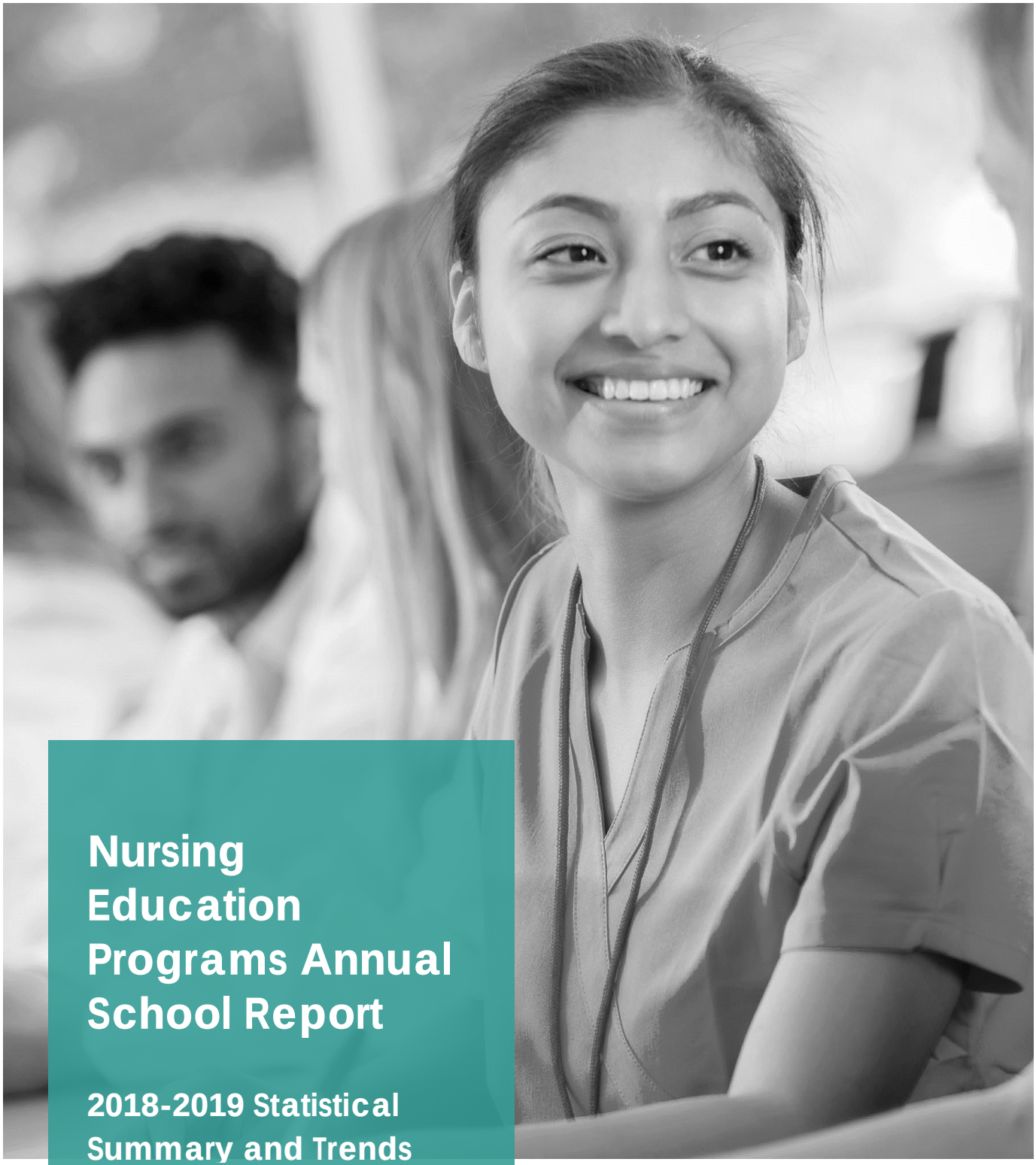
2020 Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission



Nursing Education Programs Annual School Report

2018-2019 Statistical Summary and Trends

May 2020

Washington State Department of Health

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Acronyms

AD..... Administration/Leadership Specialty
AD-RN..... Associate Degree in Nursing – Registered Nurse
AD-MS ..... Associate Degree in Nursing to Master's of Nursing
ANES..... Nurse Anesthetist
ANP..... Adult Nurse Practitioner
ARNP ..... Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner
BSN..... Bachelor of Science in Nursing – Registered Nurse
CNS..... Clinical Nurse Specialist
DNP ..... Doctorate of Nursing Practice
ED ..... Education Specialty
FNP..... Family Nurse Practitioner
GE ..... Graduate Entry Programs – Registered Nurse
GNP ..... Geriatric Nurse Practitioner
MHNP..... Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
MN..... Master's of Nursing
MS ..... Master of Science
MSN..... Master of Science Nursing
MW..... Nurse Midwife
NCLEX® ..... National Council Licensure Examination
NCQAC..... Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission
PMC..... Post Master's Certificate Nurse
PN..... Licensed Practical Nurse
PNP..... Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
RN..... Registered Nurse
RNB..... Registered Nurse Bachelor (bachelor's degree programs for licensed RNs)

Background

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) requires all nursing education programs to provide information annually [WAC 246-840-554(4)]. This report summarizes 2018-2019 academic year survey data from approved Washington state nursing programs and out-of-state distance learning programs, highlighting selected data trends.

Introduction

Forty-one approved nursing schools in Washington state completed the annual survey, including 12 universities and 29 community and technical colleges (CTC). There are 77 schools approved for clinical placements who completed the out-of-state survey during the 2018-2019 academic year. There were 2261 student clinical placements by out-of-state programs in Washington state.

This report presents both in-state and out-of-state program survey results together. The numbers of nurses licensed in the state are provided below for background and comparison. The report will provide the student and faculty in-state program survey results of undergraduate and graduate programs. Next, the out-of-state program results are provided. When appropriate, Washington state responses will be compared to national benchmarks and selected research findings. Finally, there is a summary and analysis of the annual survey findings, with a list of recommended actions based on these results and trend analysis.

Nurse Workforce

Workforce Survey Analysis

Beginning in January, 2018, nurses (LPNs, RNs and ARNPs) in Washington state were informed of a requirement to complete an online survey with questions about their demographics, work characteristics, and education history when they renewed their nursing license or applied for a new license. The initial analyses for RNs, LPN, and ARNPs with an active Washington state license on May 31, 2019, is complete (Stubbs 2020).

Of the 90,975 RNs with an active Washington license, (excluding those with an active ARNP license) 91.5 percent were employed as a nurse, 4.3 percent were unemployed and the rest were retired, volunteering or employed in another field. Of the total, 69.0 percent were practicing as a nurse in Washington. Table 1 shows the number of PNs, RNs, and ARNPs licensed May 31, 2019, given here as a snapshot of the nursing workforce.

Table 1: licensed nurses as of May 31, 2019

License Type	Active
Practical Nurse	10,864
Registered Nurse	90, 975
Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner	8,649
Total	**110,488**

(Stubbs 2020)

In-State Programs

The annual survey was completed by forty-one approved nursing schools in Washington state. There are five licensed practical nurse (PN) programs, and 25 associate degree RN (AD-RN) programs. Five universities and four community colleges offer RN to BSN (RNB) programs. Nine universities offer bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) programs. There are two ADN to MSN (AD-MS) programs, one offering master's degree graduate entry to the RN (GE), and three offering master's degree advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) and six other master's programs. Finally, there are three post-master's certificate (PMC) programs, six doctoral of nursing practice (DNP) and two Ph.D. programs.

Twenty-three of 29 community or technical colleges (CTC) have national nursing accreditation and 12 of the 12 universities have national nursing accreditation. There are six CTC programs without national nursing accreditation; two are in pre-accreditation status, two are planning accreditation in 2020 and two in 2021.

Undergraduate Programs

Trends in the number of undergraduate students who graduated between 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 are outlined below in Table 2. Practical nursing programs (PN) had 232 graduates. In 2018-2019, AD-RN programs graduated 1548 students, a slight increase from 1506 graduates the previous year.

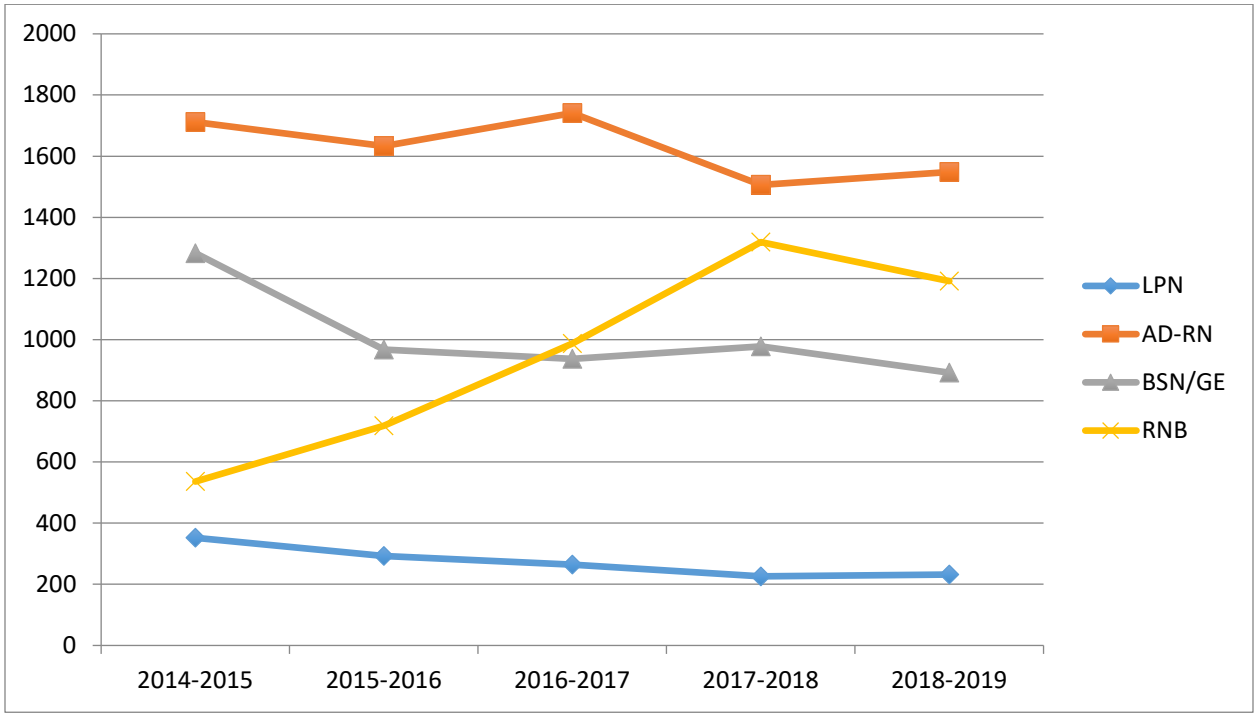
In 2018-2019, BSN programs graduated 867 students, and GE programs graduated 25 nurses, a decrease from the previous year. Note that BSN and GE students are combined in the figure below because they are both preparing students in the university setting for initial RN licensure. Students completing GE degrees are included in these graduation numbers because they are pre-licensure programs, the GE student and faculty demographics are included with the graduate program results.

Table 2: in-state undergraduate graduations

Academic Year	PN	AD	BSN/GE	RNB	BSN/GE/RNB
2014-2015	352	1,712	1,283	536	1,819
2015-2016	293	1,633	967	718	1,685
2016-2017	264	1,741	937	987	1,924
2017-2018	226	1,506	978	1,319	2,297
2018-2019	232	1,548	892	1,191	2,083

The table above provides undergraduate and GE program graduations for comparison in the past five years. There is a slight decrease in graduates from PN programs, a slight increase in AD program graduates, and significant slight decrease in RNB program graduates. The number of RNB graduates this year are compared to 1319 in 2017-2018.

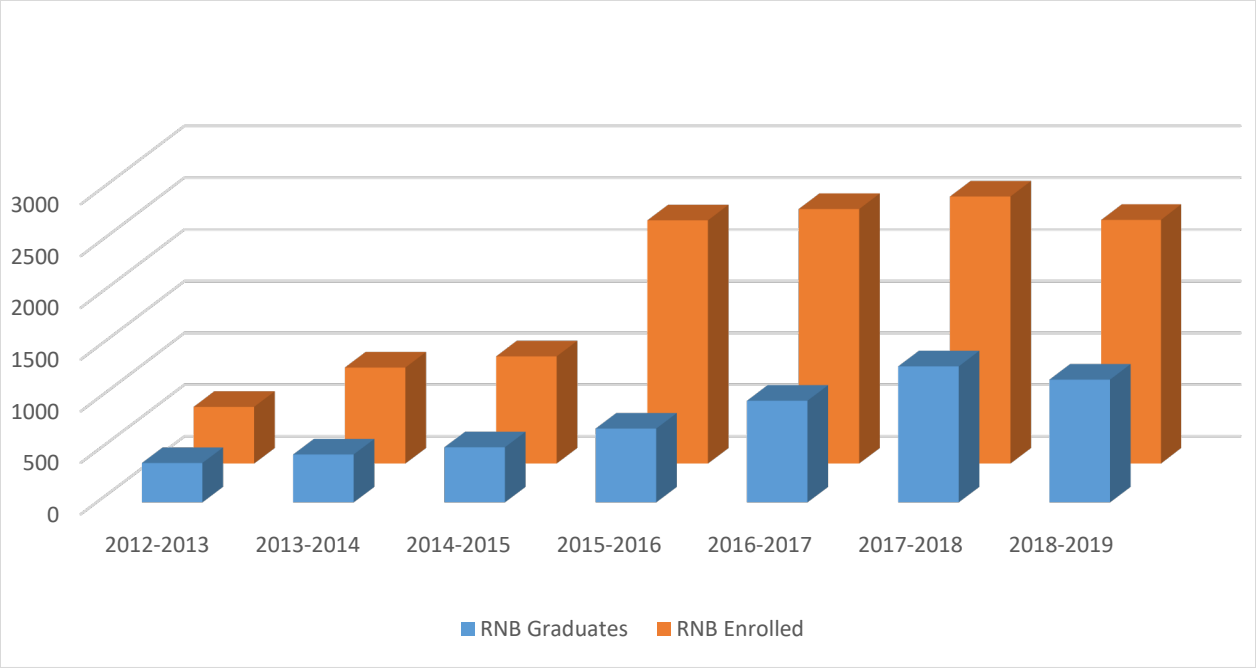
Figure 1: total undergraduate program graduates by program type



RN to BSN (RNB) 2018-2019

The number of RNB graduates in Washington schools rose sharply in 2015-2016 academic year and continued to rise through 2017-2018 followed by a slight decline in 2018-2019 with 1191 graduates. The number of graduates will likely continue upward because there are 2356 students enrolled in RNB programs.

Figure 2: number of enrolled and graduated RNB students by year

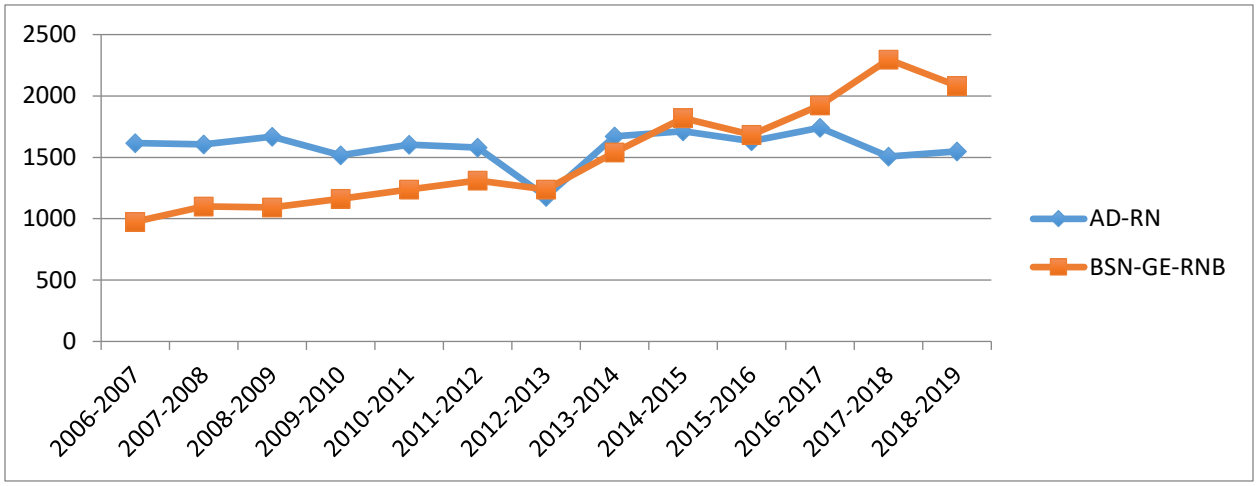


The Institute of Medicine Report (IOM) [2010], titled The Future of Nursing, identifies that nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression. Washington state has been a leader in successful strategies for academic progression from AD to BSN.

The support over four years of funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) helped accelerate the progress toward a higher educated workforce by supporting the adoption of the direct transfer agreement (DTA) streamlining academic progression between ADN and BSN programs.

Figure three provides an illustration of the successful strategies for academic progression in Washington state. When combining the number of graduates from; RNB, BSN and GE graduates, it allows comparison of the total number of initial licensure AD graduates with the total number of initial licensure BSN and higher graduates.

Figure 3: initial licensure AD-RN, and total BSN or higher graduation trends



Program Completion Rates

Schools provided an allotted time for completion in semesters or quarters, and the number of graduates who completed in 100 and 150 percent of the chosen allotted program completion time. The completion rates for the undergraduate programs are below. The RNB programs completion rates are 98 percent in 100 percent of the allotted time. AD programs have completion rates with 93 percent completing in 100 percent allotted time; however, because the program chooses the allotted time for completion, it is difficult to compare programs.

Table 3: in-state undergraduate program completion rates by program

Program Type	100 Percent Allotted Time	150 Percent Allotted Time
PN	93 percent	100 percent
AD	93 percent	99 percent
RNB	98 percent	100 percent
BSN	93 percent	99 percent

The variation in completion rates may be related to the structure of the program, student demographics, choice of allotted completion time, or other factors. There is variation in the choices of allotted completion times for RNB and BSN programs because of the different structure and makeup of the programs. All programs had completion rates between 99 and 100 percent at 150 percent of the allotted time.

Clinical Hours

Nursing faculty members plan, evaluate, and supervise clinical experiences for nursing students. Clinical experiences provide direct patient care activities and increase student learning. Clinical

learning is critical to providing quality nursing education and can be a barrier to increasing enrollment. Twenty-five colleges and universities reported inadequate clinical sites for their students in 2018-2019. The nursing programs that report the greatest difficulty finding clinical sites are undergraduate and ARNP programs. Nursing programs could increase clinical practice experience by increasing their use of simulation. WAC 246-840-534 allows LPN, RN, or RN to BSN programs to use simulation up to 50 percent of a clinical practice course. Nursing programs report use of simulation at a very low percentage of total clinical hours with no changes from last year.

The average number of clinical hours in PN programs is 372. The average clinical hours in AD-RN programs is 588. Finally, the average clinical hours in the BSN programs are 849. See below for the breakdown of the average and range of total clinical hours by program type.

Direct care experiences make up an average of 89 percent of the total clinical experience hours in PN, 86 percent in AD-RN and 86 percent in BSN programs. See the table below for clinical observation and simulation percentages.

Table 4: clinical hours by program and type

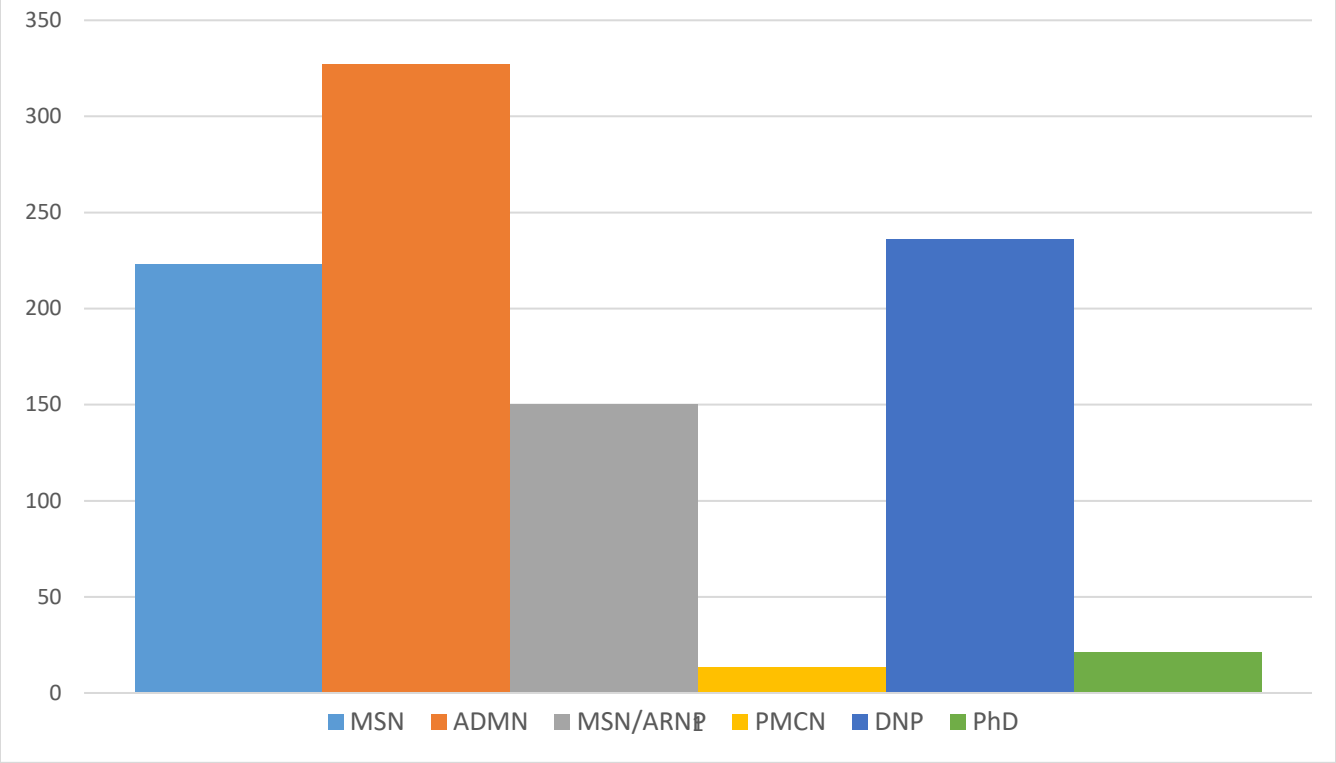
Clinical Hours	PN	AD-RN	BSN
Average	372	588	849
Range	245-512	257-1014	608-1150
Direct Care	89 percent	86 percent	86 percent
Observation	6 percent	7 percent	8 percent
Simulation	5 percent	7 percent	6 percent

Graduate Programs

The MSN graduates from master's degree programs in nursing, but not ARNP (223) and RN to MS graduates (327), are reported below. There were 150 master's prepared advanced registered nurse practitioner graduates in 2018-2019 and 13 post master's certificate in nursing (PMCN) graduates combined for display below. Programs reported 236 DNP and 21 Ph.D. graduates for 257 total graduates with a nursing doctorate in 2018-2019.

Although there were 25 graduates from GE programs during 2018-2019, these graduates were already reported above with undergraduate pre-licensure programs, so they will not be included in these graduation numbers.

Figure 4: detailed program master's and doctoral graduates 2018-2019



Program Completion Rates

Graduate nursing programs also chose a time for completion of their programs, reporting students who graduated in 100 percent of that time and those who graduated in 150 percent of that time. Overall 97 percent students from master's programs preparing for ARNP roles completed in the allotted time and 75 percent of MSN students completed in the allotted time. DNP programs reported 95 percent completion rates. Two graduate programs reported 100 percent completion rates at 150 percent of the chosen allotted time. The variations in completion rates may be related to the structure of the programs or to students' choice for slower progression plans because of personal or economic concerns.

Table 5: in-state graduate program completion rates by program

Program Type	100 Percent Allotted Time	150 Percent Allotted Time
ADMS	99 percent	100 percent
MSN ARNP	97 percent	100 percent
MSN	75 percent	97 percent
PMCN	77 percent	92 percent
DNP	95 percent	99 percent

Graduate Degree Specialties

The graduates prepared in different specialty areas meet needs across the state in primary care, education, research, and other areas of practice. The graduates by program and specialty area are outlined below. Programs reported graduates from seven types of programs and 12 different specialty areas. There were 194 graduates from MSN programs with a specialty in education (ED) There were 305 graduates from both MSN and DNP programs with a specialty in administration/leadership (AD), and78 described as other. Graduates from programs preparing nurses for the ARNP included 150 from MSN and 236 from DNP programs. The most common specialty area for graduates of ARNP programs was the family nurse practitioner (FNP). Other specialties include; clinical nurse specialist (CNS), adult nurse practitioner (ANP), mental health nurse practitioner (MHNP), pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP), geriatric nurse practitioner (GNP), nurse midwife (MW), and nurse anesthetist (ANES).

Table 6: in-state graduates by program and specialty area

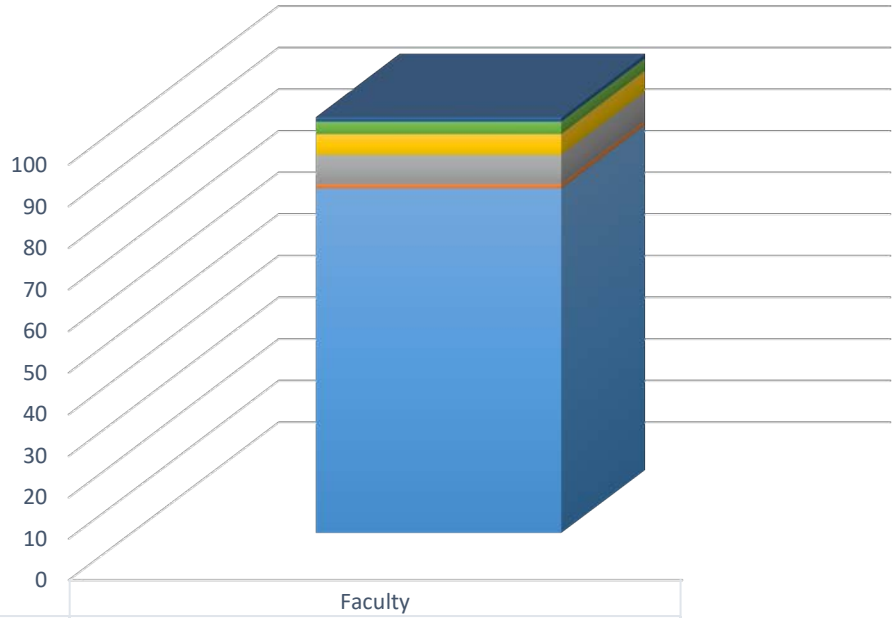
Type	INF	CNS	FNP	ANP	MHNP	PNP	GNP	MW	ANES	ED	AD	Oth	Total
ADMS	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	128	195	0	**327**
ARNP MS	0	0	103	5	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**150**
MSN	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69	106	15	**220**
PMCN	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	**13**
Pre ARNP DNP	0	4	80	35	32	13	0	9	19	0	0	12	**204**
Post ARNP DNP	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	11	16	**32**
Totals	**33**	**4**	**189**	**41**	**76**	**13**	**0**	**9**	**19**	**194**	**305**	**78**	**961**

Faculty and Student Ethnicity

Eighty-three percent of combined full-time and part-time faculty members are white/ Caucasian, 7 percent Asian, 0 percent Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, 5 percent black/ African American, 3 percent Hispanic/Latino, 1 percent mixed race, and 1 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native. Nursing programs reported 1152 faculty members employed during 2018-2019 academic year. There were 575 full-time faculty members and 577 part-time faculty

members. The missing or unknown ethnicity data were not included in the percentage calculations below.

Figure 5: percent race/ethnicity faculty



	Faculty
Mixed Race	1
Hispanic/ Latino	3
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0
Black/ African American	5
Asian	7
American Indian / Alaskan Native	1
White Caucasian	83

Nursing Faculty

An increase in the overall education of the nursing workforce will require increased numbers of nursing faculty members to provide the increase in education. Washington state regulations require a minimum of a master's degree in nursing, or a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in a related field, to teach registered nursing. Practical nursing faculty members must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in nursing. Washington state nursing programs are experiencing increasing difficulty in hiring nursing faculty members.

Nursing programs continue to explore strategies to attract and retain nursing faculty members. Workload adjustment, sharing faculty, support for ongoing academic endeavors, and professional development are the major strategies reported to address the problem.

House Bill 2158 passed in early 2019 and it allocated approximately 40 million dollars over two years to the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to increase the salaries of nurse educators. The goal of the funding was to recruit and retain nursing educators in the CTC system, meet student demand, and to decrease the rapid turnover of nursing faculty and directors and deans in nursing education programs. The premise was if the gap between salaries for nurse educators and nurses in industry was decreased, nurses who desire to teach would no longer have economic barriers.

Full-Time Faculty Turnover

There were 87 open full-time nursing faculty positions in active recruitment during 2018-2019, representing 15 percent (87/593) of all full-time faculty positions for both CTC and Universities. Community college nursing programs reported 25 percent (48/194) of their full-time nursing faculty members are anticipating retiring in the next five years. University programs reported retirements of 22 percent (87/399). Additional factors adding to the difficulties are resignations and orientation of new faculty members. Sixteen percent (31/194) of the full-time faculty at CTC and 5 percent (19/399) at universities resigned in the previous year. Eighteen percent (34/19) of faculty members at community colleges were in their first year of employment during 2018-2019 compared to 12 percent (49/399) in the university programs.

Given the successful funding for nursing faculty salaries and the difficulty nursing programs have had finding nursing faculty members, tracking this information will help us determine if increased salaries for CTC faculty relieved some of the nursing faculty shortage.

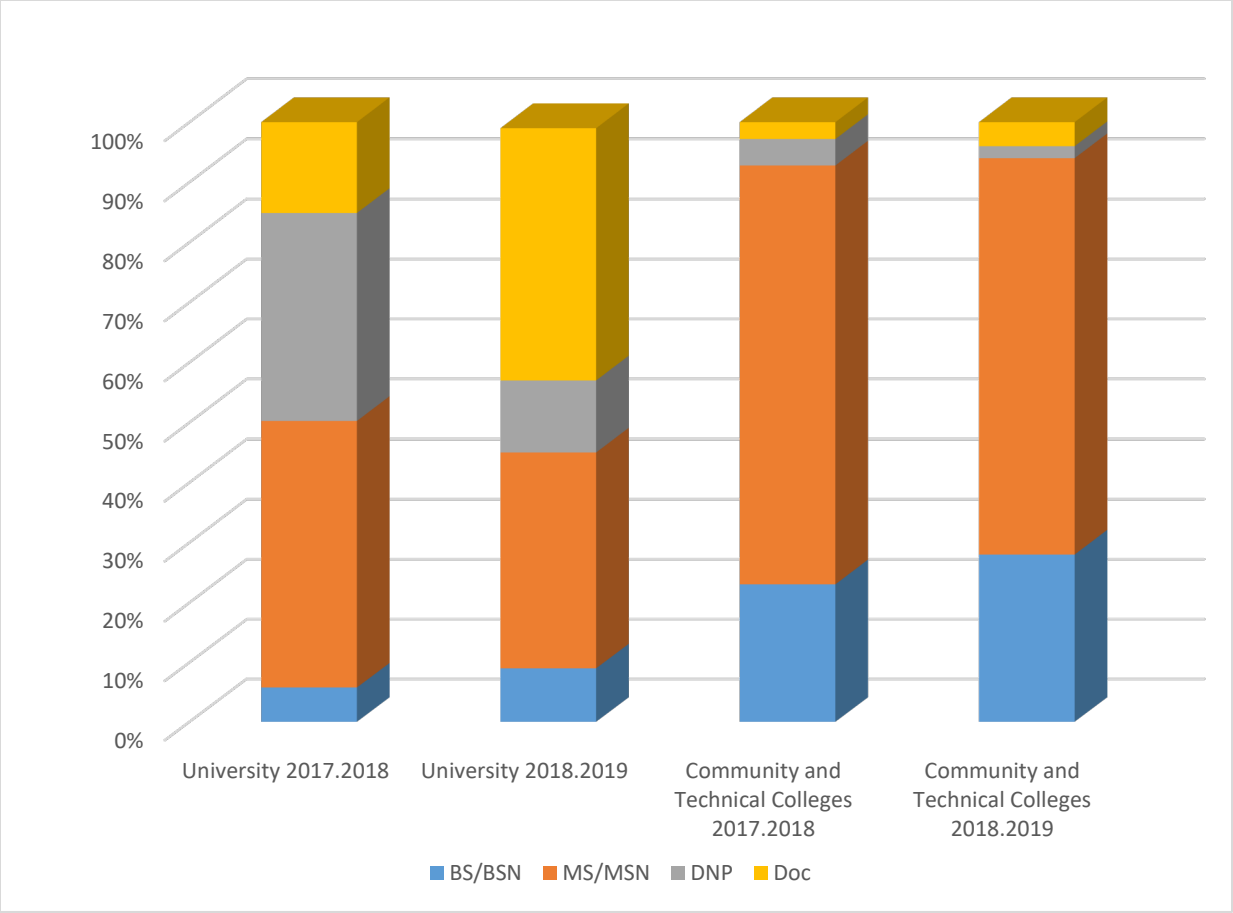
Table 7: full-time faculty turnover comparison 2018-2019

Organization	Expected to Retire in 5 years	Resigned	First Year of Employment
Community and Technical College	25 percent (48/194)	16 percent (31/194)	18 percent (34/194)
University	22 percent (87/399)	5 percent (19/399)	12 percent (49/399)

Faculty Education

Thirty-six percent of nursing faculty members at universities are prepared at the master's level and 54 percent at the doctoral level, a slight increase in overall education level of faculty since the previous year. Community and technical colleges have 66 percent of their faculty prepared at the MSN and 8 percent at the doctorate level, showing little change from the previous year. The figure below illustrates the difference in faculty preparation between community colleges and universities in 2017-2018 compared to 2018-2019.

Figure 7: faculty level of education 2017-2018 and 2018-2019



A barrier to successful recruitment and retention of nursing faculty members is inadequate compensation. Respondents answered the following questions. What are the contract lengths and associated salary ranges for your full-time nursing faculty? Please do not include time for non-teaching activities such as administration. The largest number of programs reported nine-month contracts with the lowest average nine-month salary reported as $58,007 and the highest $98,131. The average salary ranges for nine- and 12-month contracts at community colleges and universities are reported below. Community and technical college faculty members' average nine-month salary range was $58,007 to $66,324. The university average faculty nine-month salary range was $64,062 to $98,131.

At the time nursing programs were completing the annual report negotiations between the labor unions and college administration were occurring regarding the HB 2158 funds to be used for increasing nurse educator funds. The goal was to increase nurse educator salaries by 26.5 percent. The impact of the nurse educator funding will not be fully known until the 2019-2020 annual survey.

Table 8: average full-time faculty salary ranges

Contract Length	Organization	Low	High
Nine-Month	Community College	$58,007	$66,324
Nine-Month	University	$64,062	$98,131
12-Month	Community College	$65,603	$76,251
12-Month	University	$79,981	$113,300

Respondents answered similar questions for part-time faculty. What are the contract lengths and associated salary ranges for your part-time nursing faculty? The ranges are provided separately for Universities and Community Colleges for the contract lengths of three, six, nine, and twelve month average salary ranges.

Table 9: average part-time faculty salary ranges

Organization	Contract Length	Low	High
Community College	Three-Month	$5,567	$9,532
University	Three-Month	$3,407	$12,760
Community College	Six-Month	$5,566	$19,391
University	Six-Month	$9,855	$21,532
Community College	Nine-Month	$30,182	$40,702
University	Nine-Month	$28,733	$58,370
Community College	12-Month	$56,783	$67,108
University	12-Month	$51,500	$84,735

Out-of-State Programs

The out-of-state nursing program approval process for student clinical placement in Washington state began 2012. The out-of-state survey is completed annually by all out-of-state nursing programs approved for clinical placement. It is combined with the data from in-state programs to offer a more complete picture of nursing education program capacity in the state.

Because the approval process relates to clinical placements only, the data gathered are different from that gathered from the in-state programs. The numbers of programs approved reflect the self-report of the institutions. Although accuracy has improved every year, it is a challenge to assure programs complete the survey accurately. The student numbers reflect

student clinical placement only and do not include graduation numbers. Although many of these students may remain in the state after graduation, we do not track retention and graduation rates. Seventy-seven nursing schools approved for clinical placement in Washington state completed the survey.

Table 10: approved out-of-state programs and student clinical placements

College/University (77 total)	Total Programs	Total Clinical Students
Undergraduate	70	1218
Graduate	185	1043
Totals	**255**	**2261**

Out-of-State Student Statistics

Approved out-of-state programs placed 2,261 students in clinical site placements across 255 programs in the 2018-2019 academic year, an increase from 1,714 students in 2017-2018.

Table 11: number of students with clinical site placement from out-of-state programs

Academic Year	PN	AD-RN	BSN	RNB	AD-MS	GE	MSN	ARNP-MN	PMCN	DNP	PhD	Total
2014-2015	25	89	323	105	15	0	180	110	18	31	0	904
2015-2016	25	159	349	142	8	2	162	125	12	33	0	1,017
2016-2017	48	198	354	249	19	0	313	137	31	66	2	1,417
2017-2018	126	309	400	163	6	0	440	145	40	85	0	1,714
2018-2019	168	276	534	240	4	8	139	516	185	191	0	2,261

Forty-one of the programs with clinical students in Washington state prepare graduates for PN or RN licensure. There are three licensed practical nurse (PN) programs and six AD-RN programs. Twenty-eight schools have students in bachelor-of-science in nursing (BSN) programs. Four approved schools offer a graduate entry (GE) option.

The remaining programs prepare graduates to advance their education post-RN licensure. There are 33 RNB programs, six AD to MS, 41 ARNP and 41 other master's programs. Finally, there are 34 post-master's certificate programs (PMCN), 51 doctoral of nursing practice (DNP) and eight Ph.D. programs. Table 12 outlines the total number of programs by type.

Table 12: number and types of out-of-state programs with clinical site placements

Academic Year	PN	AD-RN	BSN	RNB	AD-MS	GE	MSN	ARNP-MN	PMCN	DNP	PhD	Oth	Total
2014-2015	2	5	19	9	7	5	24	24	20	25	5		148
2015-2016	3	5	21	12	5	1	27	29	23	28	4	2	160
2016-2017	4	6	28	22	14	3	35	39	30	42	8	1	232
2017-2018	4	6	30	19	5	1	37	38	32	39	7	1	219
2018-2019	3	6	28	33	6	4	41	41	34	51	8	3	255

Analysis

Washington state nurse educators made the commitment in 2011 for a higher educated and more diverse nursing workforce, when the Council for Nurse Education in Washington state (CNEWS) and the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN) collaborated to develop a Master Plan for Nursing Education (WCN, 2014). This report highlights trends in the direction to meet the goals.

Academic Progression

Access to academic progression for nurses at all levels from PN to PhD is important. The progress toward a higher educated workforce continues to accelerate. There is increased availability of a smooth pathway for community colleges and universities to collaborate on programs providing students rapid and seamless progression to the BSN. Nurse educators in Washington have also responded with increased enrollments and education capacity in BSN, RNB and graduate programs.

The recent addition of new RNB programs at both universities and CTCs, and expansion of current RNB programs, has resulted in significant increases in enrollment and graduations. Four community colleges offer RNB programs and more community colleges are considering this option.

Enrollment and graduations in graduate programs have shown impressive increases responding to the shortage of nurse faculty, primary care providers, and researchers. Our state mirrors

national trends with more ARNP students moving to DNP programs from MSN programs. Approval of out-of-state programs for clinical placements helps ensure quality and additional capacity in high-need areas.

Nursing Workforce Data

The Nursing Commission implemented a rule in January 2018 requiring all nurses to complete a demographic survey at new licensure or license renewal. Consequently, starting in 2020 accurate and complete nursing supply data will be available to more precisely plan for the effect of regional and national trends. The availability of this important data will provide a previously absent ability to monitor progress and evaluate successful strategies.

Faculty

Meeting state nursing workforce needs, and educational advancement requires a sufficient, robust, and diverse faculty pool. The Action Now! Initiative — launched by the Council for Nursing Education in Washington state (CNEWS), the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC), and the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN) — is working with practice partners and other stakeholders toward solutions to many nursing education challenges. This group has identified ensuring a sufficient, robust, and diverse faculty pool as a No. 1 priority. Analysis of the NCQAC Nursing Annual Report reinforces the urgency of the faculty need.

Meeting state (WAC 246-840-523, WAC 246-840- 524, WAC 246-840-526, WAC 246-840-527 and WAC 246-840-528) and national accreditation standards for a master's degree in CTC and a doctorate in universities will require an increase in the educational preparation of faculty. Figure seven above shows how many faculty must complete graduate studies potentially accruing additional debt and further straining income inequities. In addition to the imperative to increase nursing faculty education level, there are impending retirements and vacancies.

Providing a nursing faculty workforce that reflects the diversity of their students and the population of Washington state is essential. A diverse nursing workforce can help improve patient and population health outcomes, particularly with regard to reducing disparities in health (Williams, SD et al., 2014).

The faculty turnover numbers are alarming. They warrant sustained and aggressive measures to prevent even more shortages. We must act now to increase the number of full-time nurse educators by providing comparable salaries with nursing practice, so we can recruit and retain nursing faculty.

The impact of the increase in nurse educator salaries in the CTC system will be closely assessed in future annual reports. Metrics used will include number of open faculty positions, length of recruitment efforts, director/dean faculty turnover rates, and increases in student enrollment.

Recommendations

Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Continue to support work to increase University faculty salaries, examine workload. Support sustain current funding level and additional education for faculty.

Workforce Data

Develop a strategic plan to assure the right mix of nurses to meet the needs of Washington state residents, using supply, demand, and education data to inform actions, meet goals and evaluate progress.

Conclusions

Now is the time to take bold steps to accelerate our progress in providing the right educational mix of nurses for safe and high-quality care in Washington state. Multiple education pathways in nursing can be a challenge, but they also provide multiple opportunities to increase the overall education level of nurses. Across settings, nurses are being called upon to coordinate care and to collaborate with a variety of health professionals, including physicians, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, and pharmacists, most of whom hold master's or doctoral degrees. (IOM 2011) The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health. RNB, master's, and doctoral enrollments and graduations have continued to increase, significantly adding to a higher educated workforce, but we must continue to accelerate our progress to meet the growing health care needs of the residents in Washington state.

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