

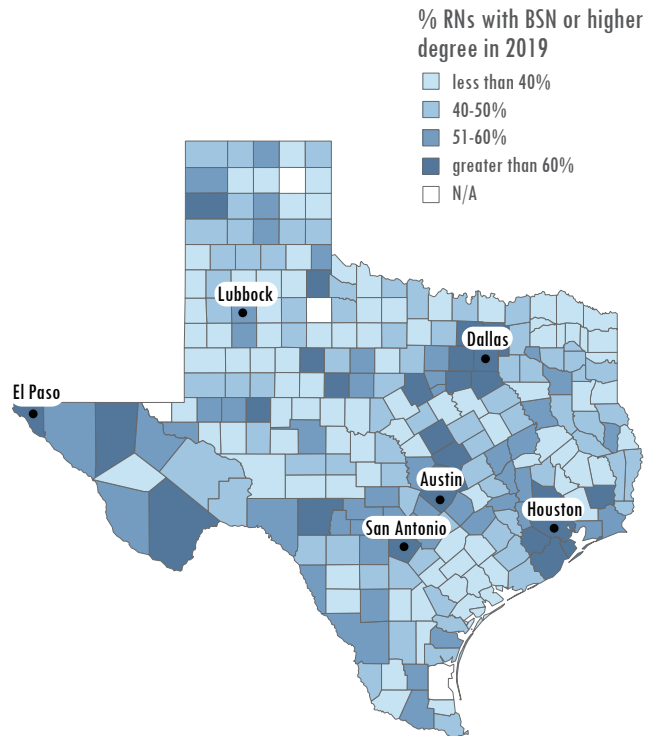
WHERE ARE THE BSN-EDUCATED RNS IN TEXAS?

Both associate's (ADN) and bachelor's (BSN) degree programs prepare nursing students to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), but the longer BSN program also emphasizes extra subjects like public health, management and leadership, and research.¹ Studies have shown that as the percent of BSN-educated RNs increases in a facility, patient outcomes improve,² and improvement in patient outcomes in turn leads to lower costs for facilities.³ These factors have contributed to a push for more BSN-educated RNs.

The map shows the percentage of RNs in each Texas county that have a BSN or higher degree.³

- 65.6% of RNs in urban counties had at least a BSN degree, while only 42.7% of those in rural counties did.
- This concentration of BSN-educated RNs in urban areas reflects nationwide trends.⁵

When asked about the importance of certain factors when hiring RNs, hospitals in urban counties are much more likely to rank the BSN degree as a 1 or 2 (on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is most important) than hospitals in rural counties.⁶ Whether or not they would prefer to hire BSN-educated RNs, rural hospitals may not have a choice, as stated by one survey respondent: "I would like to be able to hire BSN graduates, but given the pool of workers I cannot afford to be picky." Employers have difficulty recruiting nurses to rural counties for a variety of reasons, including that RNs in urban areas make significantly more money than those in rural areas.¹



Footnotes

1. IOM. The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2011.
2. Haskins S, Pierson K. The Impact of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree on Patient Outcomes: A Systematic Review. *J Nursing Practice Applications & Reviews of Research* (2016) 6:1.
3. Yakusheva O, Lindrooth R, Weiss M. Economic Evaluation of the 80% Baccalaureate Nurse Workforce Recommendation: A Patient-level Analysis. *Medical Care* (2014) 52:10.
4. Includes BSN, MSN, and doctorate degree in nursing
5. Odahowski C, Crouch E, Zahnd W, Probst J, McKinney S, Abshire D. (2020). Rural-urban differences in educational attainment among registered nurses: Implications for achieving an 80% BSN workforce. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 10.1016/j.profnurs.2020.04.008.
6. Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies. 2019 Hospital Nurse Staffing Survey: Recruitment and Retention. <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/chs/cnws/Hospital-Survey-Reports/>