

## 2016 Hospital Nurse Staffing Study Operational Definitions

**Adult Intensive Care/Critical Care (ICU)** – a hospital work area that provides patient care of a more intensive nature than the usual medical and surgical care, on the basis of physicians’ orders and approved nursing care plans. These units are staffed with specially trained nursing personnel and contain monitoring and specialized support equipment for patients who, because of shock, trauma, or other life-threatening conditions, require intensified, comprehensive observation and care. Includes mixed intensive care units. **Source:** “Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Adult Medical/Surgical** – a hospital work area that provides diagnostic and therapeutic services to patients for a variety of medical conditions, both surgical and non-surgical, on the basis of physicians’ orders and approved nursing care plans. **Source:** TCNWS modified version of “General medical and surgical” found in “Section B, pg. 4” and “General medical-surgical care” found in “Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs)** – an RN educated in the two disciplines of nursing and midwifery, who possesses evidence of certification according to the requirements of the American College of Nurse-Midwives. **Source:** Definition of Midwifery and Scope of Practice of Certified Nurse-Midwives and Certified Midwives. 23 Jan. 2014. <http://www.midwife.org/Our-Scope-of-Practice>

**Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)** - an RN who possesses a baccalaureate degree and a minimum of one year of critical care experience, through a graduate or post-graduate nurse anesthesia education program, has passed a national certification examination, and provides anesthesia and anesthesia-related care. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/nursing-service-care-delivery-workforce.html>

**Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS)** - an RN who through a formal post-basic education program has developed expertise within a specialty area of nursing practice. In addition to the delivery of direct patient/client care, the role may include consultative, educational, research, and/or administrative components. Certification and/or state recognition may be required for practice as a CNS. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/nursing-service-care-delivery-workforce.html>

**Contract/Traveling nurses** - nurses who provide their services to an organization on a short-term or periodic basis. They include temporary staff, independent contractors, and seasonal hires. **Source:** Committee on the Work Environment for Nurses and Patient Safety, Board on Health Care Services. (2004). *Keeping patients safe: transforming the work environment of nurses*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press, p. 74.

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**Emergency Department** – hospital facilities for the provision of unscheduled outpatient services to patients whose conditions require immediate care. [They provide health services] after the onset of a medical condition that manifests itself by symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a prudent layperson, who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine, to result in placing the patient’s health in serious jeopardy. **Source:** TCNWS modified version of “Emergency services” and “Emergency department” found in “Section C, pg. 8.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Experienced RNs** - an RN who has one or more years of nursing experience involving direct patient care.

**Full-time** - a nurse who works a full work week and full work year, as defined by the employer. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/employment-terminology.html>

**Full-time Equivalent (FTEs)** - the equivalent of one (1) full-time employee working for one year or a staff position budgeted for 2,080 hours per year. This is generally calculated as 40 hours per week for 52 weeks (or other variations such as 80 hours in a 14 day time frame), for a total of 2,080 paid hours per year. This includes both productive and non-productive (vacation, sick, holiday, education, etc.) time. Two employees each working 20 hours per week for one year would be the same as one FTE. **Sources:** Finkler, S. (2001). *Budgeting Concepts for Nurse Managers*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, p. 394 and *Hospital Report Care Act, Draft Rules*, August 30, 2004. Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/employment-terminology.html>

**In-house staffing pool** – also known as a “float pool”; a group of budgeted FTE RNs on hospital staff who are not permanently assigned to one hospital department or unit; instead they are assigned on an “as needed” basis to units throughout the hospital to provide direct patient care. This staffing arrangement can be used to cover unfilled budgeted nursing positions, the absence of permanent staff, or increased workload.

**Licensed Beds** - the total number of beds authorized by the state licensing (certifying) agency. **Source:** “Section D, pg. 16” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs)** - an individual who holds a current license to practice as a practical or vocational nurse in at least one jurisdiction of the United States. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/regulatory-terminology.html>

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**Magnet Hospital** – a hospital that has been awarded this status by the American Nurses Credentialing Center based on successfully meeting specified standards that show the hospital’s ability to attract and retain top talent, improve patient care, safety, and satisfaction, foster a collaborative culture, advance nursing standards and practice, and grow business and financial success. **Source:** American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). <http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet/ProgramOverview>

**Mentoring or Preceptor Program** - A formal, one-on-one teaching-learning relationship of predetermined length between a competent preceptor or mentor and a new nurse graduate that facilitates transition to practice. **Source:** National Council of State Boards of Nursing. [https://www.ncsbn.org/Final\\_08\\_reg\\_model.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Final_08_reg_model.pdf)

**Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)** – a hospital unit that must be separate from the newborn nursery providing intensive care to all sick infants including those with the very lowest birth weights (less than 1500 grams). NICU has potential for providing mechanical ventilation, neonatal surgery, and special care for the sickest infants born in the hospital or transferred from another institution. A full-time neonatologist serves as director of the NICU. **Source:** “Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014  
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Newly Licensed RNs** - an RN who has been licensed for less than one year.

**Nurse Aides (NAs)** - individuals who assist nursing staff in the provision of basic care to clients and who work under the supervision of licensed nursing personnel. Included in, but not limited to, this category are nurse aides, nursing assistants, orderlies, attendants, personal care aides, medication technicians, unlicensed assistive personnel and home health aides. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/regulatory-terminology.html>

**Nursing Informaticist** - a registered nurse who integrates nursing science, computer science, and information science in identifying, collecting, processing, and managing data and information to support nursing practice, administration, education, research, and the expansion of nursing knowledge.

**Nurse Practitioners (NPs)** - an RN prepared in a formal, post-basic nurse practitioner program, who functions in an independent primary health care provider role addressing the full range of patient's/client's health problems and needs within an area of specialization. Certification and/or state recognition may be required for practice as an NP. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/nursing-service-care-delivery-workforce.html>

**Overtime** - the additional hours worked beyond a nurse’s regularly scheduled hours for which your organization compensates at an overtime rate.

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**Obstetrics/Gynecology/Labor & Delivery** – a hospital work area that provides medical and surgical treatment to pregnant women and to mothers following delivery. Also provides diagnostic and therapeutic services to women with diseases or disorders of the reproductive organs. **Source:** “Section B, pg. 4.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014. <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Operating/Recovery Care** - a unit/room of a hospital in which surgical procedures requiring anesthesia are performed on patients who do or do not remain in the hospital overnight. The surgery may be performed in operating suites or specially designated surgical suites for outpatient surgery. After the surgical procedure is completed, the patient is moved to the post-anesthesia recovery unit, where their status is monitored and documented until their healthcare provider makes the decision to discharge them.

**Source:** TCNWS modified version of “Outpatient surgery” found in “Section C, pg. 12,” “Operating room” found in “Section D, pg. 18.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/> and “Postanesthesia Care Standards for the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.” American Association of Nurse Anesthetists. 21 Jan. 2014 <<http://www.aana.com/resources2/professionalpractice/Documents/PPM%20PACU%20Standards.pdf>>

**Orientation** - The process of introducing staff to the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, and other factors needed to function in a specific work setting. **Source:** National Council of State Boards of Nursing. [https://www.ncsbn.org/Final\\_08\\_reg\\_model.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Final_08_reg_model.pdf)

**Pathway to Excellence®** - the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) designates a Pathway to Excellence organization based on the confirmed presence of a set of characteristics known as “The Pathway to Excellence Criteria” in the facility. Foundational quality initiatives in creating a positive work environment, as defined by nurses and supported by research, are documented by way of a thorough review process. These criteria are integrated into operating policies, procedures, and management practices and are paramount to a positive nursing practice environment that impacts nurse job satisfaction and retention. **Source:** American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). <http://nursecredentialing.org/Pathway.aspx>

**Part-time** - a nurse who works less than full-time, as defined by the employer. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/employment-terminology.html>

**Pediatric Critical Care** – a hospital work area that provides care to pediatric patients that are of a more intensive nature than that usually provided to pediatric patients. The unit is staffed with specially trained personnel and contains monitoring and specialized support equipment for treatment of patients who, because of shock, trauma, or other life-threatening conditions, require intensified, comprehensive observation and care. **Source:**

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“Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Pediatric Medical/Surgical** - a hospital work area that provides diagnostic and therapeutic services to pediatric patients for a variety of medical conditions, both surgical and non-surgical, on the basis of physicians’ orders and approved nursing care plans. **Source:** TCNWS modified version of “General medical and surgical” found in “Section B, pg. 4” and “Pediatric medical-surgical care” found in “Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Per diem** - an arrangement wherein a nurse is employed directly on an as-needed basis and usually has no benefits. Per diem nurses may be unit based. **Source:** The Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers Minimum Nurse Demand Dataset. [http://www.nursingworkforcecenters.org/resources/files/Nurse\\_Demand\\_Dataset.pdf](http://www.nursingworkforcecenters.org/resources/files/Nurse_Demand_Dataset.pdf)

**Psychiatric/Mental Health** - a hospital work area that provides acute or long-term care to emotionally disturbed patients, including patients admitted for diagnosis and those admitted for treatment of psychiatric problems, on the basis of physicians’ orders and approved nursing care plans. Long-term care may include intensive supervision to the chronically mentally ill, mentally disordered, or other mentally incompetent persons. **Source:** “Section C, pg. 6.” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Registered Nurses (RNs)** - an individual who holds a current license to practice within the scope of professional nursing in at least one jurisdiction of the United States. Includes diploma RNs, ADNs, and BSNs. **Source:** Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS). <http://www.iconsdata.org/regulatory-terminology.html>

**Residency** - A series of learning sessions and work experiences that occurs continuously over a 12-month period and that is designed to assist new employees as they transition to their first professional nursing role. Intended for direct care roles in the acute care hospital setting. **Source:** Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/resstandards08.pdf>

**Rural hospital** – a hospital that meets at least one of the following criteria: has 100 or fewer beds, 4000 or fewer admissions, or is located outside a Metropolitan Statistical Area. **Source:** American Hospital Association. <http://www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/rural/index.shtml>

**Separations** - the number of people (head count) who left your organization in the specified time frame. Include voluntary and involuntary terminations or separations. Do NOT count per diem workers, contract/temporary labor, students in training, travelers, or separations due to illness or death in the termination or separation numbers. Do not include within-organization transfers. **Source:** The Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers Minimum Nurse Demand Dataset.

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[http://www.nursingworkforcecenters.org/resources/files/Nurse\\_Demand\\_Dataset.pdf](http://www.nursingworkforcecenters.org/resources/files/Nurse_Demand_Dataset.pdf)

**Staffed beds** - the number of beds regularly available (those set up and staffed for use). Report only operating beds, not constructed bed capacity. Include all bed facilities that are set up and staffed for use by inpatients who have no other bed facilities, such as pediatric bassinets, isolation units, quiet rooms, and reception and observation units assigned to or reserved for them. Exclude newborn bassinets and bed facilities for patients receiving special procedures for a portion of their stay and who have other bed facilities assigned to or reserved for them. Exclude, for example, labor room, post anesthesia, or postoperative recovery room beds, psychiatric holding beds, and beds that are used only as holding facilities for patients prior to their transfer to another hospital. **Source:** “Section D, pg. 16” 2012 Annual Survey of Hospitals. Texas Department of State Health Services. 21 Jan. 2014 <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hosp/>

**Teaching Hospital** – individual hospitals, health systems, and health networks that deliver medical care to patients and provide clinical education and training for preparing healthcare professionals, as verified through membership in the Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH). **Source:** Association of American Medical Colleges. <https://www.aamc.org/about/membership/378786/teachinghospitals.html>

**Temporary Staffing Agencies** – agencies through which nurses contract in order to provide nursing services to an organization, rather than being employed by the organization itself. **Source:** Page, AEK. (2008). Temporary, Agency, and Other Contingent Workers. In: Hughes RG, editor. *Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses*. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US), chapter 27.

**Trauma Center** - a hospital that is designated as a trauma facility by the Texas Department of State Health Services to provide emergency and specialized intensive care to critically ill and injured patients. Level I: a comprehensive trauma facility that manages major and severe trauma patients. Level II: a major trauma facility that provides services similar to a Level I trauma facility, although research and some medical specialty areas are not required. Level III: a general trauma facility that provides resuscitation, stabilization and assessment of injury victims and either provides treatment or arranges for appropriate transfer to a higher level trauma facility. Level IV: a basic trauma facility that provides resuscitation and stabilization, and arranges for appropriate transfer of major and severe trauma patients to a higher-level trauma facility. **Source:** Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 25, Part 1, Chapter 157, Subchapter A, Rule 157.2.