



Admission, Enrollment, and Graduation Trends in Professional Nursing Programs

2017

This update presents information for the 119 pre-licensure registered nursing (RN) programs that reported data for the 2017 reporting year, including:

- 1 diploma program;
- 68 Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs, including 57 generic ADN programs and 11 licensed vocational nurse (LVN) to ADN stand-alone programs;
- 49 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 using the 2017 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 2, 2017. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2016-2017 (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017) 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 2007 through 2017. Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission.¹

- 1 program was new and did not admit new pre-licensure applicants in AY 2016-2017.
- Seats for new students increased by 5.8% from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017.²

- The number of qualified applications increased by 3,912 (16.0% increase), between AY 2015-2016 and AY 2016-2017.
- 18,056 qualified applications were accepted in AY 2016-2017. This was a 5.9% increase from the previous academic year.
- 32 programs offered admission to all qualified applications, down from 34 programs in 2016.

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions and Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission (QANA), 2007-2017

	Seats for New Students ³	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission
2007 (n=86)	-	19,035	11,270	7,765 (40.8%)
2008 (n=92)	11,468	21,383	12,338	9,045 (42.3%)
2009 (n=93)	12,391	21,137	12,403	8,734 (41.3%)
2010 (n=96)	14,048	26,053	14,836	11,217 (43.1%)
2011 (n=105)	15,680	26,633	15,700	10,933 (41.1%)
2012 (n=106)	15,937	26,839	15,687	11,152 (41.6%)
2013 (n=113)	16,652	29,265	17,265	12,000 (41.0%)
2014 (n=114)	15,756	25,434	16,031	9,403 (37.0%)
2015 (n=119)	16,253	24,082	16,827	7,255 (30.1%)
2016 (n=116)	16,901	24,497	17,057	7,440 (30.4%)
2017 (n=119)	17,878	28,409	18,056	10,353 (36.4%)

Note: n = number of programs; Data were not available for cells with dashes (-).

The 86 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rate the importance of reasons why qualified applications were not accepted.

- Of the 86 responding programs, 50 (58.1%) reported that lack of clinical space was the most or second most important reason why qualified applications were not accepted. Some of the specific problems cited regarding lack of clinical space included increased competition with other programs (25 programs) and BSN programs receiving priority for space over ADN programs (9 programs).

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

² Per the survey operational definition, seats for new students refers to the maximum number of seats for new students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Seats for new students may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).



- Other first or second most important reasons why qualified applications were not accepted were a lack of budgeted faculty positions (46 programs or

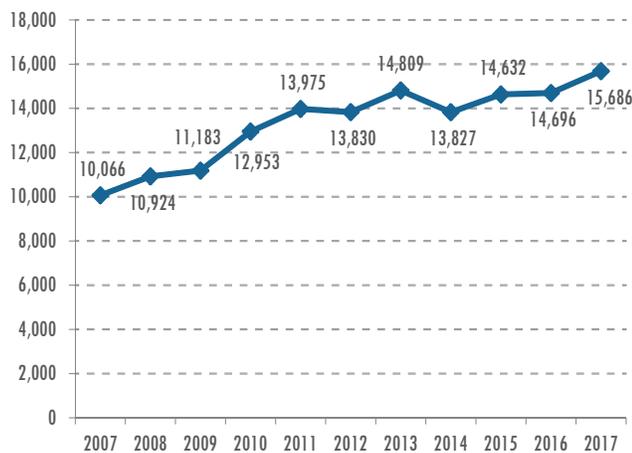
53.5%), lack of qualified applicants for budgeted faculty positions (43 programs or 50.0%), and limited classroom space (21 programs or 24.4%).

Newly Enrolled Students in Professional Nursing Programs

Figure 1 illustrates the number of newly enrolled, first year students from 2007 to 2017. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From AY 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017, the number of newly enrolled students increased by 6.7%.
- The number of newly enrolled students has increased by 55.8% from 2007 to 2017.
- Despite increases in enrollment, 12.3% of seats for new students remained unfilled. 13 programs had more than 50 unfilled seats: 9 BSN, 2 ADN, and 2 LVN to ADN programs.

Figure 1. Newly Enrolled Students, 2007-2017



³LVN to ADN numbers are based on the 11 stand-alone programs designated by the BON as LVN to ADN programs. These are separate from the ADN programs that have LVN to ADN tracks.

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

- Newly enrolled students increased in all program types except MSN AE, which decreased by 6 students (10.9%).
- The apparent increase in newly enrolled LVN to ADN students is largely due to National American University doing a teach-out for Career Point College students. These 299 students were not accounted for in the 2016 NEPIS.

Table 2. Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students by Program Type, AY 2015-2016 and AY 2016-2017

	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2015-2016	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2016-2017	% Change from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017
ADN	6,380	6,563	2.9%
BSN	7,264	7,599	4.6%
Diploma	116	142	22.4%
LVN to ADN ³	881	1,333	51.3%
MSN AE	55	49	-10.9%

Total Enrollment in Professional Nursing Programs

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

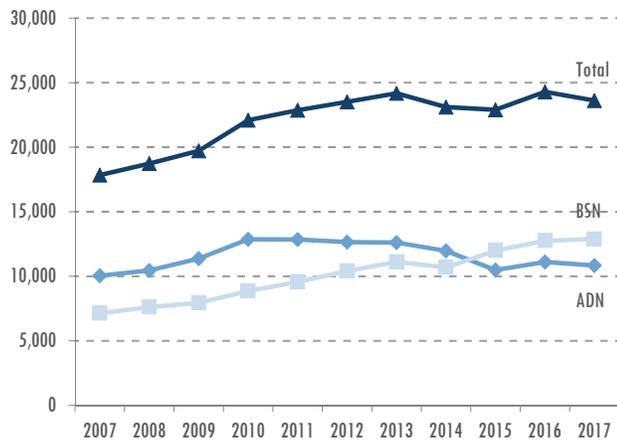
- BSN enrollment increased by 2.0% from 2016 to 2017, while ADN enrollment decreased by 1.3%.

Table 3. Total Enrollment by Program Type, 2005-2017

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Diploma	354	407	505	536	261	280	270	281	281	277	248	256	241
ADN + LVN to ADN	8,934	9,387	10,043	10,449	11,371	12,867	12,850	12,651	12,610	11,970	10,488	11,108	10,968
BSN	6,930	6,773	7,148	7,626	7,957	8,874	9,571	10,422	11,130	10,701	12,001	12,769	13,018
MSN AE	132	144	145	121	132	160	175	161	157	161	163	158	159
Total	16,350	16,711	17,841	18,732	19,721	22,095	22,866	23,515	24,178	23,109	22,900	24,291	24,386



Figure 2. Total Enrollment by Program Type, 2007-2017⁴



- Enrollment in ADN programs has decreased by 14.8% since its high in 2010.
- Diploma and MSN AE each represent 1 program and, therefore, made up a small percentage of enrolled students.

On September 30, 2017, as shown in Table 4, there were 24,386 students enrolled in professional nursing programs.

- Since 2005, professional nursing program enrollment has increased by 49.1% overall.
- From 2016 to 2017, total enrollment in professional nursing programs increased by 0.4%
- Of the 24,386 professional nursing students

enrolled, 1,613 were transfer students from other professional nursing programs, and 1,268 were re-entry students.

Table 4. Professional Nursing Program Enrollment, 2005-2017

	Enrollment	Annual Enrollment Change	Enrollment Change from 2005
2005	16,350	-	-
2006	16,711	2.2%	2.2%
2007	17,841	6.8%	9.1%
2008	18,732	5.0%	14.6%
2009	19,721	5.3%	20.6%
2010	22,181	12.5%	35.7%
2011	22,866	3.1%	39.9%
2012	23,515	2.8%	43.8%
2013	24,178	2.8%	47.9%
2014	23,109	-4.4%	41.3%
2015	22,900	-0.9%	40.1%
2016	24,291	6.1%	48.6%
2017	24,386	0.4%	49.1%

⁴ The “total” category in Figure 2 includes the diploma program, the MSN AE 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 had been increasing steadily for 11 years before it decreased slightly in 2015, as shown in Figure 3.

A total of 11,677 students graduated from professional nursing programs during the reporting period,⁵ a 4.4% increase since 2016 and a 66.1% increase since 2007. 8 recently opened programs reported having zero graduates.

- 62 of the 113 programs that reported graduates on both the 2016 NEPIS and 2017 NEPIS (54.9%) increased their number of professional nursing graduates during AY 2016-2017.
- Programs that increased their number of graduates included 29 ADN programs, 5 LVN to ADN programs, 27 BSN programs, and 1 MSN AE program.

Figure 3. Professional Nursing Graduates, 2007-2017



⁵ The number of graduates reported is for AY 2016-2017 academic year (September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017). 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 AY 2016-2017 enrolled in the professional nursing programs during AY 2015-2016.



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 2017 were unlicensed students (81.6% of all graduates).
- LVNs who graduated from a professional nursing program made up 15.9% of the professional nursing graduates in 2017.
- The number of paramedics/EMTs who graduated from a professional nursing program increased by 24 students, while the number of allied health professionals who graduated from a professional nursing program decreased by 65.4% between AY 2015-2016 and AY 2016-2017.

Table 5. Professional Nursing Graduates by Type

	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2015-2016	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2016-2017	% Change in Graduates
Unlicensed Students	9,017	9,529	5.7%
Paramedics/EMTs	105	129	22.9%
Allied Health	306	106	-65.4%
LVNs	1,711	1,862	8.8%
MSN AE	50	51	2.0%

Barriers to Increasing Pre-Licensure RN Graduates

The 111 programs that reported graduates were asked to describe any barriers they faced in increasing pre-licensure RN graduates.

- Lack of qualified faculty and lack of available clinical sites were tied for the number one cited reason programs were unable to increase the number of pre-licensure graduates (34 programs each or 30.6%).
- 10 programs (9.0%) 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

These 111 programs also reported the perceived level of difficulty that their pre-licensure RN graduates experienced in finding a job in nursing.

- The majority of programs reported that it was easy (58 programs or 52.3%) or very easy (35 programs or 31.5%) for graduates to find a job in nursing.
- 1 program reported that it was difficult and no programs reported that it was very difficult for graduates to find a job in nursing.
- 17 programs (15.3%) reported being neutral about the level of difficulty of their graduates in finding a job in nursing.