

Age Distribution of the Texas Nursing Workforce, 2015-2024

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Summary

This presentation explores changes in the age distribution of the nursing workforce by practice setting, full-time or part-time employment status, and geographic designation from 2015 to 2024.

The median age of vocational nurses (VNs) has increased from 44 to 46 years from 2015 to 2024. Differences can also be observed by position type. In contrast, and like national trends, the median age for registered nurses (RNs) working full-time has decreased from 44 in 2015 to 42 in 2024.¹

Changes in the age distribution of the workforce have implications for recruitment and retention, experience, skills, specialization level, attrition rates, job engagement, satisfaction, and values.² In 2024, 54% of RNs working in a School of Nursing were 55 years and older, while in a hospital that proportion was 18%.

In addition, regional differences will require different approaches to maintain adequate workforce supply. The proportion of RNs age 55 and older in metropolitan counties was 28% in 2015 and 23% in 2024, while in non-metropolitan counties it was 34% in 2015 and 30% in 2024.

Methods

- Licensure data files were provided by the Texas Board of Nursing.
- Nurses were only counted at their highest licensure level.
 - LVNs with an active RN licensed and RNs with an active APRN license were excluded
- Nurses were considered active if:
 - Their practice address, or mailing address when practice address not available, was in Texas.
 - They were employed in nursing full-time, part-time, or per diem.

Results

Figure 1. Age Distribution of Vocational Nurses

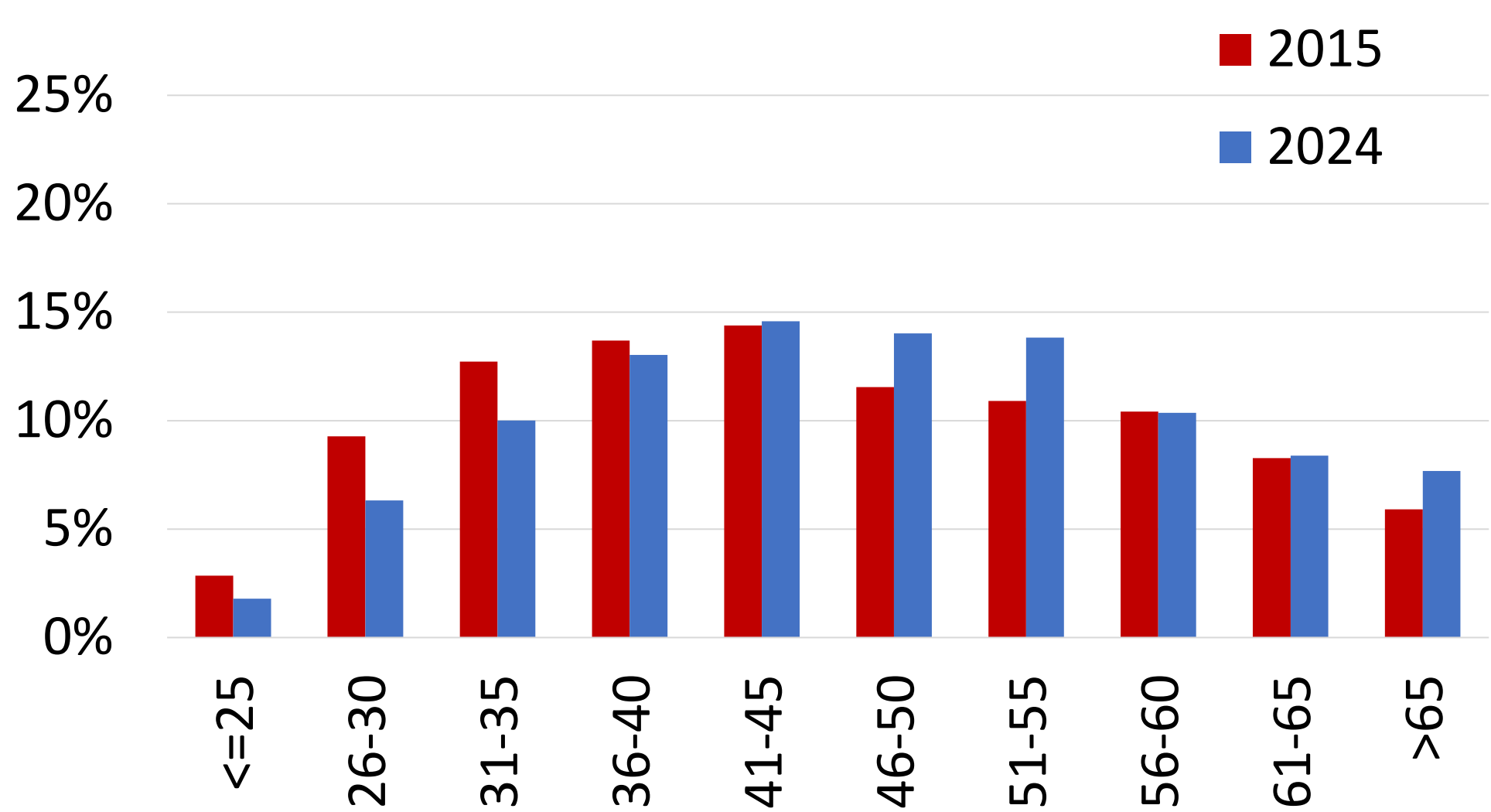


Figure 2. Age Distribution of Registered Nurses

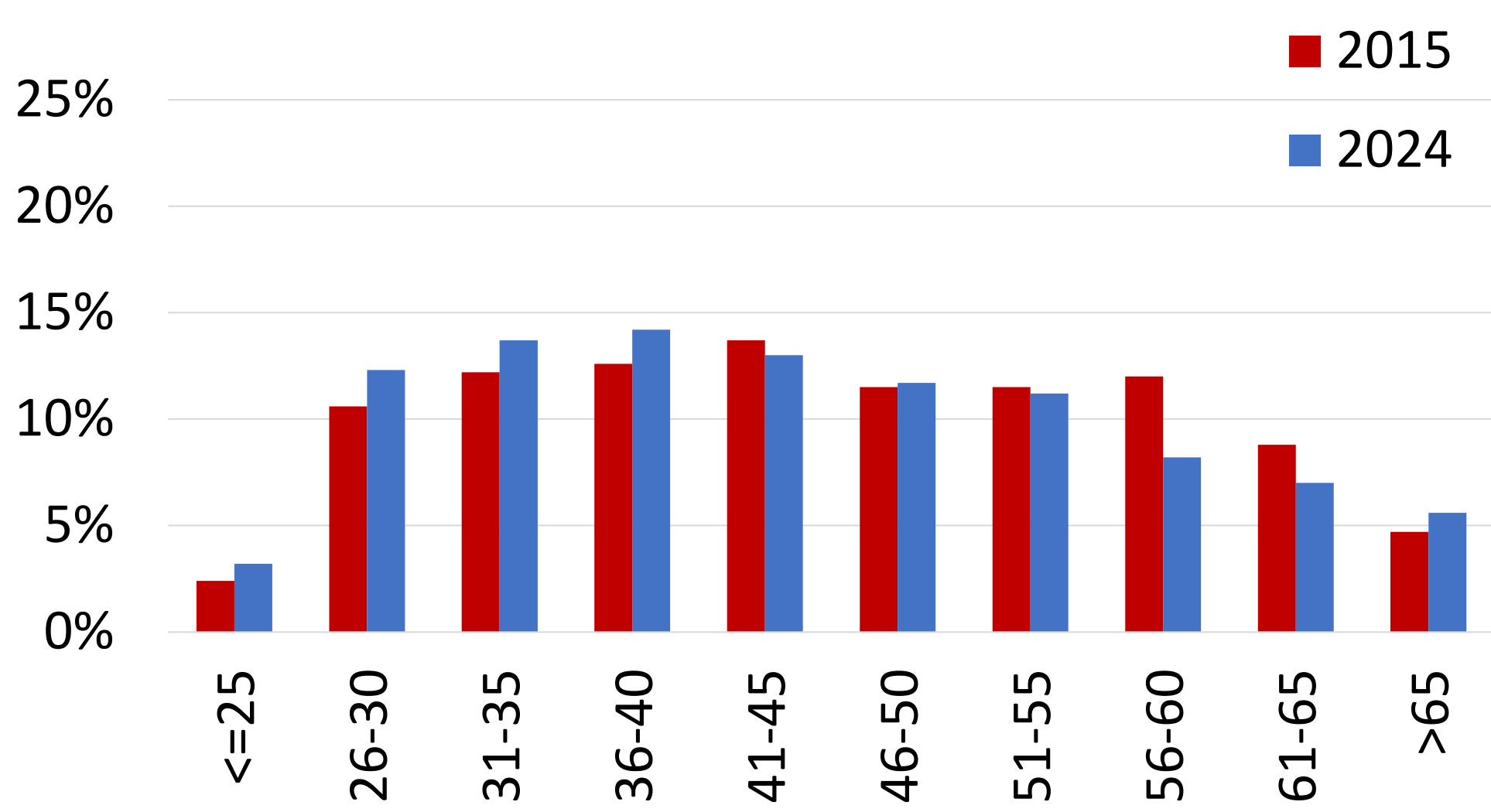


Table 1. Median Age by Practice Setting

VN 2015	VN 2024	Practice Setting	RN 2015	RN 2024
45	44	Hospital	42	39
45	48	School of Nursing	55	52
44	43	Community or Public Health	47	46
45	46	School or College Health	51	46
43	47	Home Health	47	47
43	46	Nursing Home/Extended Care	49	46
45	46	Other(s)	50	46
44	46	State Total	44	42

Table 2. Median Age by Public Health Region

VN 2015	VN 2024	Public Health Region	RN 2015	RN 2024
43	46	Panhandle	43	41
44	47	North Texas	44	42
43	45	East Texas	45	42
45	47	Gulf Coast	44	43
45	46	Central Texas	44	41
42	45	South Texas	45	43
41	44	West Texas	42	40
41	44	Rio Grande Valley	42	42
44	46	State Total	44	42

Table 3. Percent of Nurses 55+ by Practice Setting

VN 2015	VN 2024	Practice Setting	RN 2015	RN 2024
30%	25%	Hospital	23%	18%
35%	36%	School of Nursing	54%	45%
28%	22%	Community or Public Health	34%	28%
32%	29%	School or College Health	43%	31%
24%	32%	Home Health	35%	34%
26%	30%	Nursing Home/Extended Care	39%	33%
30%	29%	Other(s)	42%	30%
28%	29%	State Total	29%	23%

Table 4. Median Age and Percent by Employment Status

VN 2015	VN 2024	Employment Status	RN 2015	RN 2024
43 (87%)	46 (91%)	Full-Time	44 (87%)	42 (89%)
46 (13%)	47 (9%)	Part-Time or Per-Diem	49 (13%)	43 (11%)

Table 5. Percent of Nurses 55+ by Metro Designation

VN 2015	VN 2024	Metro Designation	RN 2015	RN 2024
27%	29%	Non-metro	34%	30%
27%	29%	Metro	28%	23%
27%	29%	State Total	28%	23%

Observations

Between 2015 and 2024:

- The median age of the VN workforce increased while the median age of the RN workforce decreased.
- The median age of VNs increased for all practice settings except hospitals and community or public health.
- The median age of RNs by practice setting decreased for all settings except home health, where it remained at 47 years.
- The percent of nurses (VNs and RNs) 55 and older employed in a hospital setting decreased.
- The percent of VNs 55 and older employed in a school of nursing increased but the percent of RNs decreased.
- Changes in median age by public health region (PHR) followed state trends.
- The proportion of VNs employed in nursing full-time increased from 87% to 91%.
- The median age of VNs increased for all employment statuses.
- The median age of RNs employed part-time or per-diem decreased from 49 to 43.
- The proportion of VNs 55 and older increased from 27% to 29% across the state, regardless of metropolitan county designation.
- The proportion of RNs 55 and older decreased for all metro designations but vary by designation.
- The proportion of RNs 55 and older employed in non-metropolitan counties was higher than in metropolitan counties or at the state level.

References

- National Academies Medicine The Nursing Workforce. In: The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity. National Academies Press (US); 2021. Accessed January 8, 2025. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK573922/>
- Tan SHE, Chin GF. Generational effect on nurses' work values, engagement, and satisfaction in an acute hospital. BMC Nurse. 2023;22:88. doi:10.1186/s12912-023-01256-2