



The Long Term Care Nurse Staffing Study (LTCNSS) assesses nurse staffing and related issues in the long term care setting. In 2015, approximately 27% of licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) and 3% of registered nurses (RNs) in Texas worked in the nursing home/extended care setting. Long term care facilities may also employ certified nurse aides (CNAs), certified medication aides (CMAs), and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). During the spring of 2016, the TCNWS administered the LTCNSS to 1,202 Texas nursing facilities. A total of 439 facilities participated, for a final response rate of 36.5%.

Studies have shown that Directors of Nursing (DONs) can have an impact on the quality of care in long term care settings.<sup>1</sup> Facilities that reported having a DON with longer job tenure had higher quality of care scores.<sup>1</sup> So, it is important to further analyze DONs in long term care settings in Texas. This report provides information on DONs in Texas long term care nursing facilities, including salary, longevity, qualifications/experience, and reasons for DON turnover. Only 4 of 439 facilities reported having no DON at the time of data submission.

<sup>1</sup>Krause, M.R. (2012) Director of Nursing Current Job Tenure and Past Experience and Quality of Care in Nursing Homes. *Health Care Manage Rev.*, 37, 98-108.

## Longevity and Tenure

Figure 1 shows the proportions of DONs that have held their current position over various time periods and Figure 2 shows the proportions of DONs with various levels of long term care experience.

- In 2014, 71.6% of DONs had 6 or more years of experience in long term care compared to 66.5% of 430 DONs in 2016.
- Almost 50% of 421 DONs held their current position for less than 1 year. In 2014, 38.5% of DONs had been employed at their facility for one year or less. This is alarming because research has shown that facilities who employed a DON with shorter current job tenure had considerably lower quality of care scores compared to those facilities who had a DON with longer tenure.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2016, DONs held their current position a median of 12 months

Figure 1. DON long term care position tenure

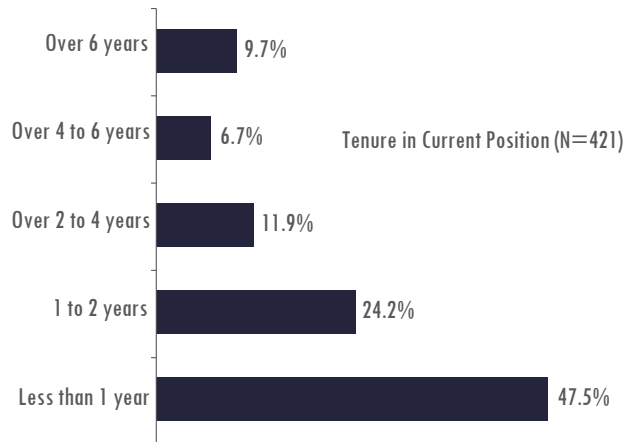
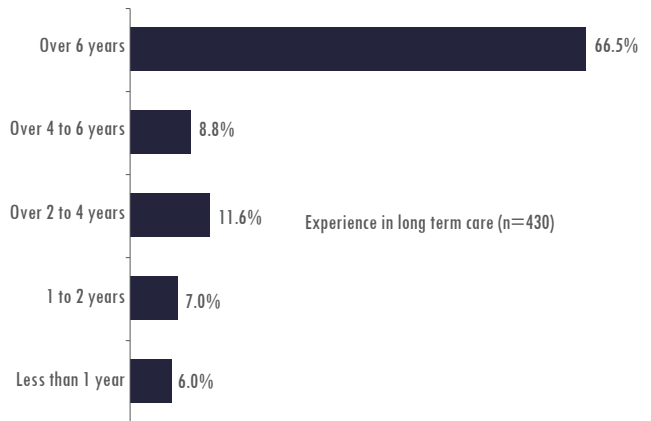


Figure 2. DON long term care experience



## Reasons for DON Turnover

**Table 1. Frequency of reasons reported for DON turnover**

Reason for DON turnover	# of respondents	% of respondents
Exhaustion/burnout	174	39.6%
Staffing issues	160	36.4%
DON turnover is not an issue	155	35.3%
Burden of regulatory requirements	133	30.3%
Excessive paperwork	114	26.0%
Lack of management/leadership skills	89	20.3%
Resident/family expectations	82	18.7%
Fear of litigation	55	12.5%
Lack of administrative/corporate support	47	10.7%
Pay/benefits not commensurate	47	10.7%
Lack of LTC experience	42	9.6%
Other	29	6.6%
Lack of nursing knowledge	17	3.9%

Respondents were asked to select the issues that contributed to the turnover of Directors of Nursing in their long term care facility. Note that respondents could select all that apply in this question, unless there was not a turnover issue.

- 35.3% of 439 respondents indicated that DON turnover was not an issue at their facility (Table 1, page 2), which was an increase from the 2014 LCTNSS.
- The most frequently cited reason for DON turnover was exhaustion/burnout (39.6%).

Of those respondents who selected the “other” category in their response to which issues contribute to DON turnover, 25 provided a written response.

- 28% of these 25 respondents claimed that personal reasons/stress contribute to DON turnover.

## Education

In 2011, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*<sup>1</sup>. This report recommended a series of concrete policy and administrative changes that would allow the American healthcare professions to deal with our country’s healthcare workforce needs. Two of these recommendations deal specifically with the education and training of nursing staff:

- Increase the proportion of nurses with at least a baccalaureate degree to 80% by 2020.
- Double the number of nurses with a doctorate in nursing by 2020.

With respect to these recommendations, the proportion of DONs in Texas with a bachelor’s degree has increased since the 2014 LTCNSS, when 28.9% of DONs had a bachelor’s in nursing. However, the number of DONs with a degree higher than a bachelor’s in nursing remained the same.

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Medicine (IOM). (2011). *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press. Retrieved from: [http://thefutureofnursing.org/sites/default/files/Future%20of%20Nursing%20Report\\_0.pdf](http://thefutureofnursing.org/sites/default/files/Future%20of%20Nursing%20Report_0.pdf)

Table 2 presents a breakdown of the most commonly held degrees by DONs.

- 94.4% of 429 DONs had a nursing degree.
- The most common degree type among DONs was an associate’s in nursing.

**Table 2. Educational attainment of DONs**

Degree Type	# of DONs	% of DONs
Associate's in nursing	221	51.5%
Bachelor's in nursing	157	36.6%
Master's in nursing	17	4.0%
Diploma	10	2.3%
Other	4	0.9%
Bachelor's in field other than nursing	12	2.8%
Master's in field other than nursing	8	1.9%
Total	429	100.0%

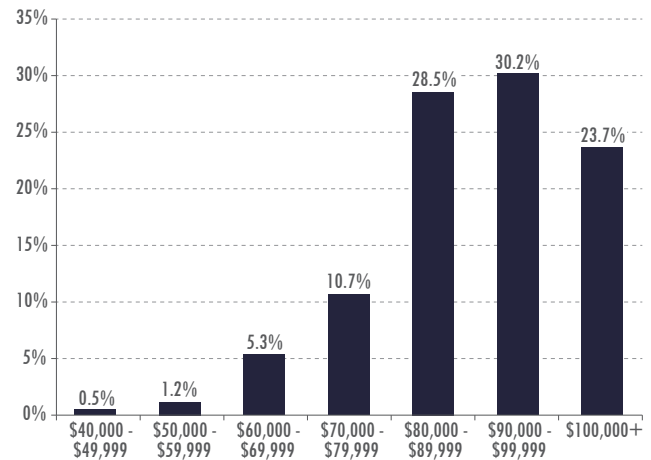


## Salary

431 of 439 survey respondents chose a salary range for the DON, from a minimum of \$40,000-\$49,999 to a maximum of \$100,000 and over.

- The statewide median DON salary range is between \$90,000 and \$99,999.
- The median salary range reported in 2014 was \$80,000 to \$89,999.

Figure 2. DON salary range distribution (n=440)



## Conclusion and Recommendations

### Conclusion

71.7% of facilities reported having a DON that held the position for less than 2 years and almost half of responding facilities currently had a DON who was at the facility less than a year. This is an issue that must be addressed because research has shown that quality of care is negatively impacted when long term care facilities employ a DON that does not have long tenure.<sup>1</sup> Exhaustion/burnout was the most frequently reported reason for DON turnover. The proportion of DONs with a BSN has increased since the 2014 LCTNSS, but the number of DONs with an advanced degree remained similar to 2014 data. The median salary range for DONs has increased from \$80,000 and \$89,999 in 2014 to \$90,000 and \$99,999 in 2016.

### TCNWS Advisory Committee Recommendations

#### DON Support

Owners and administrators must support DONs as they either transition in to the role of the DON for the first time or learn to effectively fulfill their role in a new long term care setting.