**Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council -
Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, February 26, 2025
10:00 a.m.**

Location: Department of State Health Services, 1100 West 49th Street, Bernstein Building, Room M-100, Austin, Texas 78756

To join from your telephone:

To join from your computer using Microsoft Teams:

Members Attending

Angel Angco-Barrera, MBA, BSN, RN
Kristin Benton, DNP, RN
Carol Boswell, Ed.D, RN, CNE, ANEF, FAAN - Co-Chair
Donna Carlin, MSN, RN
Cory Church, PhD, RN, NPD-BC
Laura Cornelson, MSN, RN
April Ernst, MSN, RN, CNE
Nora Frasier, DNP, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC, FAONL
Cynthia O'Neal, PhD, RN
Cora Rabe, DNP, CRNA
Linda Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP, FAANP, FAAN
Renae Schumann, PhD, RN, CNE
Yvonne Seifert, MSN, RN
Lisa Taylor, PhD, RN, CNS, FNP
Grace Werckle, BSN, RN
Sally Harper Williams
Karen Wright, DNP, RN, NPD-BC, NEA-BC

Members Absent

Serena Bumpus, DNP, RN, NEA-BC
Kathy Leader-Horn, LVN
Susan Ruppert (Co-Chair), PhD, APRN, FNP-C, ANP-BC, FNAP, FCCM, FAANP, FAAN
Holly Wei, PhD, RN, CPN, NEA-BC, FAAN

Public Present

Nicole Buckingham

Staff Present

Lissette Curry, PhD
Gracia Dala, MPH, RD
James Farris, MPAff

Kristina Juarez, MPH
Pam Lauer, MPH
Clarisse Manuel
Isabel Schwartz, MPH

This meeting will be webcast. Members of the public may attend the meeting in person at the address above or access a live stream of the meeting at https://texashhsmeetings.org/HHSWebcast. Select the tab for Moreton M-100 Live on the date and time for this meeting. Please e-mail Webcasting@hhsc.state.tx.us if you have any problems with the webcasting function.

1. Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Boswell called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., and welcomed the committee members, staff, and guests present, who introduced themselves. Laura Cornelson is the new Texas Hospital Association representative. Cynthia O'Neal is the new nurse educator representative, associate dean of nurse sciences studies at UTHSCA, Yvonne Scheifert, employers of nursing specializing in long-term care, VP of Clinical Services at Methodist Retirement Communities, Karen Wright, is the new representative of employers of nursing representing hospitals, senior director of nursing practice and research at Parkland Health. Two additional members – Dr. Holly Wei, a nurse researcher representative, Kathy Leader-Horn, a licensed vocational nurse (LVN) representative. Dr. Boswell announced that the meeting would be recorded as required by the Administrative Procedures Act and the Open Meetings Act, and that members should state their name for the record when making motions.
2. Establish Quorum and Approval of Excused Absences	Quorum was established given that more than 50% were present. Dr. Boswell requested a motion to approve excused absences for Dr. Bumpus, Ms. Leader-Horn, Dr. Ruppert, and Dr. Wei. The motion was made by Kristin Benton and seconded by Donna Carlin. The motion passed.
3. Review of February 26, 2025, Agenda	There were no questions about the agenda.
4A. Minutes of the November 20, 2024 Meeting	No revisions were requested for the November 20, 2024, meeting minutes. Dr. Boswell noted that she did offer one revision to the minutes, which was already given to Pam Lauer. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Church and seconded by Lisa Taylor. The motion carried.
4B. 2024 Nursing Education Program Information Survey Reports	Gracia Dala and Isabel Schwartz presented the 2024 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) Reports. Isabel Schwartz presented the VN NEPIS Reports. Characteristics of VN Programs: The report described the characteristics of surveyed VN programs, including geographic designation (i.e. metropolitan or border status), program type (i.e. community, state, or technical college, or private or independent institution for higher education), program closures and openings, course modality, and clinical curriculum information.

Comments:
- Dr. Benton noted that on Page 2, the rule regarding competencies required for faculty delivering online courses is correctly cited as 214.9b3, not 215.9b3. Pam Lauer noted this change.
- Angel Angco-Barrera noted a typo on page 6 on "high school."

Admissions, Enrollment, and Graduation:
The report described admissions, enrollment, and graduation trends in VN programs, including data on qualified applicants not admitted, unfilled seats, and barriers to admitting more students.

No comments were made.

Student Demographics:
The report described the demographic trends of VN nursing graduates, including gender, age, and race or ethnicity.

No comments were made.

Vocational Nursing Education for High School Students:
The report described characteristics of VN programs offered to high school students. Data presented included geographic designation, program type, the grade level at which students could enroll, options for completing the curriculum after graduation, and admissions trends.

Comments:
- Janice Hooper provided an update that there is increased interest in program offerings for high school students and that more options may be available soon.
- Pam Lauer recognized the role of the Texas Board of Nursing and the Education Subcommittee of the Nursing Advisory Committee in creating this report.

Gracia Dala presented the 2024 RN NEPIS Reports.

Characteristics of RN Programs:
The report described the characteristics of surveyed pre-licensure RN programs, including geographic designation, program type (i.e. diploma, Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), etc.), institution type (i.e. community college, university, for-profit program, etc.), program consolidation, closures and openings, curriculum length, course modality, clinical curriculum information, and information on academic-practice partnerships.

Comments:
- Donna Carlin noted that Figure 3 comparing the median clinical contact hours by program type was helpful and asked if that figure could be updated to include the prior year to track increases or decreases in clinical hours. Dr. Benton agreed. Gracia Dala noted this revision.

Admission, Enrollment, and Graduation:

	The report described admissions, enrollment, and graduation trends in RN programs, including data on qualified applicants not admitted, unfilled seats, and barriers to admitting more students. The report compared this data across program type. Comments: • Donna Carlin asked if the program reporting 428 unfilled seats was verified. Gracia Dala responded that the data is verified with institutions but that the team can verify this response with the program again. Student Demographics: The report described the demographic trends of RN nursing graduates, including gender, age, and race or ethnicity. No comments were made. RN to BSN Education The report described data collected from RN to BSN programs. The report included information on the characteristics of the programs such as program length and course modality. The report also described admissions, enrollment, and graduation trends, as well as graduate demographics, including information on the work experience of students. Comments: • Angel Angco-Barrera noted an error in a footnote on page 5, which duplicated a hyperlink from an earlier footnote. Gracia Dala noted the change. Faculty Profile The report described data collected on VN, RN, and graduate nursing program faculty. Information included employment statistics such as trends in the proportions of full-time versus part-time faculty, vacancy and turnover, time to fill vacant positions, and the strategies and barriers to recruiting nursing faculty. The demographics of faculty, such as age, gender, race or ethnicity, and educational attainment were also reported. Comments: • Carol Boswell noted a formatting issue in Table 2, which appeared to be missing a column title. • Gracia Dala noted for in-person committee members that numbers may not match between the printed reports and the report show. A motion to approve the reports was made by Renae Schumann and seconded by Cory Church. The motion to approve the reports passed.
4C. 2024 Governmental Public Health Nurse Staffing Study Reports	Isabel Schwartz presented the 2024 Governmental Public Health Nurse Staffing Study Reports. Agency Characteristics:

The report described the characteristics of responding agencies, such as public health service region, geographic designation, and agency type (i.e. local health department, public health service regional office, or DSHS or HHS central office). Data on nurse administration and board membership at responding agencies was also reported.

No comments were made.

Staff Mix:
The report described nurse staffing at responding governmental public health agencies. Information reported included the nursing staff mix between different nurse types, changes in budgeted positions, skills assessments of nursing staff, consequences of inadequate staffing, and recruitment and retention strategies.

Comments:
- Cory Church noted the header for Training Program for Newly Licensed Nurses should specified Newly Licensed Registered Nurses, given that the reports also discuss other nurse types like LVN. Isabel Schwartz noted this change.

Vacancy and Turnover
The report described trends in vacancy and turnover rates at governmental public health agencies by nurse type, agency type, and public health service region.

Comments:
- Angel Angco-Barrera asked a clarifying question about headcount and separations in Table 5, if 19 separations for LVNs were only in 2 agencies since 32 agencies reported 0 separations. Pam Lauer said this interpretation was correct and that the team could follow up to confirm this was accurate.

Recommendations:
The report described the recommendations provided by the Nursing Advisory Committee and Task Force to improve nurse staffing at governmental public health agencies.

Comments:
- Pam Lauer noted that the recommendations come directly from the TCNWS Advisory Committee and Task Force.
- Laura Cornelson asked if there has ever been conversation on comparing the findings of these data to population projections. Pam Lauer answered that there are projections for supply and demand for nurses, though they do not include projections for nursing program faculty or by nurse specialties, but that a recommendation could be made to create a document summarizing findings from all surveys conducted by TCNWS to synthesize the data.
- Kristin Benton asked for background on the recommendations. Specifically, for Recommendation 2, she would be interested in learning more about the Georgia Department of Public Health Office of Nursing and why that specific framework was selected for the recommendation.

	Pam said she would go back and ask the task force for additional language to clarify why this rule was changed, and that there had been discussion among the task force that the Georgia framework had been identified as best practice. • Donna Carlin asked about Recommendation 4, if the language could be changed to "standardized pay scale." Karen Wright agreed. Pam Lauer said that this could be changed. A motion to approve the reports was made by Kristin Benton and seconded by Cynthia O'Neal. The motion to approve the reports passed.
4D. Update on Early Career Nurses Survey	Gracia Dala provided an update on the Early Career Nurses Survey. • The survey population will be Texas nurses with active LVN or RN licenses who were licensed in the last 5 years. • Topics covered by the survey questions will include participating in transition to practice programs, prior experience in healthcare, workplace setting, intent to stay in current workplace, and educational background. • A draft of the survey was sent for second review to the task force. • Beta-testing for the survey will take place in the coming weeks. • The survey will be available from April to June. Pam Lauer provided additional information: The survey will be collected solely online, and postcards with the QR code will be sent to 70,000 nurses identified as eligible. This will be the first time TCNWS has collected data from individual nurses online. Pam Lauer asked committee members to assist in disseminating the survey to eligible nurses. • The survey is being developed in collaboration with the Task Force, headed by Dr. Cory Church, and other experts in the field. • Dr. Church spoke briefly about the project, including on the decision to expand the survey to early-career nurses rather than just newly licensed nurses, and asked committee members for help disseminating the survey.
4I. Organizational Updates	Kristin Benton provided an update from the Texas Board of Nursing (BON). • The budget meeting with Senate Finance Committee for the BON just finished and discussion on the budget will begin. • Exceptional items in the budget include a request for an increase in funding for TCNWS and a renewal of funding for Operation Nightingale. • Regarding Operation Nightingale, updates from the FBI included the discovery of an additional institute involved in dispensing fraudulent nursing diplomas, the MedLife Institute in Florida, which has increased the operation caseload. Additional affidavits for another program have also been received.

	Donna Carlin provided an update from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).
	- Three grant programs for nursing are currently very close to being announced. Two out of three programs have selected grantees, and applications for the third program, the Nursing and Allied Health grant, are due Friday. - Monitoring legislation related to higher education, particularly related to requirements for vaccines before enrollment - Bills expanding prescriptive authority and independence for APRNs are also being monitored
4J. TCNWS Update	Pam Lauer provided an update from TCNWS. - The 2024 NEPIS RN and VN reports will be finalized and published. The graduate reports will be ready for review during the next advisory committee meeting, tentatively scheduled for May 21. - TCNWS is continuing development on the Early Career Nurses Survey. - The annual report on outcomes for the last four Workplace Violence Grant (WPV Grant) winners will be published in Summer 2025. - TCNWS is monitoring legislative bills related to the Center's work, including: - HB 827, relating to wording in the WPV Grant Program - HB 2188, relating to assessing feasibility aligning certification and career pathways for nurse aides, medication aids, and personal care technicians - HB 2664, relating to TCNWSAC establishing a task force on racial diversity in the nursing workforce Up next: - The Early Career Nurses Survey will launch. - TCNWS will update existing dashboards on nursing education. - The next two TCNWSAC meetings are scheduled for May 21 and September 24. - Fall 2025 will mark the kick off of the 2026 Nurse Staffing Study Task Forces
5. Public Comment	Dr. Boswell opened the floor for public comment. Dr. Boswell reminded the audience to state their name and organization if applicable. - Dr. Benton introduced Nicole Buckingham, who is the program supervisor for APRN licensing at the Texas Board of Nursing. - Dr. Virginia Ayars thanked Pam Lauer and her team for their efforts in creating and distributing the Nursing Education Program Information Survey. There were no other comments from the public.
6. Adjourn	Dr. Boswell called the meeting adjourned at 11:58 PM.

Contact: Pamela Lauer, Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies
512-517-6902 or TCNWS@dshs.texas.gov

This meeting is open to the public. No reservations are required and there is no cost to attend this meeting.

Persons who want to attend the meeting and require assistive technology or services should contact Pamela Lauer at 512-517-6902 or pamela.lauer@dshs.texas.gov at least 72 hours prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements may be made.