

ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND GRADUATION TRENDS IN PROFESSIONAL NURSING PROGRAMS

This update presents information for the 130 pre-licensure registered nursing (RN) programs in Texas during the 2023 reporting year, including:

- 1 diploma program;
- 69 Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs, including 57 generic ADN programs and 12 licensed vocational nurse (LVN) to ADN stand-alone programs;
- 58 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs; and
- 2 Master of Science in Nursing Alternate Entry (MSN AE) programs.

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data using the 2023 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 2, 2023. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2022-2023 (September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

Professional Nursing Programs Admissions

Table 1 presents data on qualified applications and admissions to professional nursing programs from 2014 through 2023. Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission.¹

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions and Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission (QANA), 2014-2023

	Seats for New Students ²	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission
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%)
2018 (n=122)	18,426	31,440	18,524	12,916 (41.4%)
2019 (n=124)	18,889	33,489	19,795	13,694 (40.9%)
2020 (n=125)	20,360	34,565	20,758	13,807 (39.9%)
2021 (n=126)	21,479	37,959	22,250	15,709 (41.4%)
2022 (n=128)	23,024	38,424	24,704	13,720 (35.7%)
2023 (n=130)	25,255	39,910	26,205	13,705 (34.3%)

Note: n = number of programs

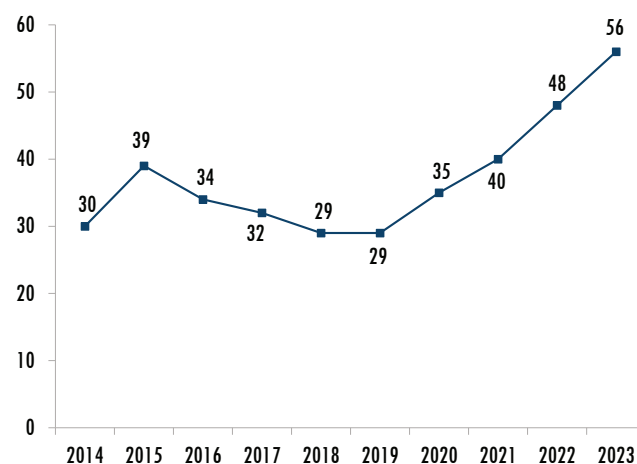
- Seats for new students increased by 9.7% from AY 2021-2022 to AY 2022-2023.²
- The number of qualified applications increased by 1,486 (3.9% increase) between AY 2021-2022 and AY 2022-2023

Offered Admission

26,205 qualified applications were offered admission in AY 2022-2023. This was an 6.1% increase from the previous academic year.

Figure 1 shows the number of programs that offered admission to all applicants from 2014 to 2023. In 2023, 56 programs offered admission to all qualified applications. This number has been increasing from 40 in AY 2020-2021 and 48 in AY 2021-2022.

Figure 1. Programs Offering Admission to All Qualified Applicants, 2014-2023



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

Of the 56 programs that offered admission to all qualified applicants:

- 33 (58.9%) were BSN programs. The remaining program types were ADN (14, 25.0%) and LVN to ADN (9, 16.1%).
- 45 (80.4%) were located in metropolitan areas.
- 24 (42.9%) were classified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as “University”.

Qualified Applicants Not Offered Admission

The 74 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rate the importance of reasons why qualified applications were not accepted.

- The highest weighted reason why qualified applicants were not accepted was a lack of clinical space. Some of the specific problems cited regarding lack of clinical space included increased competition with other programs (12 programs), BSN programs receiving priority for space over ADN programs (7 programs), and limited availability of clinical agency staff due to precepting new nurses (3 programs).
- Other highly weighted reasons why qualified applications were not accepted were a lack of budgeted faculty positions, lack of qualified faculty applicants for budgeted faculty positions, and limited classroom space.
- Specific problems cited related to lack of qualified faculty applicants included non-competitive salary (14 programs) and no applicants with experience (9 programs).

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.).

Newly Enrolled Students in Professional Nursing Programs

Figure 2 illustrates the number of newly enrolled, first year students from 2014 to 2023. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From AY 2021-2022 to AY 2022-2023, the number of newly enrolled students increased by 0.5%.
- The number of newly enrolled students has increased by 46.6% from 2014 to 2023.

Figure 2. Newly Enrolled Students, 2014-2023

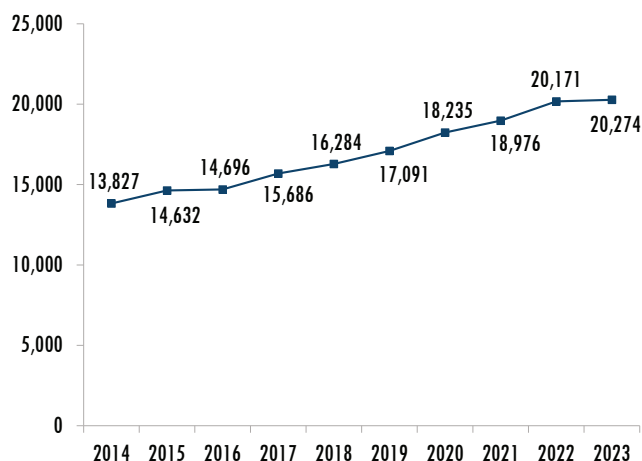


Table 2 shows the number of newly enrolled students by program type.

- Newly enrolled students increased in all program types except ADN programs and LVN to ADN programs

Table 2. Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students by Program Type, AY 2021-2022 and AY 2022-2023

Program Type	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2021-2022	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students, AY 2022-2023	% Change from AY 2021-2022 to AY 2022-2023
ADN	6,879	6,608	-3.9%
BSN	11,344	11,924	5.1%
Diploma	191	196	2.6%
LVN to ADN ³	1,680	1,459	-13.2%
MSN AE	77	87	13.0%
Total	20,171	20,274	0.5%

Seats Unfilled

Table 3 shows the number of seats for new students and the number of newly enrolled students from 2014 to 2023.

- Despite increases in enrollment, 19.7% of seats for new students remained unfilled in 2023.

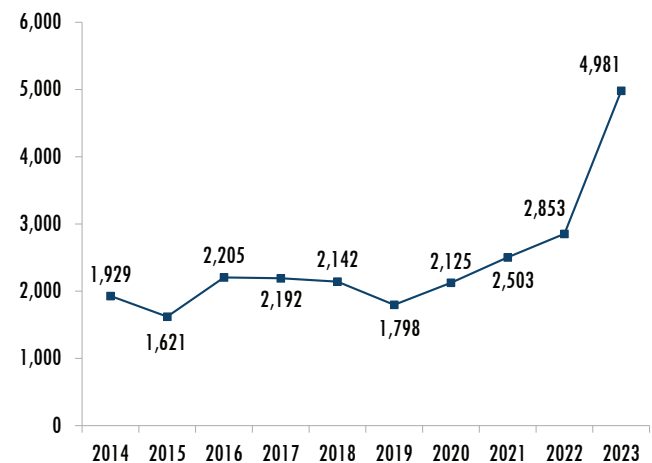
Table 3. Seats for New Students and Newly Enrolled Students, 2014-2023

	Seats for New Students	Newly Enrolled Professional Nursing Students	Seats Unfilled (%)
2014	15,756	13,827	12.2%
2015	16,253	14,632	10.0%
2016	16,901	14,696	13.0%
2017	17,878	15,686	12.3%
2018	18,426	16,284	11.6%
2019	18,889	17,091	9.5%
2020	20,360	18,235	10.4%
2021	21,479	18,976	11.7%
2022	23,024	20,171	12.4%
2023	25,255	20,274	19.7%

Figure 3 shows the number of unfilled seats for new students from 2014 to 2023.

- From AY 2021-2022 to AY 2022-2023, the number of unfilled seats for new students increased by 74.6%.
- The number of unfilled seats for new students has increased by 158.2% from 2014 to 2023.

Figure 3. Total Unfilled Seats for New Students, 2014-2023



Of the 130 RN programs, only 14 reported 0 seats unfilled.

- Seats unfilled ranged from 1 to 488.
- The median number of seats unfilled was 18.

58 programs reported more than 18 seats unfilled. Of these 58 programs:

- 38 (65.5%) reported fewer qualified applicants than seats for new students.
- 15 (25.9%) reported more qualified applicants than seats for new students.
- 5 programs reported that their number of qualified applicants and seats for new students was the same.

Of the 15 programs that reported more than 18 seats unfilled and more qualified applicants than seats for new students:

- 8 (53.3%) programs reported that their number of students offered admission was less than their number of seats for new students.
- 5 (33.3%) programs reported that their number of students offered admission was more than their number of seats for new students.

³ LVN to ADN numbers are based on the 12 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.

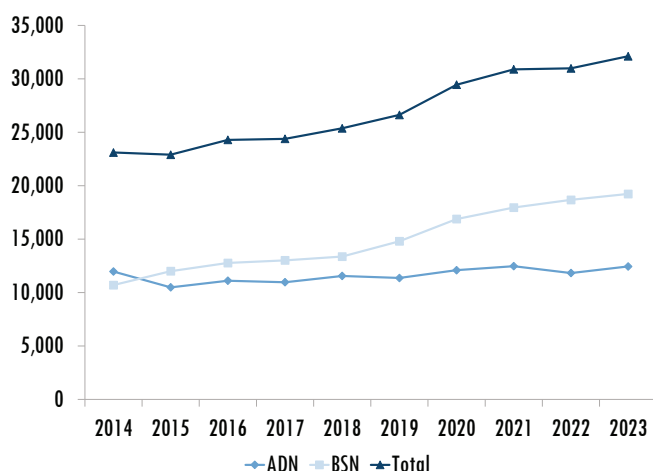
Total Enrollment in Professional Nursing Programs

Total enrollment, including both newly enrolled and returning students, in professional nursing programs by program type is shown in Table 4 and Figure 4.

Table 4. Total Enrollment by Program Type, 2014-2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ADN + LVN to ADN ⁴	11,970	10,488	11,108	10,968	11,558	11,364	12,096	12,471	11,830	12,443
BSN	10,701	12,001	12,769	13,018	13,370	14,803	16,885	17,958	18,672	19,228
Diploma	277	248	256	241	280	281	302	296	306	256
MSN AE	161	163	158	159	167	176	170	165	172	188
Total	23,109	22,900	24,291	24,386	25,375	26,624	29,453	30,890	30,980	32,115

Figure 4. Total Enrollment by Program Type, 2014-2023⁵



On September 30, 2023, as shown in Table 5, there were 32,115 students enrolled in professional nursing programs.

- Since 2014, professional nursing program enrollment has increased by 39.0% overall.
- BSN enrollment increased by 3.0% from 2022 to 2023, and ADN5 enrollment increased by 5.2%.
- From 2022 to 2023, total enrollment in professional nursing programs increased by 3.7%.
- Of the 32,115 professional nursing students enrolled, 365 were transfer students from other professional nursing programs, and 1,214 were re-entry students.

Table 5. Professional Nursing Program Enrollment, 2014-2023

Year	Enrollment	Annual Enrollment Change
2014 (n=114)	23,109	-4.4%
2015 (n=119)	22,900	-0.9%
2016 (n=116)	24,291	6.1%
2017 (n=119)	24,386	0.4%
2018 (n=122)	25,375	4.1%
2019 (n=124)	26,624	4.9%
2020 (n=125)	29,453	10.6%
2021 (n=126)	30,890	4.9%
2022 (n=128)	30,980	0.3%
2023 (n=130)	32,115	3.7%

Note: n = number of programs

⁴ ADN and LVN to ADN programs combined.

⁵ The "total" category in Figure 2 includes the diploma program, the MSN AE programs, 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 has been increasing steadily since 2015, as shown in Figure 5.

A total of 14,964 students graduated from professional nursing programs during the reporting period,⁶ a 2.0% increase since 2022 and a 26.8% increase since 2014.

4 programs opened within the last two years and reported having zero graduates during AY 2022-2023.

- Among the 126 programs that reported graduates on both the 2022 NEPIS and 2023 NEPIS, 65 (51.6%) increased their number of professional nursing graduates during AY 2022-2023.
- Programs that increased their number of graduates included 1 diploma program, 26 ADN, 9 LVN to ADN programs, 27 BSN programs, and 2 MSN AE programs.

Figure 5. Professional Nursing Graduates, 2014-2023

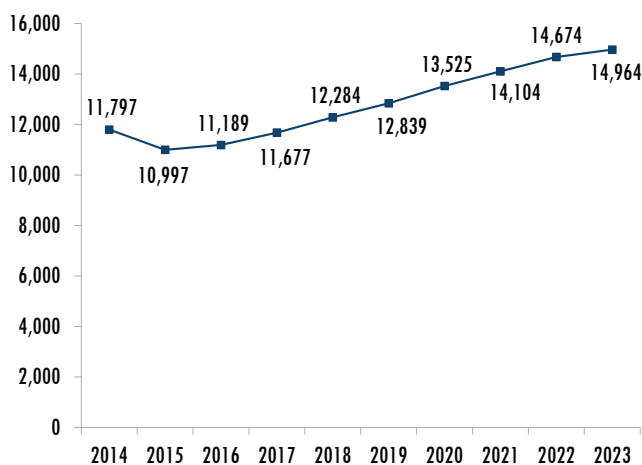


Table 6 displays the number of professional nursing graduates by student type for the past 2 academic years.

Table 6. Professional Nursing Graduates by Type, AY 2021-2022 and AY 2022-2023

	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2021-2022	Professional Nursing Graduates, AY 2022-2023	% Change in Graduates
Unlicensed Students	11,948	12,034	0.7%
Paramedics/EMTs	118	169	43.2%
Allied Health	138	185	34.1%
Military	52	33	-36.5%
LVNs	2,358	2,472	4.8%
MSN AE	64	71	10.9%
Total	14,678	14,964	1.9%

- The majority of professional nursing graduates in 2023 were unlicensed students (80.4% of all graduates).
- LVNs who graduated from a professional nursing program made up 16.5% of the professional nursing graduates in 2023.
- The number of allied health professionals who graduated from a professional nursing program increased by 34.1%.
- The number of paramedics/EMTs who graduated from a professional nursing program increased by 43.2% between AY 2021-2022 and AY 2022-2023.

⁶The number of graduates reported is for AY 2022-2023 academic year (September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023). 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 2022-2023 enrolled in the professional nursing programs during AY 2021-2022.

Barriers to Increasing Pre-Licensure RN Graduates

The 125 programs that reported graduates were asked to describe any barriers they faced in increasing pre-licensure RN graduates.

- Lack of faculty was the number one cited reason programs were unable to increase the number of pre-licensure graduates (33 programs or 26.4%), followed by lack of available clinical sites (25 programs or 20.0%).

55 programs (44%) reported that they did not have any barriers to increasing the number of pre-licensure RN graduates. Of these 55 programs:

- 27 (49.1%) were BSN programs, 21 (38.2%) were ADN programs, and 7 (12.7%) were LVN to ADN programs.
- 32 (58.2%) programs admitted all qualified applicants.
- 47 (85.5%) were located in metropolitan areas.

Level of Difficulty for Graduates to Find a Job in Nursing

Programs were also asked about 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 very easy (89 programs or 68.5%) or easy (36 programs or 27.7%) for graduates to find a job in nursing.
- 4 programs (3.1%) reported that their graduates have a neutral level of difficulty in finding a job in nursing.
- 1 program reported that it was difficult for graduates to find a job in nursing, citing competition with BSN graduates as the reason.