TEXAS CENTER FOR NURSING WORKFORCE STUDIES

TEXAS Health and Human Services | Texas Department of State Health Services

The Hospital Nurse Staffing Survey (HNSS) assesses the size and effects of the nursing shortage in hospitals, Texas' largest employer of nurses. During the spring of 2024, the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) administered the HNSS to the Chief Nursing Officers/Directors of Nursing of 739 Texas hospitals. These included for-profit, nonprofit, public, and Texas Health and Human Services Commission-operated hospitals, as well as hospitals linked to academic institutions; military hospitals were not surveyed. The facilities surveyed were general acute care, psychiatric, special, behavioral,* and rehabilitation hospitals; outpatient or community-based clinics were not included. Respondents provided data for 297 hospitals for a response rate of 40.2%. The responding hospitals were not representative by region, so all data from the 2024 HNSS is only reported at the state level.

This report presents the findings of the 2024 HNSS related to vacancy and turnover in Texas hospitals. The vacancy rates reported measure the percentage of positions that were vacant on one day during one of the year's peak occupancy times (1/1/2024). The turnover rates measure the frequency of staff separations, both voluntary and involuntary, over a one year period (1/1/2023-12/31/2023). Nurse vacancy and turnover rates are among the key measures for assessing a nursing workforce shortage, the severity of the shortage, and changes in the nursing labor market over time. High vacancy and turnover rates can lead to negative outcomes that can affect quality of care such as losing experienced staff and increasing the workload and stress levels of existing staff.[1] High vacancy and turnover is also costly to hospitals due to the high cost associated with overtime or the use of agency nurses to fill vacant positions, as well as the cost associated with recruiting qualified nurses.[2]

*Behavioral hospitals were not previously surveyed, showing a significant increase in population from 2022

[1]American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2019). Nursing shortage fact sheet. https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Fact-Sheets/Nursing-Shortage-Factsheet.pdf
[2] Waldman, J. D., Kelly, F., Sanjeev, A., & Smith, H. L. (2004). The shocking cost of turnover in health care. Health Care Management Review, 29:1, 2-7.

Vacancy Rates by Nurse Type

Table 1 presents the total number of occupied and vacant FTE positions in Texas by nursing staff type and the resulting position vacancy rate for each. Included in the tables are Registered Nurses (RNs), Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs), Nursing Aides (NAs), and APRNs broken down into the 4 types: Nurse Practitioner (NP), Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), and Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM).

- RNs were the most prevalent nursing staff type in responding Texas hospitals.
- NPs were the most prevalent APRN type.
- NPs had the highest position vacancy rate at 23.8%, followed by LVNs at 21.5 %.

Table 1. Number of occupied and vacant FTE positions in Texas by nursing staff type, 2024

	n	Total Occupied FTE Positions	Total Vacant FTE Positions	Statewide Position Vacancy Rate	Number of Hospitals that Reported Zero Vacancies
RNs	217	43,794.8	8,575.0	16.4%	38
LVNs	223	2,722.8	746.6	21.5%	112
NAs	231	8,908.1	1,480.7	14.3%	119
NPs	226	1,517.2	474.1	23.8%	192
CNSs	222	95.2	6.3	6.2%	218
CRNAs	218	485.3	112.6	18.8%	201
CNMs	220	74.9	13.6	15.4%	218

n=number of hospitals in Texas that reported each nursing staff type for budgeted and occupied FTE positions.

Figure 1 shows the percent of hospitals reporting zero vacancies for RNs, LVNs, and NAs.

- More hospitals reported zero vacancies in 2024 than 2022 for all nursing staff types.
- The percent of hospitals reporting zero vacancies for RNs and LVNs is still lower than 2019 proportions.

Figure 1. Percent of hospitals reporting zero vacancies for RNs, LVNs, and NAs, 2014- 2024
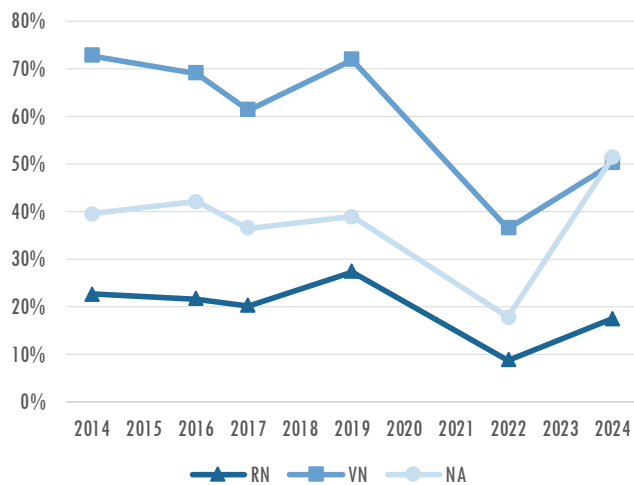

Figure 2 represents the position vacancy rates for Texas from 2014-2024 for RNs, LVNs, and NAs.

- Vacancy rates for RNs, LVNs, and NAs all decreased by less than 3 percentage points between 2022 and 2024.
- While vacancy rates decreased for each nurse type in 2024, they are still higher than pre-COVID vacancy rates.

Figure 2. Position vacancy rates for RNs, LVNs, and NAs, 2014-2024
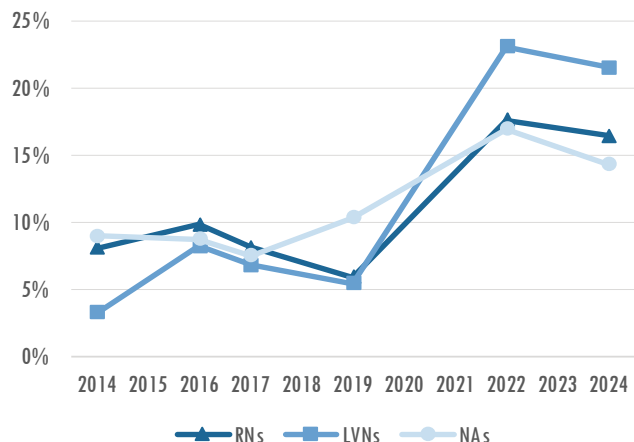

Figure 3 represents the position vacancy rates for Texas from 2014-2024 for APRN types.

- Rates for all APRN types except CNSs increased from 2022 to 2024.

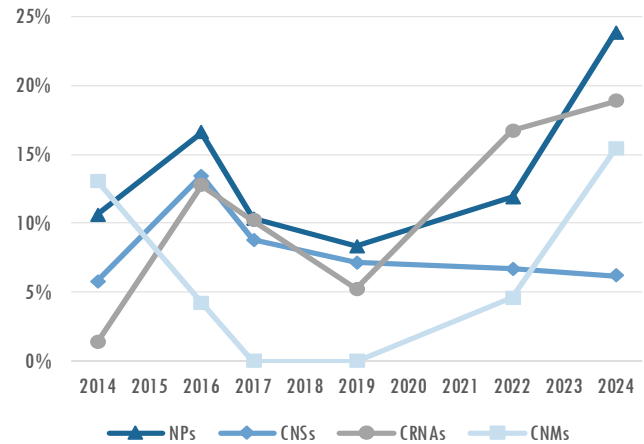**Figure 3. Position vacancy rates for APRNs, 2014-2024**

Table 2 (page 3) shows the descriptive statistics of facility vacancy rates, including median. The median represents the middle value among all position vacancy rates calculated for each individual hospital. Median facility vacancy rate gives a sense of how widespread an issue staff vacancy is.

- RNs had a median facility vacancy rate of 8.3%, a decrease from 2022 (17.7%).
- The median facility vacancy rate for LVNs was 7.1%, a decrease from 2022 (11.5%).
- The mean facility vacancy rates were lower than the statewide vacancy rates for all nursing types.
- For comparison, the Nursing Solutions Institute (NSI) reports the national average for RN vacancies at hospitals is 9.9%.[3]
- The median facility vacancy rate for NPs, CNSs, and CNMs was 0% and 13.5% for CRNAs.

To compare, Florida's hospital RN vacancy rate for 2023 was 13.0%.[4] In California hospitals, the RN vacancy rate was 8.2% in 2023.[5] New York's health and hospital vacancy rate was 15.0% in 2023.[6]

[3] https://www.nsinursingsolutions.com/Documents/Library/NSI_National_Health_Care_Retention_Report.pdf

[4] https://www.fha.org/FHA/FHA/Health-Care/Workforce-Issue-Briefs-and-Infographics.aspx

[5] https://rn.ca.gov/pdfs/forms/forecast2023.pdf

[6] https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/reports/osdc/pdf/report-2-2024.pdf

Table 2. Facility vacancy rate descriptive statistics, 2024

	n	Minimum	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Maximum	Mean
RNs	217	0.0%	2.6%	8.3%	16.5%	100.0%	12.7%
LVNs	183	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	25.0%	100.0%	17.1%
NAs	172	0.0%	0.0%	7.6%	19.2%	100.0%	13.5%
NPs	97	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.9%	100.0%	17.0%
CNSs	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	18.0%	2.9%
CRNAs	27	0.0%	0.0%	13.5%	88.1%	100.0%	34.5%
CNMs	7	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	43.0%	6.5%

Note: n=number of hospitals in Texas that reported each nursing staff type

Turnover Rates by Nurse Type

The numbers in Tables 3 show the reported average number of full- and part-time employees from the first and last day of 2023, the total number of separations, and the statewide turnover rate by nursing staff type among responding hospitals.

- The statewide turnover rate was highest among NAs (40.4%), followed by LVNs (26.1%), and RNs (15.5%).
- Nationally, the median turnover rate for full- and part-time RNs in hospitals is 15.0% according to the 2023 NSI report.

Table 3. Average number of employees and separations in Texas by nursing staff type, 2023

	n	Average Full-time Employees	Average Part-time Employees	Total Separations	Statewide Turnover Rate
RNs	274	70,032.0	15,221.0	13,182.7	15.5%
LVNs	261	3,556.5	539.9	1,071.0	26.1%
NAs	248	10,400.1	1,675.2	4,873.0	40.4%
NPs	236	2,859.7	283.5	308.0	9.8%
CNSs	220	203.5	19.0	8.0	3.6%
CRNAs	219	544.0	83.0	56.0	8.9%
CNMs	217	65.5	16.5	4.0	4.9%

Note: n=number of hospitals in Texas that reported average number of employees and separations

- All types of APRNs had lower statewide turnover rates than RNs, LVNs, and NAs.

Figure 4 shows median facility turnover rates for nursing staff types, RNs, LVNs, and NAs, from 2014 to 2024.

- Turnover for RNs and NAs decreased from 2022 to 2024.
- Turnover for LVNs increased slightly from 2022 to 2024.
- The turnover rate for LVNs has remained within 5 percentage points since 2014.
- Turnover for NAs is higher than that for RNs and LVNs and has remained higher for more than 10 years.

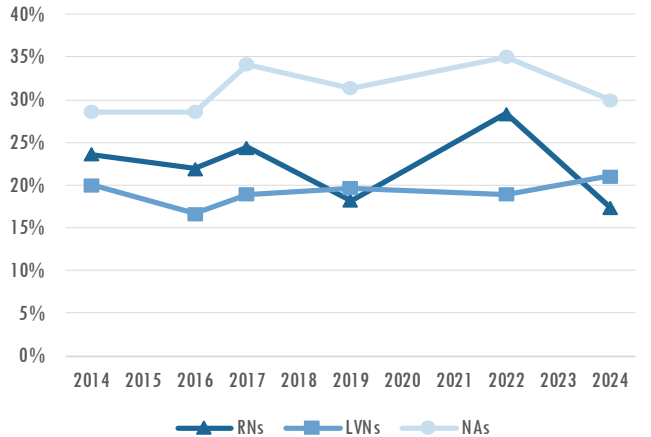**Figure 4. Median facility turnover rates for RNs, LVNs, and NAs, 2014-2024**

Table 4 show the descriptive statistics, including the median facility turnover rate, by nurse type. The median rate represents the middle value when turnover is calculated for each individual hospital facility. The median value is reported because it is less sensitive to outliers than the mean.

- The median facility turnover rate in Texas, amongst all APRN types was 0%. This means that more than half of responding hospitals who employ APRNs had a 0% turnover rate.

Table 4. Facility turnover rate descriptive statistics, 2024

	n	Minimum	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Maximum	Mean
RNs	269	0.0%	11.2%	17.4%	27.7%	189.3%	23.2%
LVNs	213	0.0%	0.0%	21.1%	42.5%	228.6%	28.8%
NAs	185	0.0%	16.0%	29.9%	53.9%	200.0%	36.8%
NPs	109	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.9%	200.0%	13.4%
CNSs	15	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	200.0%	15.0%
CRNAs	28	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.5%	37.5%	6.7%
CNMs	8	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	120.0%	15.4%

Note: n=number of hospitals in Texas that reported average number of employees and separations for each nursing staff type.