Find a Job in Nursing

Programs reported the perceived level of difficulty that their pre-licensure RN graduates experience in finding a job in nursing.

- The majority of programs reported that it was easy (44 programs or 38.6%) or very easy (18 programs or 15.8%) for graduates to find a job in nursing.
- 16 programs reported that it was difficult (14 programs or 12.3%) or very difficult (2 programs or 1.8%) for graduates to find a job in nursing.
- 36 programs (31.6%) reported being neutral about the level of difficulty of their graduates in finding a job in nursing.

