

Annual Report  
Nebraska Center for  
Nursing  
2015

REGISTERED NURSES  
LICENSED PRACTICAL  
NURSES  
NURSING FACULTY

## The Nebraska Center for Nursing

[www.center4nursing.com](http://www.center4nursing.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

The Nebraska Center for Nursing has been analyzing nursing workforce data, since the year 2000, collected from the renewal surveys completed by Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) when renewing their respective nursing licenses. These surveys are analyzed considering only those nurses who work in the State of Nebraska<sup>1</sup> to provide clear demographic estimates of the nursing workforce providing health care to the citizens of the State.

The Renewal Surveys are collected by the Nebraska DHHS Licensure Unit both in digital and paper formats, gathering information that includes demographic data, job location, work settings, and satisfaction levels regarding the nursing profession and workplaces. The Renewal Surveys are in compliance with the minimum datasets required by national association of nurses. The Center also compiles and analyzes faculty and student data collected from the Nursing Colleges' Annual Reports which are merged with the renewal surveys for further analysis.

The current **2015 Annual Report of the Nebraska Center for Nursing** shows the workforce data outcomes of the 2014 RN and 2013 LPN Renewal Surveys<sup>2</sup>, along with statistics of the 2013 Nursing Faculty. Outcomes are compared with historical data to show trends over time. Both renewal surveys contain nearly 30 questions, which can be cross-tabulated, enriching the statistical analysis of the workforce data. The Nebraska Center for Nursing invites nurses and the general

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<sup>1</sup> The Nebraska DHHS Licensure Unit licenses nurses who work in and out of the State of Nebraska.

<sup>2</sup> RN data is collected on even years and LPN data on odd years.

public interested in these databases to request additional information by directly contacting the Executive Director of the Center, Karen Bowen, at [Karen.bowen@nebraska.gov](mailto:Karen.bowen@nebraska.gov).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nursing workforce continues to expand in the State of Nebraska, although most of the growth has been concentrated in metropolitan areas, as in the cities of Lincoln and Omaha. This contrasts with rural Nebraska where there is a number of counties without a presence of nurses (RNs or LPNs).

The average age of RNs has kept quite stable over the years, with a minimum average age of 43.3 in 2004 and a maximum average of 44.7 years in 2010. The current (2014) average age is 43.6 years, and nationwide the average age is 44.6 years (HRSA, 2013) <sup>3</sup>.

The percent of males within Registered Nurses has steadily increased over the years, reaching a high of 6% in the year 2014. The opposite has occurred within Licensed Practical Nurses, where males in the year 2013 only represented 2.9% of the total population of LPNs. The percentage of males within RNs is still lower than the national average (9.1%). RNs who are considered minorities have also increased over the years, from 3.1% in the year 2000, to 6% in the year 2014. At the state level, 19% of the population is considered a minority<sup>4</sup>. Nationwide, 14.8% of RNs are considered minorities (HRSA, 2013).

In terms of education attainment, RNs with bachelor degrees have increased nearly 10% from the year 2008 to the year 2014 (51.3% vs. 61.0%, respectively). At the national level, just 44.6% of RNs hold a bachelor degree. Also, RNs with doctoral degrees have more than doubled, from 74 RNs with doctoral degrees in 2003 to a total of 163 RNs in 2014 (120% growth). Overall, RNs holding masters

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<sup>3</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). The US nursing workforce: Trends in supply and education. (<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/supplydemand/nursing/nursingworkforce/nursingworkforcefullreport.pdf>)

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2013 estimates).

and doctoral degrees represent 10.6% of the workforce, which is similar to the national statistics (HRSA, 2013).

Nearly six out of ten RNs work in Hospitals (57.6%) which is slightly lower than the national data (63.2%; HRSA, 2013). Only 13% of Nebraska LPNs work in hospitals. In comparison, at the national level, 29.3% of LPNs work in hospitals. Nearly four out of ten LPNs work in Nursing Homes/Extended Care/ Assisted Living Facility (42.7%).

A total of 591 faculty work in Nebraska (Nursing Colleges' Annual Reports, 2013). The average age for all Nebraska nursing faculty is 50 years old, nearly six and half years older than the average age of Nebraska RNs.

## 2014 RN RENEWAL SURVEY

A total of 21,015 online surveys were analyzed. This total represents RNs who work in the State of Nebraska. When warranted, results are compared with 2012 or earlier RN Renewal Survey results.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### AGE

The average age of RNs in Nebraska is **43.6** years of age. Nurses 40 years old or younger have proportionally increased in comparison to the 2012 Renewal Survey (45.8% vs. 42.2%, respectively). On the contrary, for cohorts over 40 the opposite is shown, especially for those over 70 years of age who seem to start retiring at a higher rate than in previous years. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: **RNs by age 2012-2014**



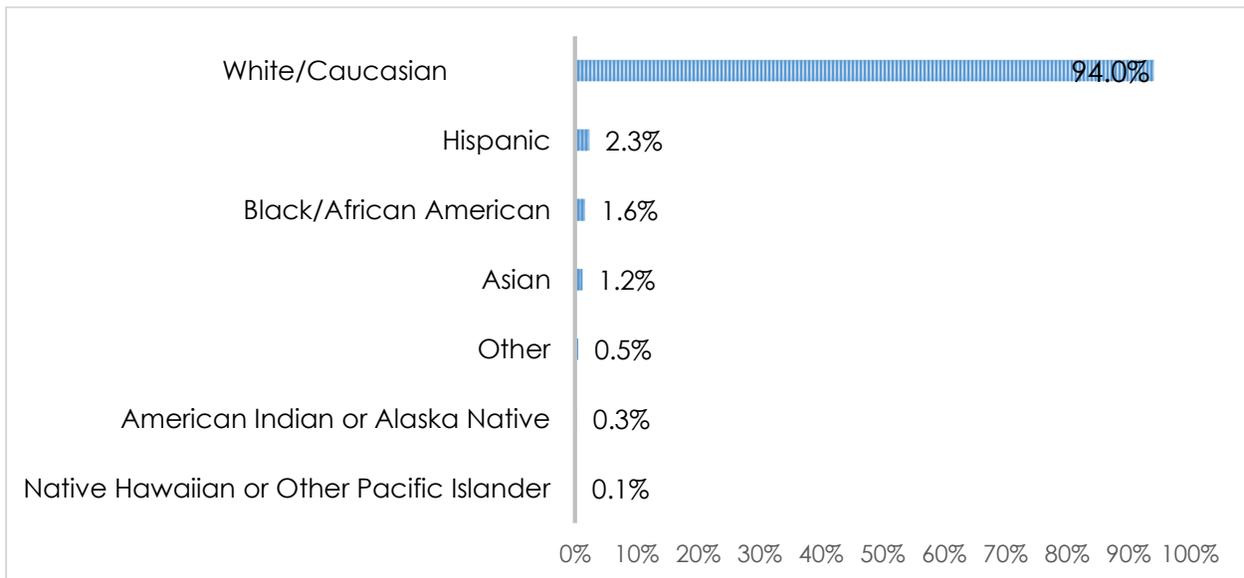
When comparing average age since the year 2000, no major differences were found; the highest average age was in 2010 (44.7 years of age), and the lowest in 2004 (43.3 years of age).

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## RACE/ETHNICITY

Percentage of RNs who are considered a minority (i.e., African Americans, Native Americans, Asian, Hispanics,) has grown over time. In the year 2000, **3.1%** of the nursing workforce was racially/ethnically considered a minority. Currently, **6%** of RNs are minorities. Although this percentage is still lower than the national statistics, it shows that over time the presence of minorities in the State of Nebraska has steadily grown, as has also been the statewide trends. Hispanic represents the highest ethnic group among minorities (2.3%), followed by Asians (1.2%). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: **Race/Ethnicity**

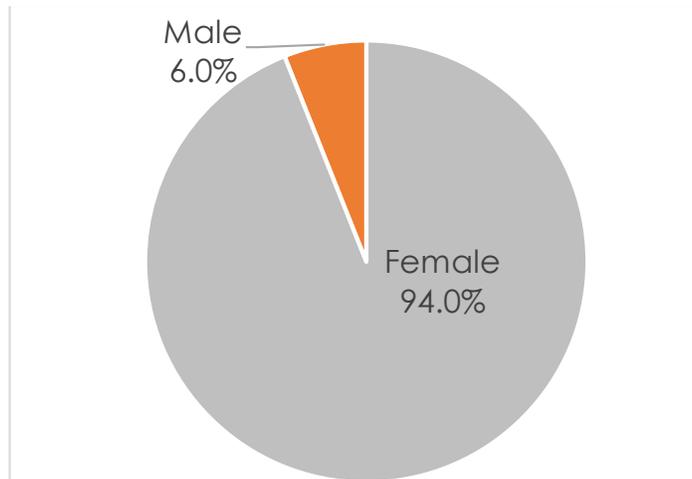


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## GENDER

The presence of men in the nursing profession has also grown over time, and again at a lower percentage than the national trends, but the trend has always been positive. Currently, **6.0%** of RNs are male. Figure 3. Comparatively, in the year 2000 only **4.1%** of the nursing workforce were males.

Figure 3: **Gender Distribution**

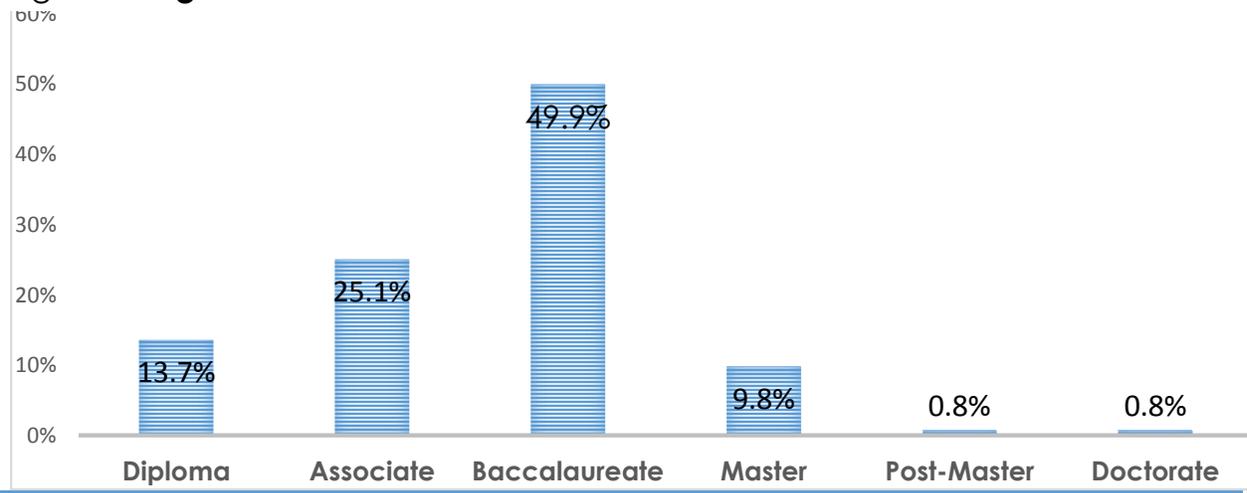


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## EDUCATION

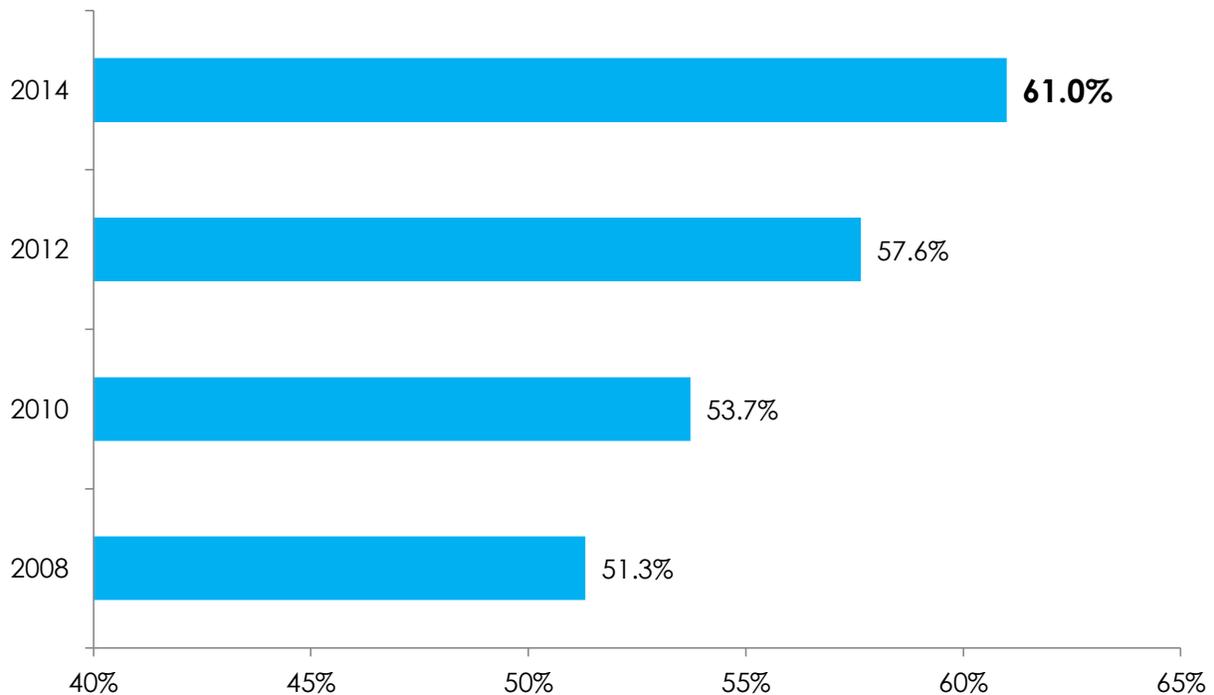
Educational levels among nurses have increased over the years, especially those who hold a Baccalaureate degree. Doctoral degrees have also increased among RNs. According to the 2014 RN Renewal Survey, there are 163 nurses (0.8%) with doctoral degrees (DNPs, EdDs, and Ph.Ds.) working in the State of Nebraska. In comparison, there were only 74 nurses with doctoral degrees in the year 2003. Figure 4 shows the highest level of education held by RNs (2014).

Figure 4: **Highest Level of Education**



One of the goals of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) is to achieve 80% of nurses who hold a Bachelors degree in the year 2020. The following chart shows the percentage of RNs who hold a bachelor degree (it includes all RNs with higher degrees) in the last six years (Renewal Surveys 2008 – 2014). RNs who hold at least a bachelor degree have increased 10% during that time period (51.3% to 61%, respectively). See Figure 5.

Figure 5: **RNs with Baccalaureate Degree**



TYPE OF SETTING

The 2014 Renewal Survey lists 16 working nurse practice positions. **Hospitals** represent the main setting where RNs carry out their work (**57.6%**), followed by Physician's Office/Health Clinic (9.9%), and then by Nursing Home/Extended Care (8.4%). Only 0.4% of RNs are self-employed, and just 1% of them work in either Public or Community Health. Less than 3% of RNs work in academic settings. See Figure 6. In the year 2000, 51% of RNs used to work in Hospitals. Figure 7 shows the percentage of RNs employed in Hospitals since the year 2000.

Figure 6: **Type of Setting Primary Nursing Practice Position**

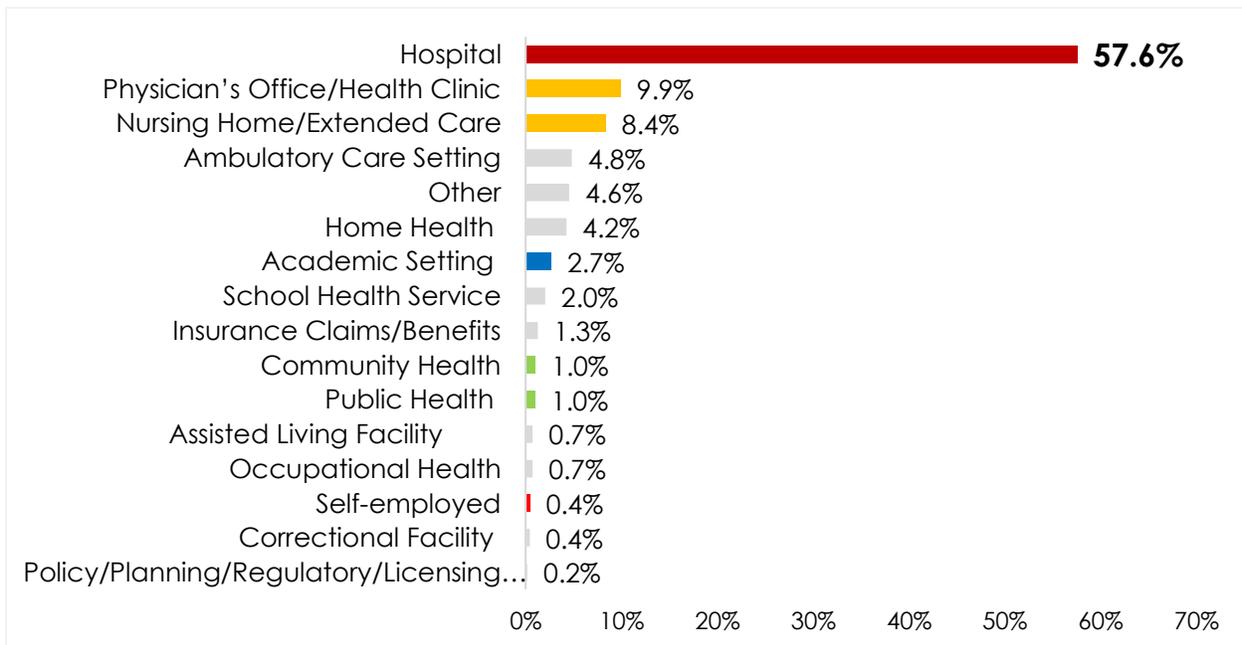
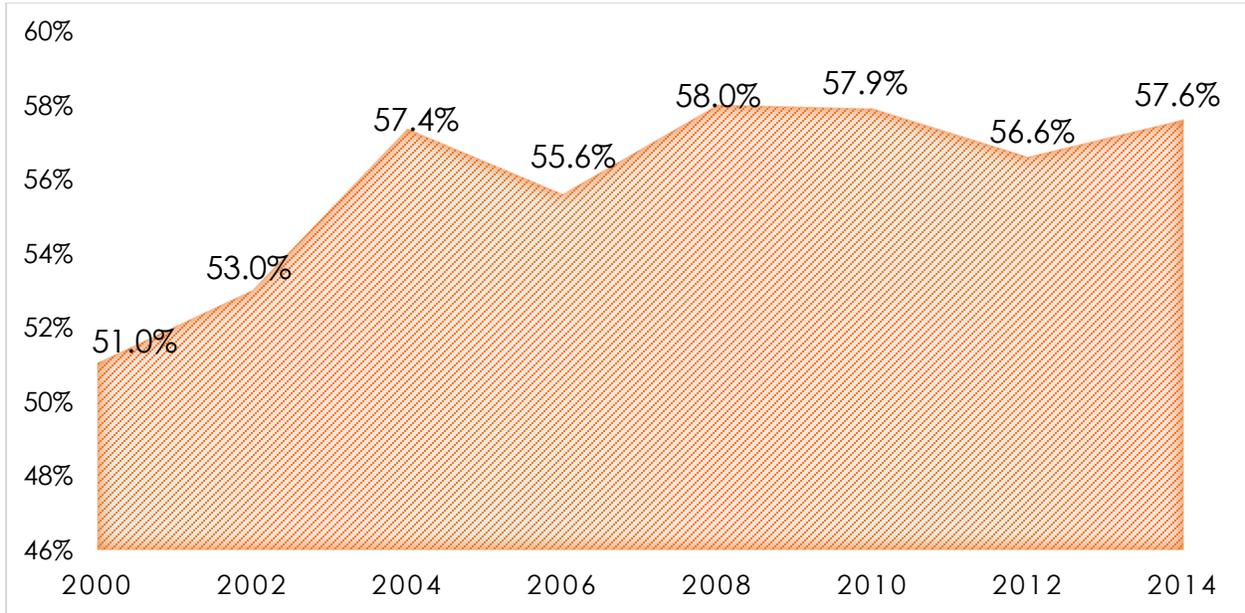
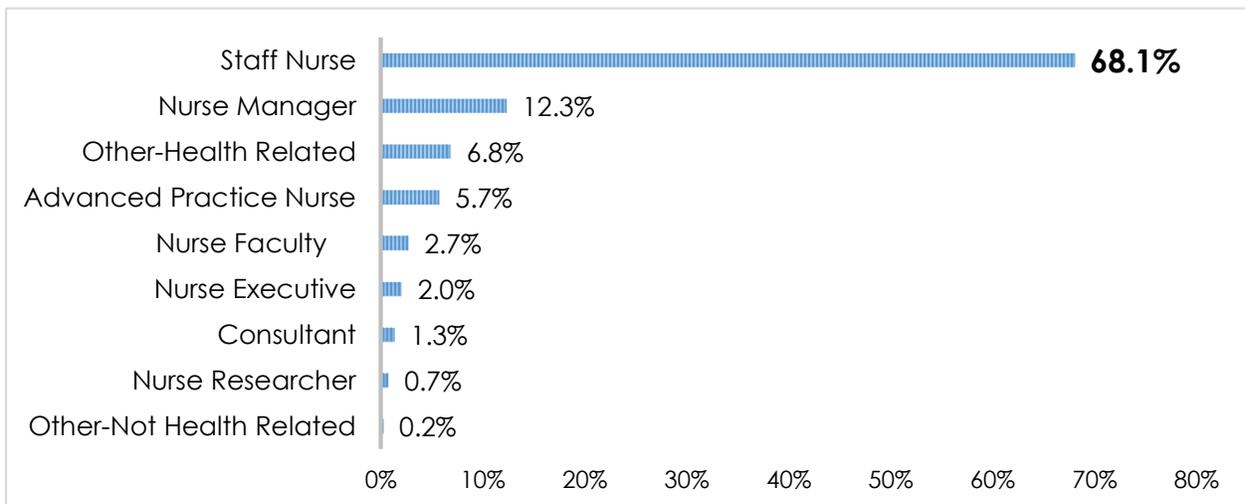


Figure 7: **Hospital: Percent of Employment (2000 – 2014)**



Nearly two-thirds of RNs work as “Staff Nurse” (68.1%), followed by “Nurse Manager” (12.3%), and then by “Other-Health Related” position (6.8%). See Figure 8. Nearly four out of ten RNs who hold positions as a Nurse Manager work in Hospitals (39.3%).

Figure 8: **RN Position Title**

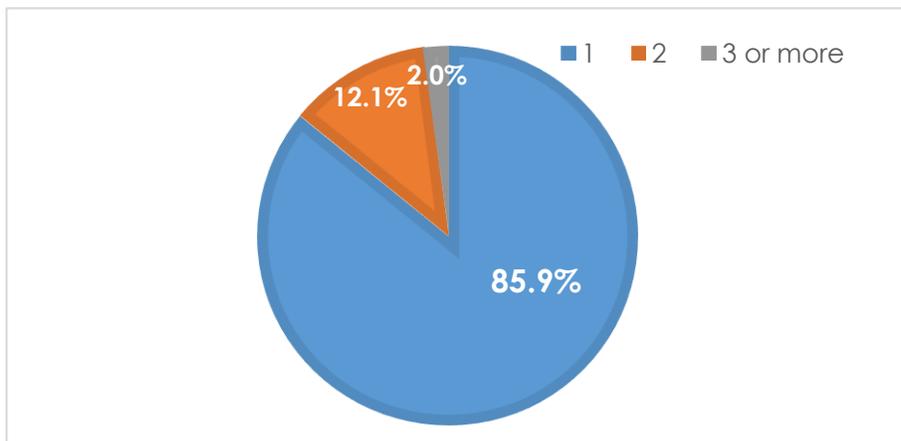


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## EMPLOYMENT

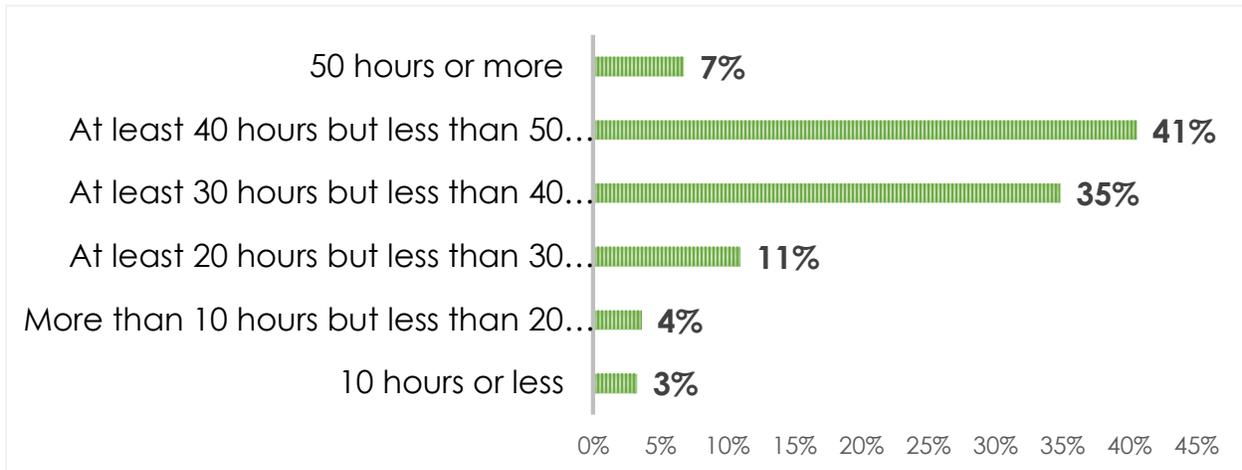
The majority of RNs work for one employer (85.9%), and just two percent work for three or more employers. Figure 9. Those who work for one employer, 45% are full-time employees (work over 40 hours/week). Those who work for three or more employers, 62% of nurses are full-time employees, and the majority (52%) work in Hospitals, followed by 9%, who work in Nursing Home/Extended Care.

*Figure 9: Number of Positions Currently Employed as a Nurse*



Overall, nearly five out of ten RNs work 40 hours a week or more, and nearly two out of ten RNs work less than or equal to 20 hours a week. See Figure 10. Just 7% of RNs work 50 hours or more per week, although this still represents a staggering number of 1,374 RNs. Eight percent of them work in academic settings, which is quite relevant considering that this activity only represents 2.7% of all RNs' professional settings, as shown in Figure 6 (page 12).

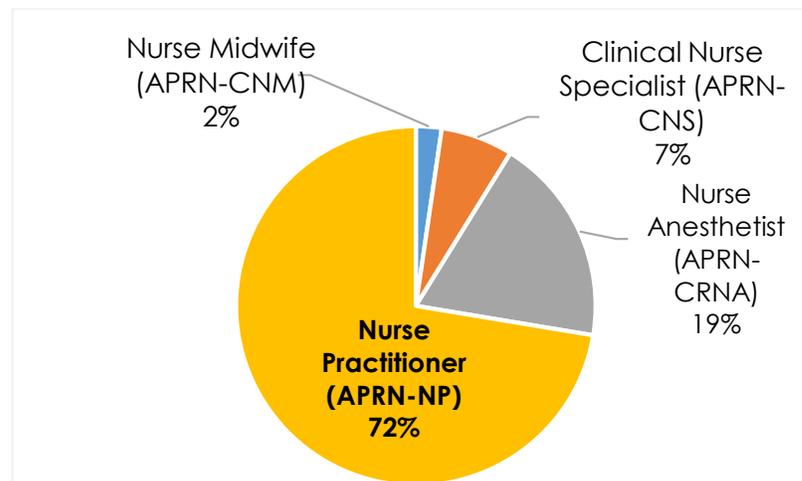
Figure 10: **Hours worked per week**



**ADVANCE PRACTICE ROLE**

According to the 2014 RN Renewal Survey, there are 1,383 RNs working in Nebraska licensed with an advanced practice role. Nearly seven out of ten RNs who hold an advance practice role are Nurse Practitioners (72%), followed by Nurse Anesthetist (19%), Clinical Nurse Specialist (7%), and then by Nurse Midwife (2%). See Figure 11.

Figure 11: **RNs Advanced Practice Role**

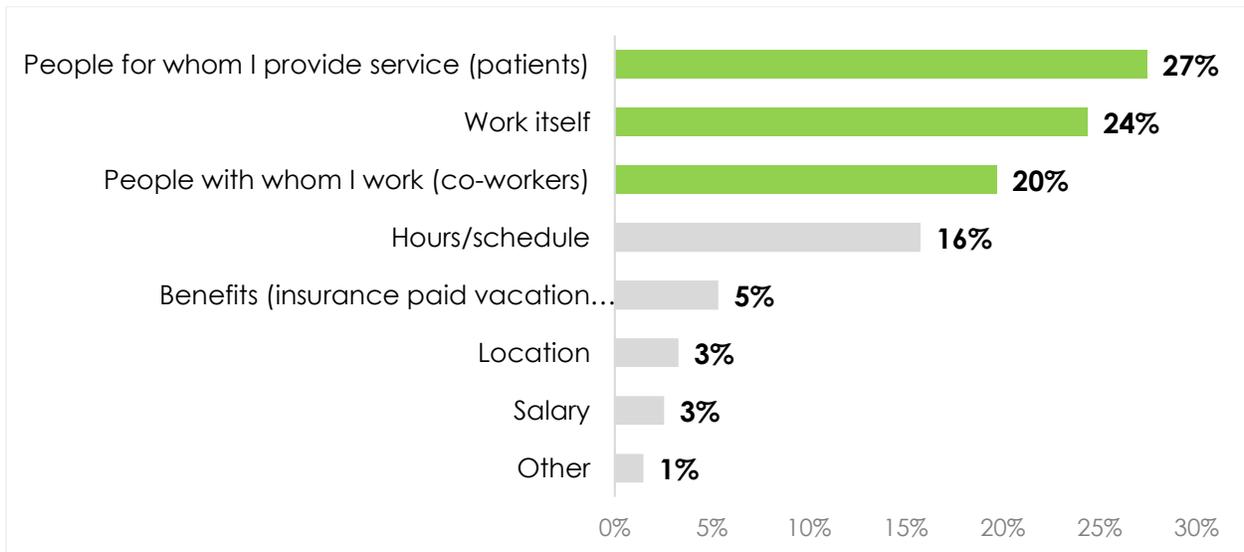


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## SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH EMPLOYMENT

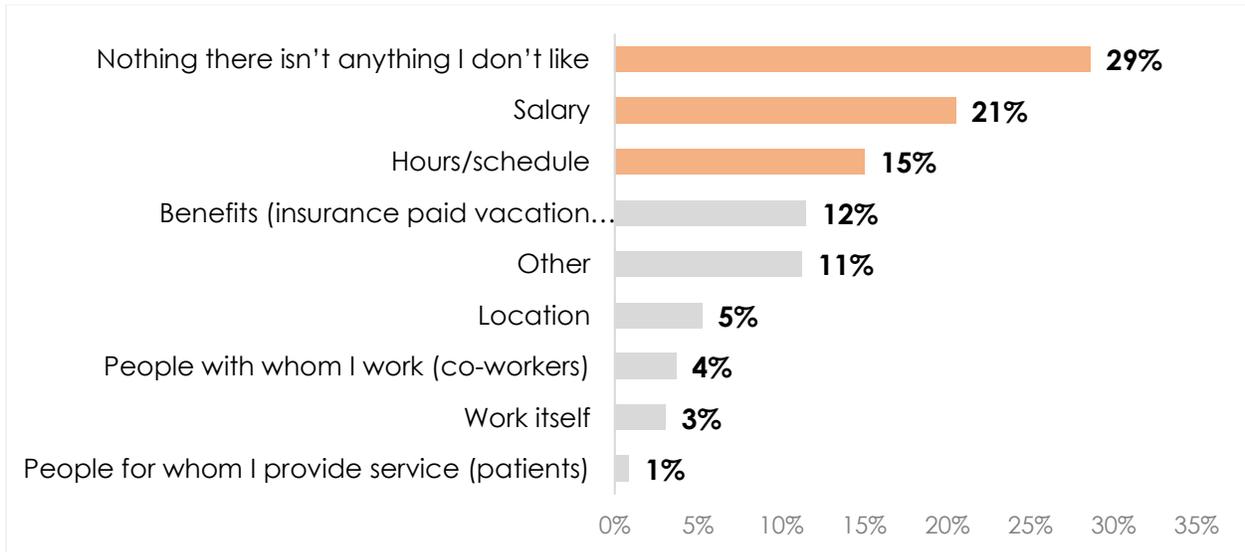
One-fourth of RNs indicated that what they like the **most** about their job is to provide services to patients (27%), followed by Work itself (24%), and then by the People with whom they work (co-workers) (20%). See Figure 12.

Figure 12: **What do you like MOST about your principal nursing employment?**



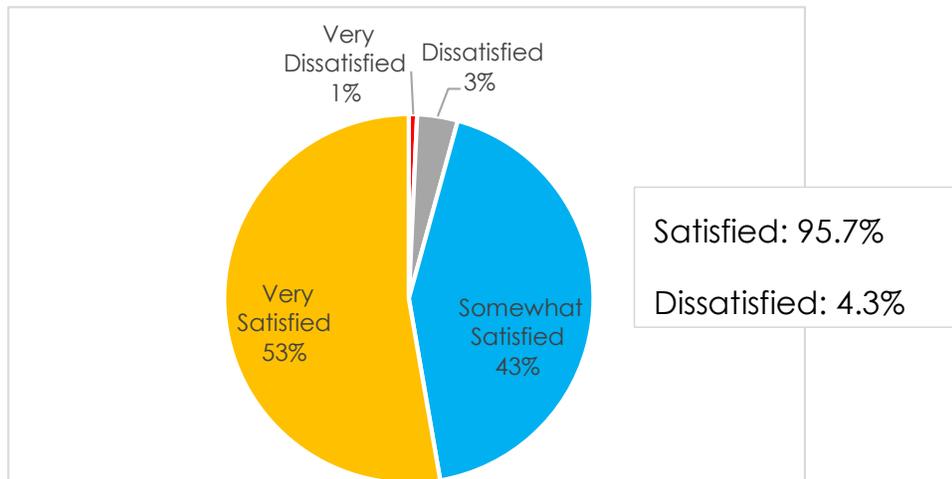
When RNs were asked about what they like the **least**, nearly three out of ten indicated that there is nothing they do not like (29%), followed by Salary (21%), and then by Hours/schedule (15%). See Figure 13.

Figure 13: **What do you like the LEAST about your principal nursing employment?**



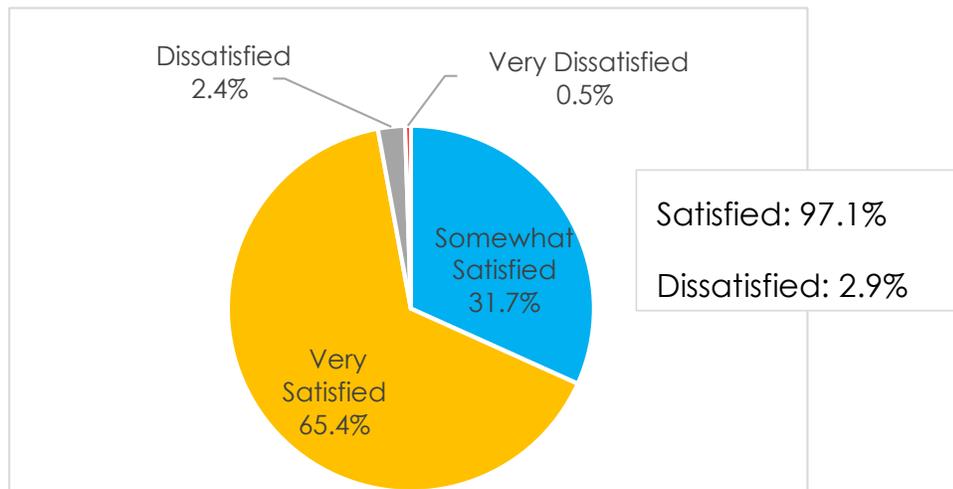
RNs were asked how satisfied they are with their current job. One out of two nurses indicate that they are “Very satisfied” with their jobs (52.7%). Only 0.7% of nurses indicated that they were “Very dissatisfied” with their current job. When merging positive remarks about their jobs (i.e., “Very satisfied” and “Somewhat satisfied”), a total of **95.7%** of RNs feel satisfied with their current jobs. See Figure 14.

Figure 14: **How satisfied are you with your current job?**



RNs were also asked how satisfied they are with nursing as a career. Nearly two-thirds of RNs answered that they were “Very satisfied” (65.4%), followed by “Somewhat satisfied” (31.7%). Overall, 2.9% of RNs answered that they were not satisfied with their career. See Figure 15.

Figure 15: **How satisfied are you with nursing as a career?**



A high proportion of RNs indicate that they would encourage others to choose nursing as a career (87.2%), and 85% of RNs would do it over if they had the opportunity to choose nursing as a career again. When comparing with previous renewal surveys, these percentages are quite consistent, even when facing difficult workforce challenges such as nursing shortages. See Figures 16 and 17.

Figure 16: **Encourage others to choose nursing as a career.**

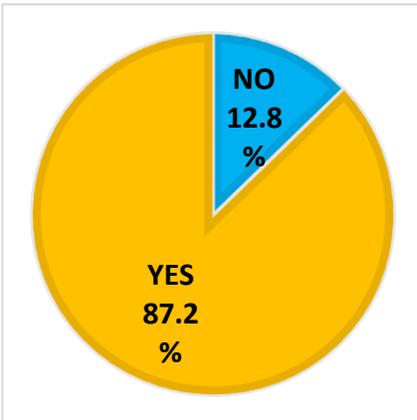
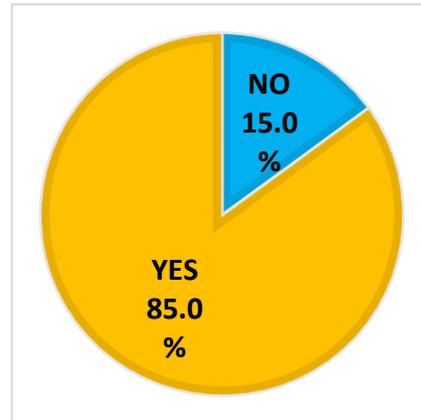
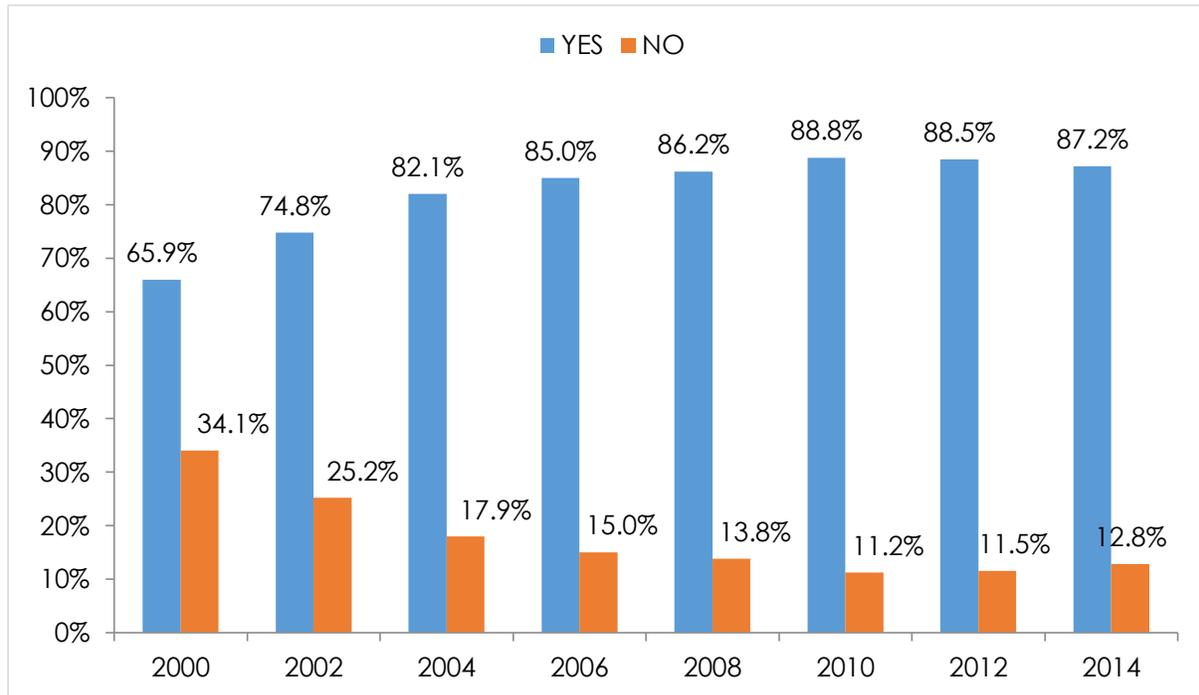


Figure 17: **Would you choose nursing as a career again?**



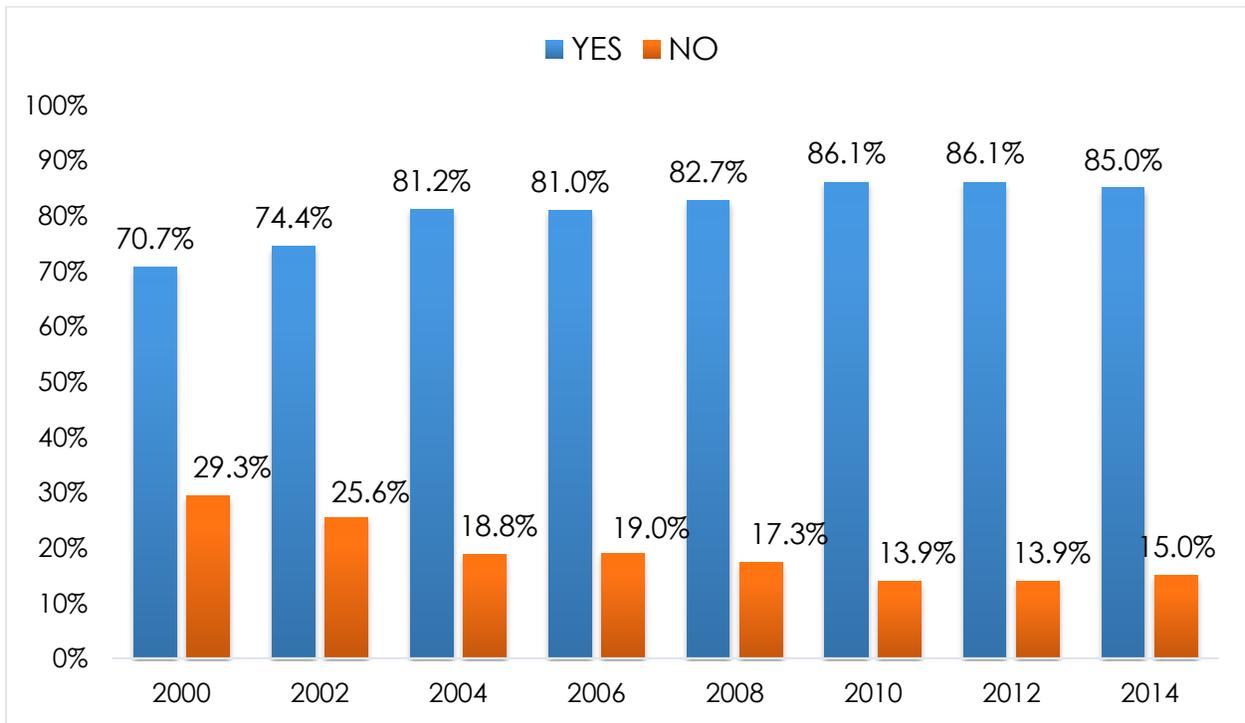
Historical trends (Renewal Surveys 2000 – 2014) show that an increasing number of nurses would have encouraged others to choose nursing as a career, or would have chosen nursing if they had to do it over. For instance, encouraging others to choose nursing as a career increased from **65.9%** in the year 2000 to an historical high of **88.5%** in the year 2010. Figure 18.

Figure 18: **Encourage others to choose nursing as career 2000 - 2014**



In the year 2000, only 70% of RNs indicated that they would have chosen nursing as a career. As shown in Figure 19, that percentage increased to 85% in the year 2014 (differences are statistically significant).

Figure 19: **Would you chose nursing as a career again 2000 - 2014**







## 2013 LPN RENEWAL SURVEY

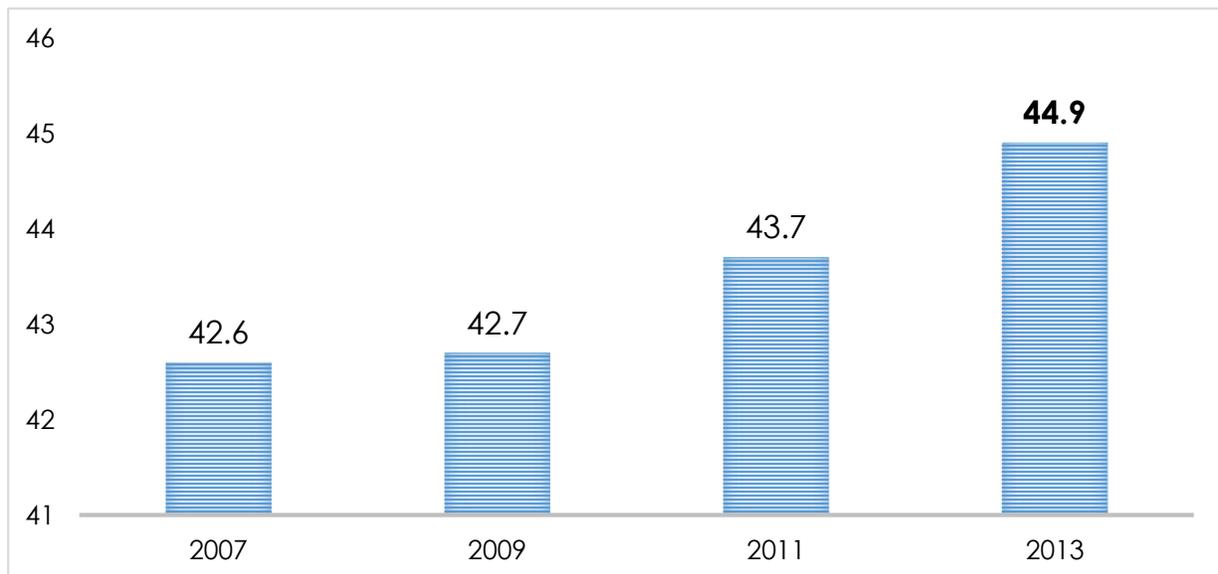
A total of 5,475 surveys were analyzed (online: 88.8%; paper: 11.2%). Similar to RN's data analysis, only surveys from LPNs who work in Nebraska were considered for analysis. When warranted, results are compared with 2011 or earlier LPN Renewal Survey results.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

#### AGE

The average age of LPNs in Nebraska is 44.9 years of age. In 2007, the average age for LPNs was 42.6 years of age. See Figure 22. In 2013, 39.3% of LPNs were 40 years of age or younger, which is lower when comparing to the results in 2011 (42.4%), and when comparing to the RN results in 2014 (45.8% of RNs are 40 years of age or younger). The average age of the LPN population is increasing at a higher rate than the average age of the RN population.

Figure 22: **LPN's Average Age 2007 - 2013**

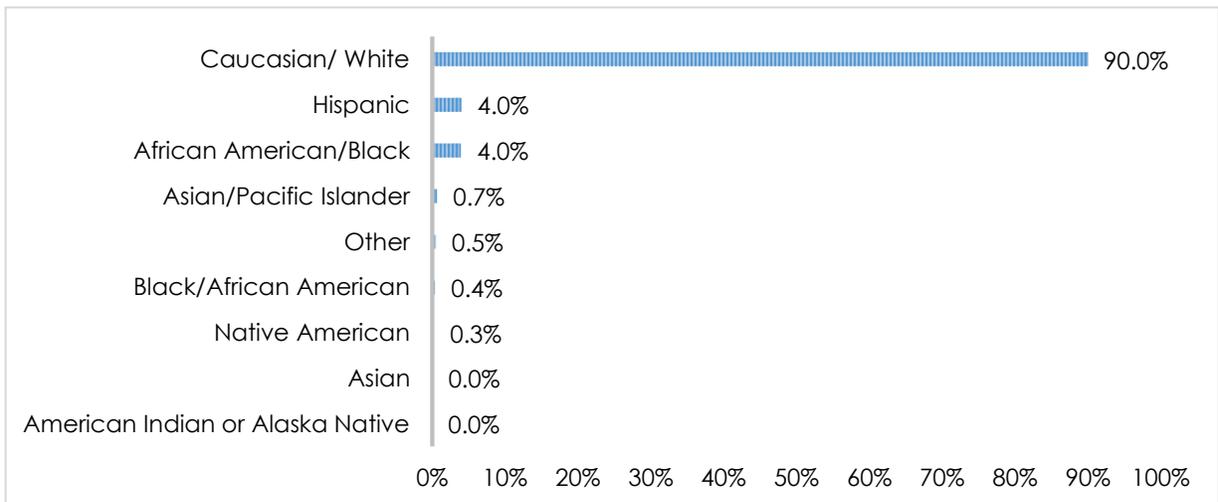


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## RACE/ETHNICITY

One out of ten LPNs are racially/ethnically considered a minority (**10%**). Among minorities, the Hispanic/Latino and African American/ Black population are the largest, each with 4%. See Figure 23. In the year 2000, only 3% of LPNs were minorities.

Figure 23: **LPN Race/Ethnicity**



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## GENDER

According to the 2013 LPN Renewal Survey, only 2.9% of nurses are male. Figure 24. The percentage of males within LPNs have steadily decreased since 2007. In the year 2007, 3.4% of all LPNs who work in Nebraska were males, in 2009, 3.2%, and in 2011, just 3.0% of LPNs were males. See Figure 25.

Figure 24: LPN Gender Distribution

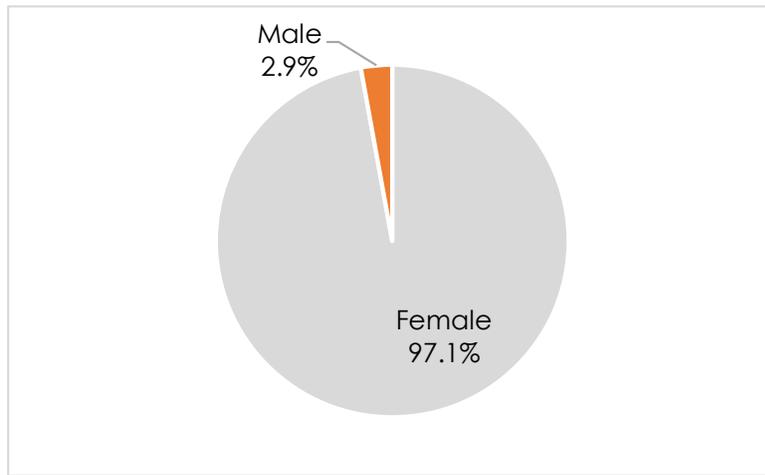
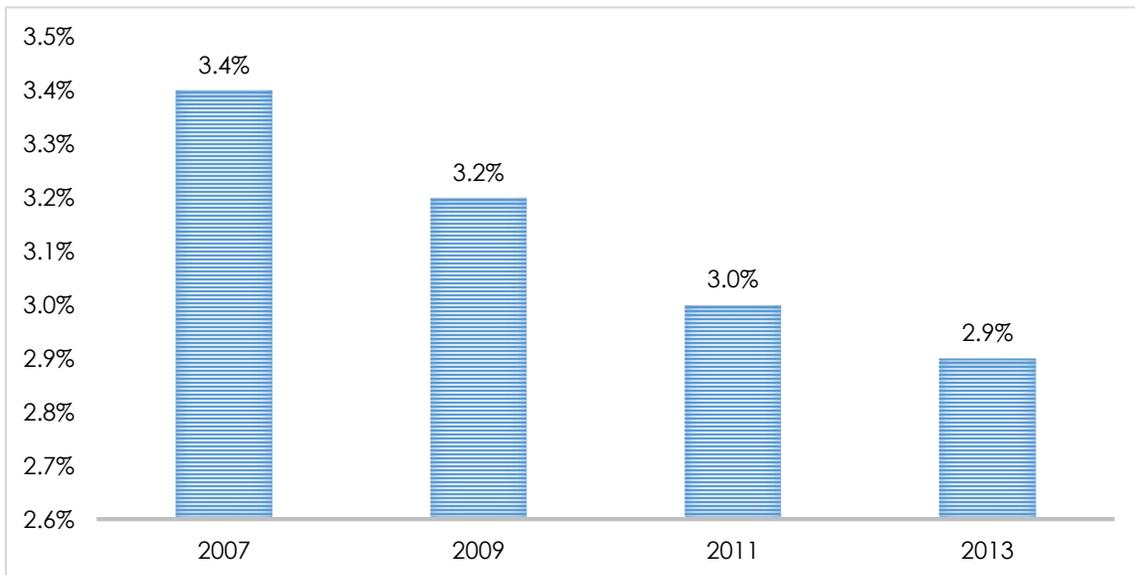


Figure 25: Percent of Males within LPNs 2007 -2013

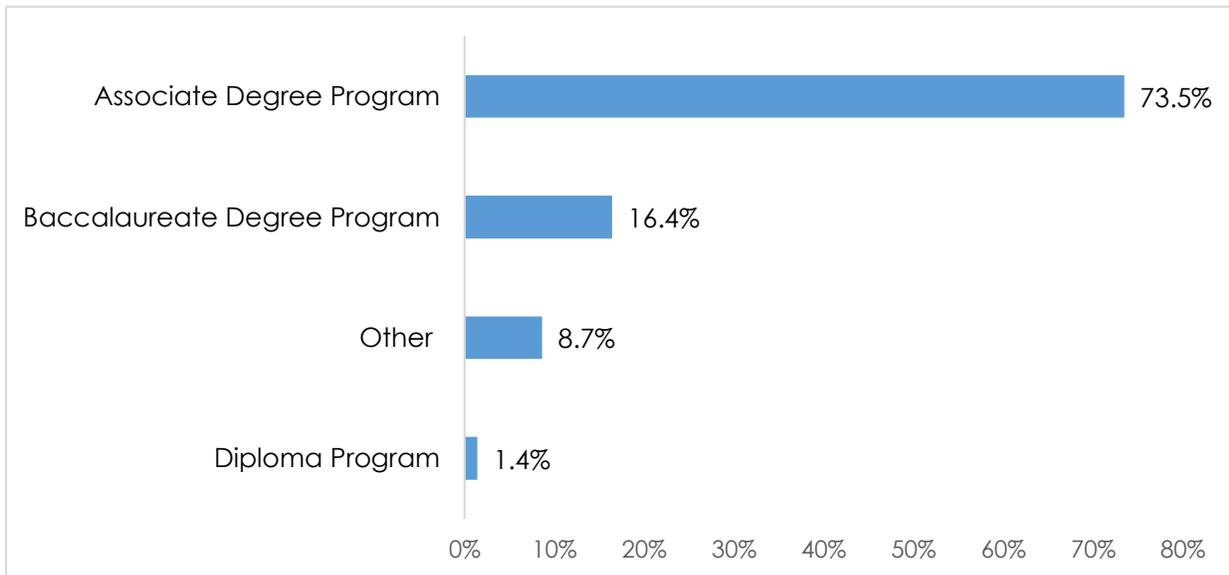


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## EDUCATION

One out of ten LPNs are enrolled in a nursing education program leading to a degree/certificate (10.2%). For those who are enrolled, the majority choose Associate Degree Programs (73.3%), followed by Baccalaureate Degree Programs (16.4%), and then Other Programs (8.7%). See Figure 26.

*Figure 26: LPNs Enrolled in a Nursing Education Program*



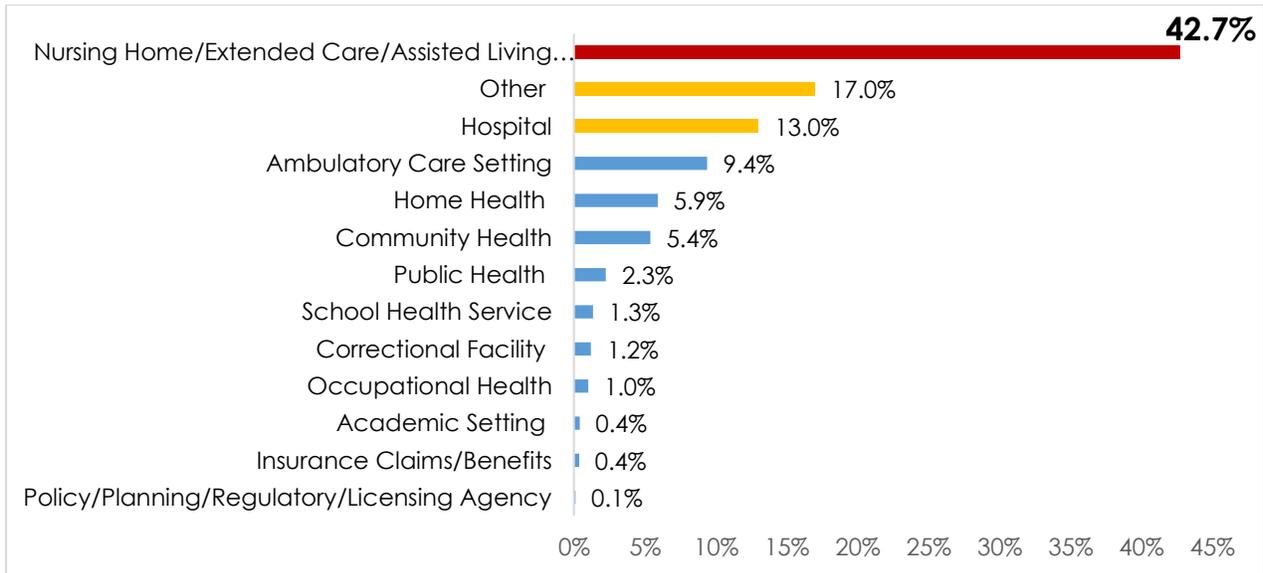
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## WORK ENVIRONMENT

### TYPE OF SETTING

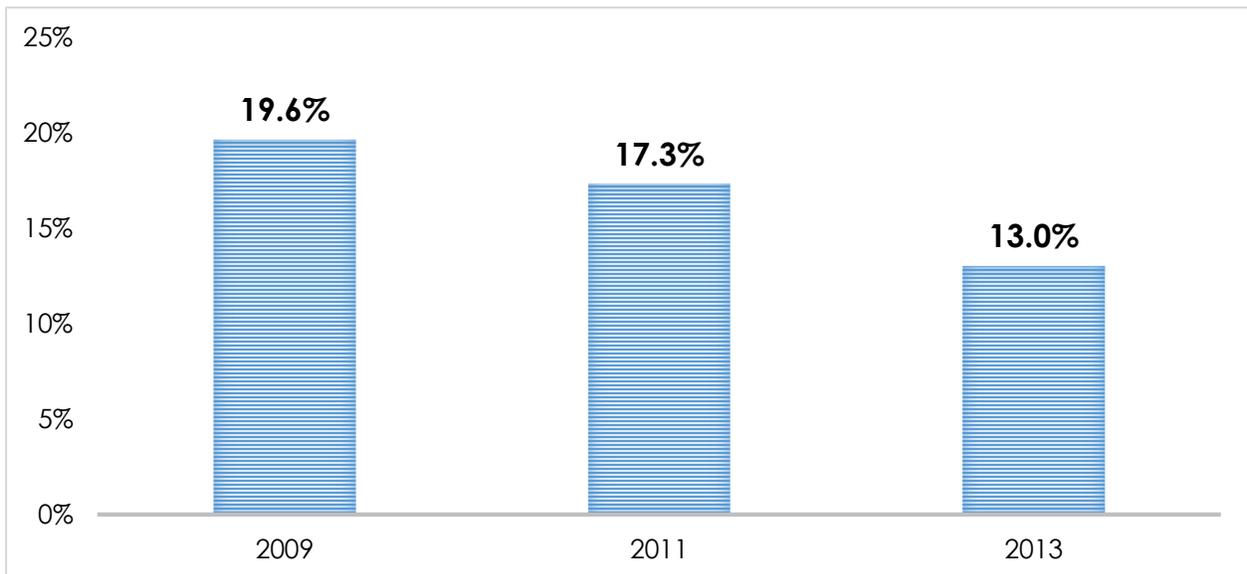
Nearly four out of ten LPNs are employed in Nursing Homes/Extended Care/Assisted Living Facility (42.7%). See Figure 27.

Figure 27: LPN Type of Setting Nursing Practice Position



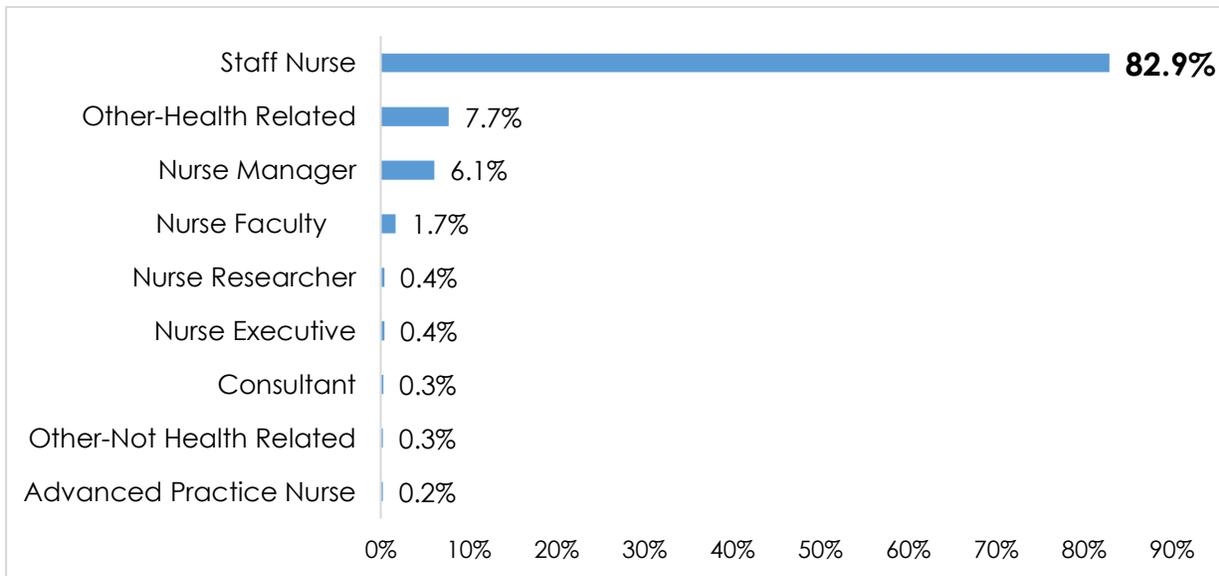
Only 13% of LPNs are employed in hospitals, compared to 57.6% of RNs who work in hospitals. In 2009 and 2011, the percentage of LPNs working in hospitals was higher, 19.6% and 17.3%, respectively. Figure 28.

Figure 28: LPNs (%) working in Hospitals 2009 - 2013



Eight out of ten LPNs work as a “Staff Nurse” (82.9%), followed by “Other- Health related” position (7.7%), and then by “Nurse Manager” (6.1%). See Figure 29. The majority of LPNs who hold a position as a Nurse Manager work in Nursing Home/Extended Care/Assisted Living Facility (63%).

Figure 29: **LPN Position Title**

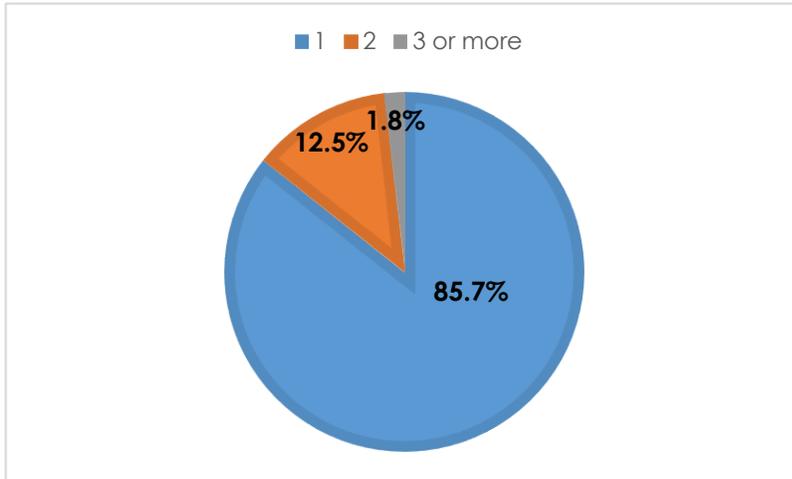


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## EMPLOYMENT

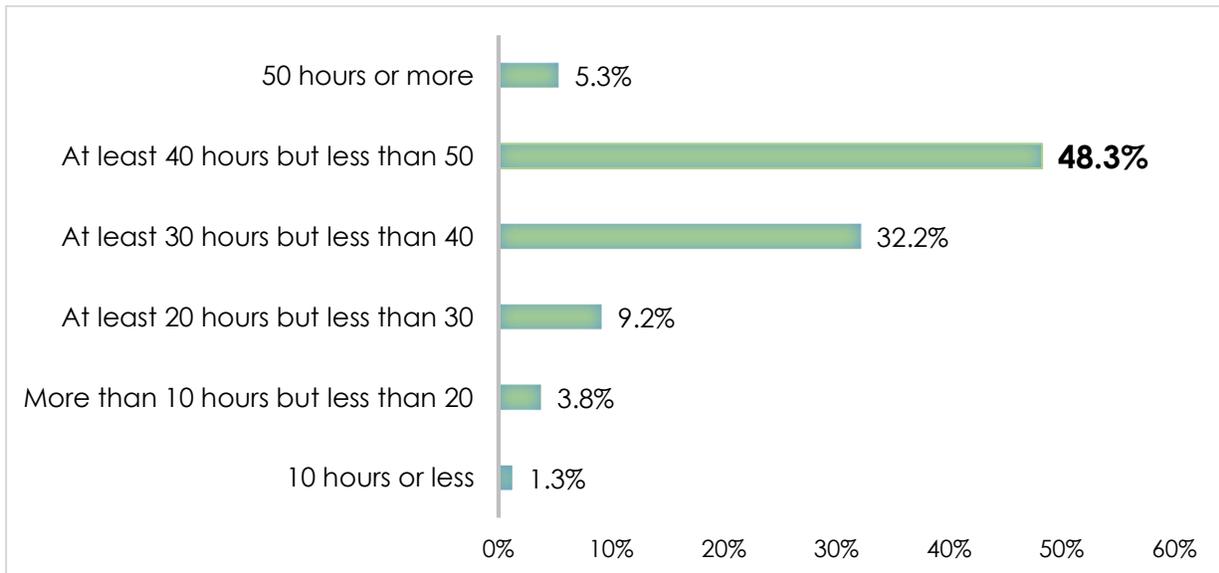
LPNs work for different employers in a similar proportion as RNs. The majority work for just one employer (85.7%) and less than 2% work for three or more employers. See Figure 30.

Figure 30: **LPN Number of Positions Currently Employed as a Nurse**



In terms of hours worked per week, nearly five out of ten LPNs work at least 40 but less than 50 hours per week. See Figure 31. In comparison, four out of ten RNs work a similar amount of hours.

Figure 31: **LPN Hours worked per week**

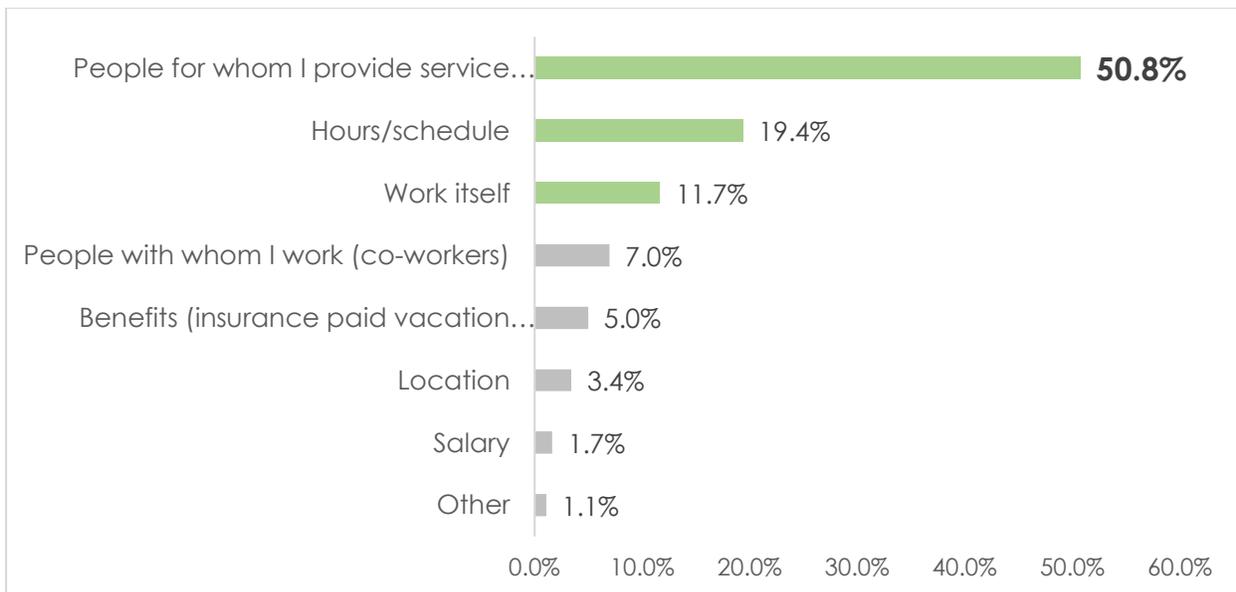


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## SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH EMPLOYMENT

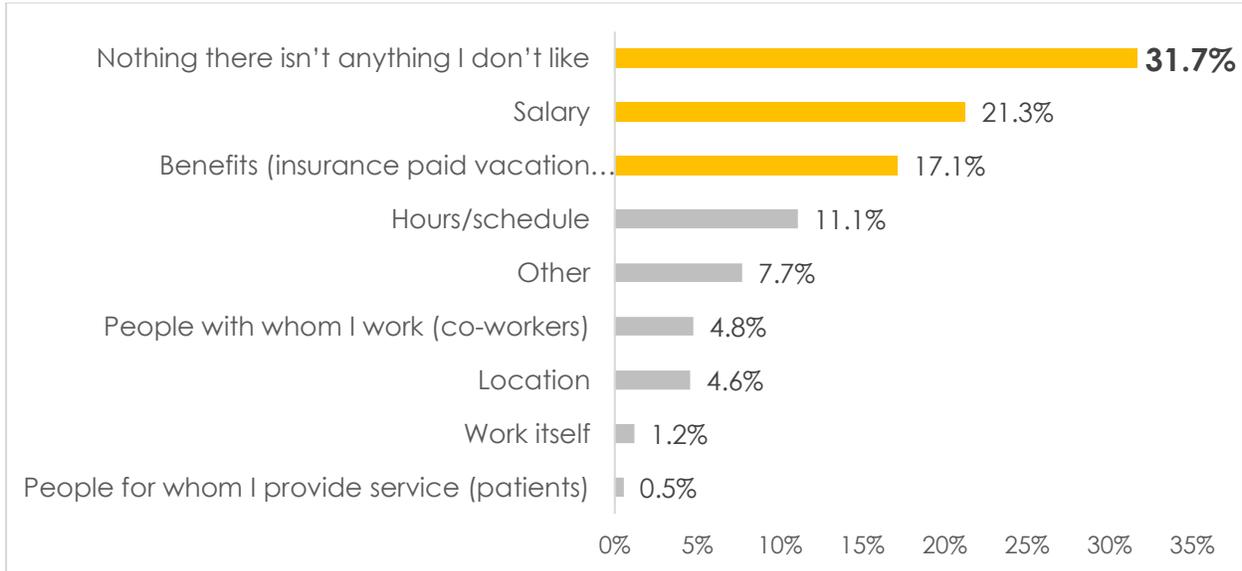
The LPN survey asks what nurses like the most about their principal employment. Nearly half of LPNs indicated that providing services to patients is what they like the most (50.8%), followed by “Hours/schedule” (19.4%), and then by “Work itself” (11.7%). See Figure 32.

Figure 32: **What do you like MOST about your principal nursing employment?**



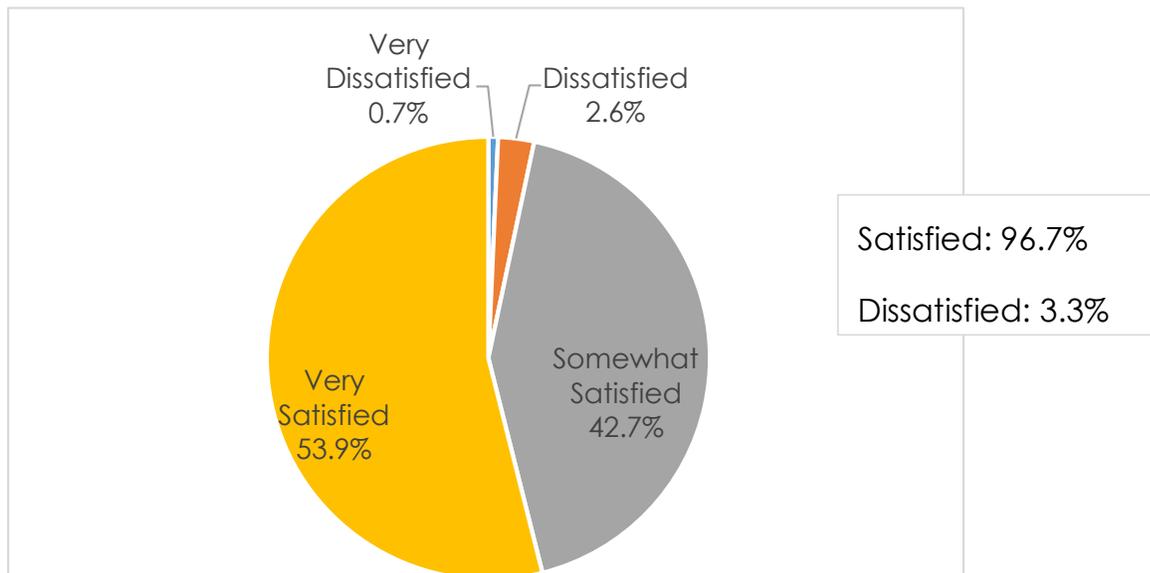
When asked what they liked the least about their principal employment, three out of ten LPNs mentioned that there is nothing they do not like (31.7%), followed by salary (21.3%) and then by Benefits (17.1%). Figure 33. These results are similar to those obtained from RNs (compare with Figure 13, page 17).

Figure 33: **What do you like the LEAST about your principal nursing employment?**



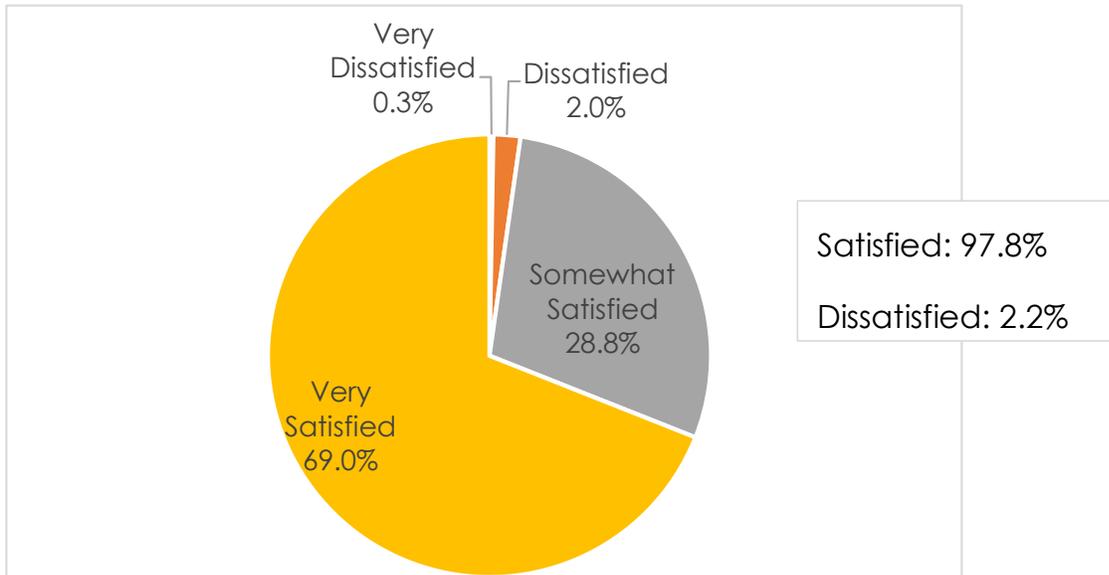
LPNs were also asked how satisfied they are with their current job. Only 3.3% of LPNs mentioned that they are dissatisfied with their current job (one percent lower in comparison to RNs). See Figure 34.

Figure 34: **How satisfied are you with your current job?**



LPNs showed higher levels of satisfaction with their career when compared with RNs. Nearly seven out of ten LPNs mentioned that they were “Very Satisfied” with their profession, compared to 65.4% of RNs. Figure 35.

Figure 35: **How satisfied are you with nursing as a career?**



Nine out of ten LPNs would encourage others to choose nursing as a career (Figure 36), and 88.5% would do it over if they had the opportunity to choose nursing as a career again (Figure 37).

Figure 36: **Encourage others to choose nursing as a career.**

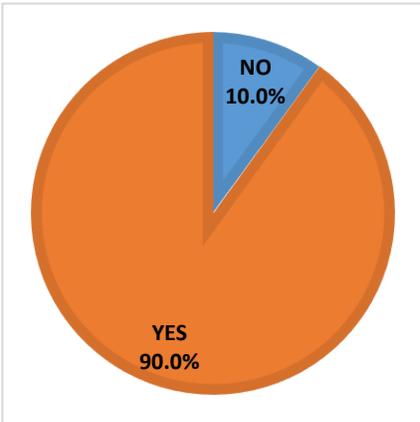
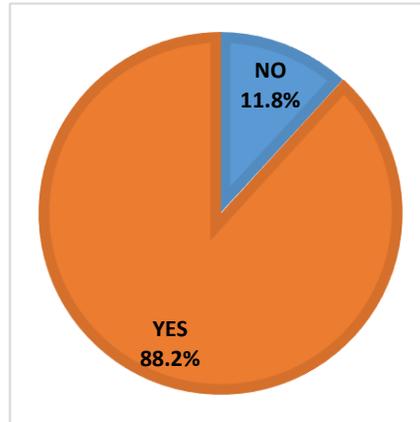


Figure 37: **Would you choose nursing as a career again?**



Comparatively, results show that satisfaction levels with the LPN profession have increased over time. For instance, in 2001, nearly three-fourths of nurses would have encourage others to choose nursing as a career (73.8%). A similar proportion of LPNs would have chosen nursing as a career again (76.7%).

#### GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF LPNS IN NEBRASKA

Figure 38 shows the number of LPNs by County according to the 2013 LPN Renewal Survey. Twelve counties did not report any LPN working in them: Sioux, Banner, Grant, Thomas, Arthur, McPherson, Logan, Blaine, Loup, Keya Paha, Wheeler, and Hayes. The highest number of LPNs was reported in Douglas County ( $n = 1,058$ ), followed by Lancaster County ( $n = 849$ ). The lowest number of LPNs were found in Frontier ( $n = 2$ ), followed by Sherman and Hooker, both with five LPNs.





## NURSING FACULTY

### DEMOGRAPHICS

The total number of nursing faculty in Nebraska is **591** (Nursing Colleges' Annual Reports, 2013). Only 1.4% of nursing faculty is male ( $n = 8$ ; see Figure 40), which in comparison is much lower than the overall percentage of RNs at the state level (6%). At the national level, 5.5% of faculty are male (AACN, 2014)<sup>5</sup>. The average age for all Nebraska nursing faculty is 50 years old, nearly six and half years older than Nebraska RNs. Nearly one-third of nursing faculty are between 55-64 years of age, which is also much higher than the state age distribution (21% of RNs are between 55-64 years old). See Figure 41.

Figure 40: **98.6% of Faculty are Women**

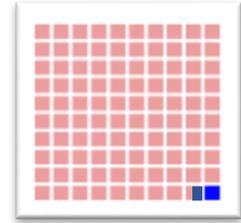
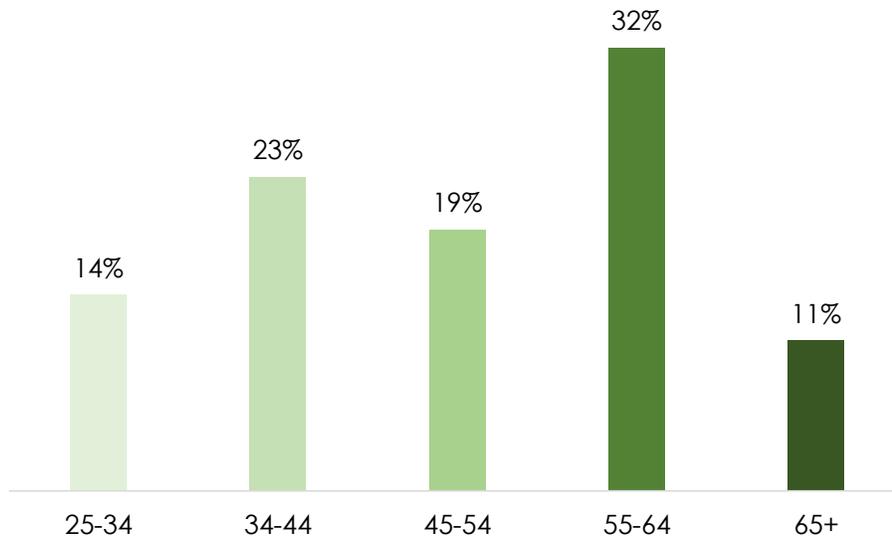


Figure 41: **Nursing Faculty Age Distribution**

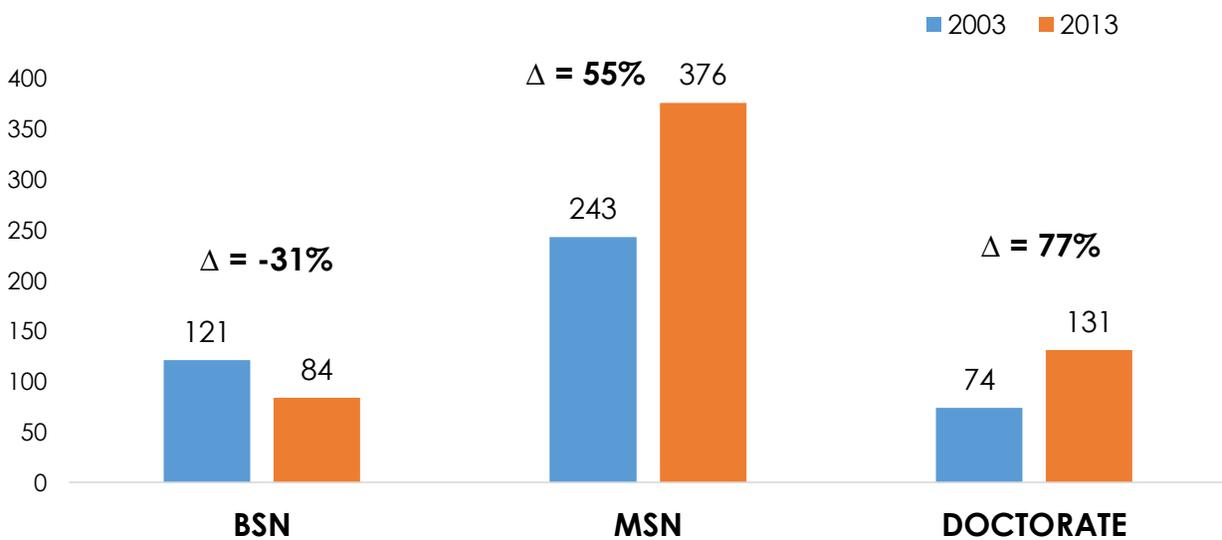


<sup>5</sup> American Association of Colleges of Nursing. 2014 Annual Report. <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/aacn-publications/annual-reports/AnnualReport14.pdf>

When comparing with data collected in 2003, the total number of nursing faculty has increased by 35%. During the same time, however, the number of RN and LPN students increased by 61% (DHHS Licensure Unit). Thus, the average number of students per faculty grew from 7.6 students in 2003 to 9.0 students in 2012.

When analyzing faculty by degrees hold, Masters and Doctoral degrees have increased the most over the years (55%, 77%, respectively). Faculty who holds Bachelors degree decreased by 31% during the same time period. See Figure 42.

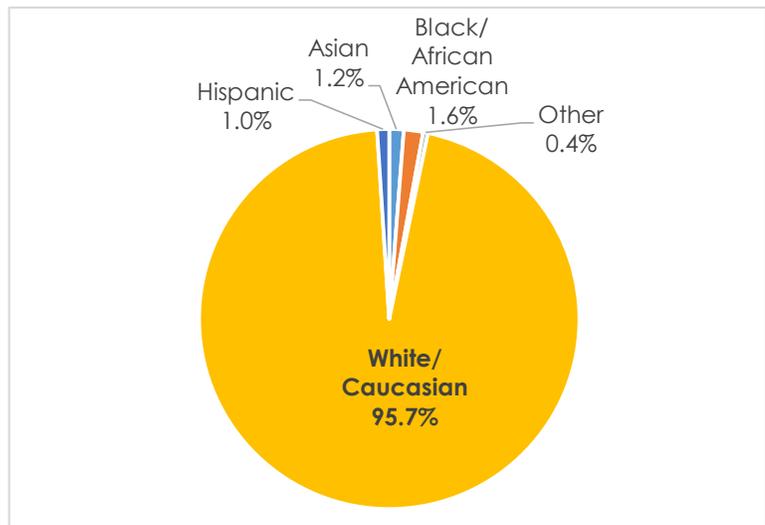
Figure 42: **Number of Faculty by Degree and Percentage Change 2003-2013**



Also, faculty has become older as the average age of faculty in 2003 was 48.6 in comparison to 50 years of age in 2013. The faculty group that has aged the most are those who hold doctoral degrees, from an average of 55 years of age in 2003 to 58 years of age in 2013.

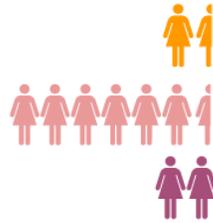
In terms of race/ethnicity, 4.3% of nursing faculty is of a racial/ethnic minority; that percentage is lower than the total RNs' racial/ethnic distribution in Nebraska (6%). And it is also lower than the national data (13.1%; AACN, 2014). See Figure 43.

Figure 43: **Race-Ethnicity Distribution of Nursing Faculty**



## EDUCATION

Nearly two-thirds of nursing faculty hold a masters degree (64%), followed by doctorate degrees (22%; includes DNPs and EdDs), and Bachelor degrees (14%). When comparing average age related to faculty's level of education, doctorate faculty's average age is 17 years older than faculty holding bachelor degrees, and 9 years older than faculty holding master degrees. See Figure 44.



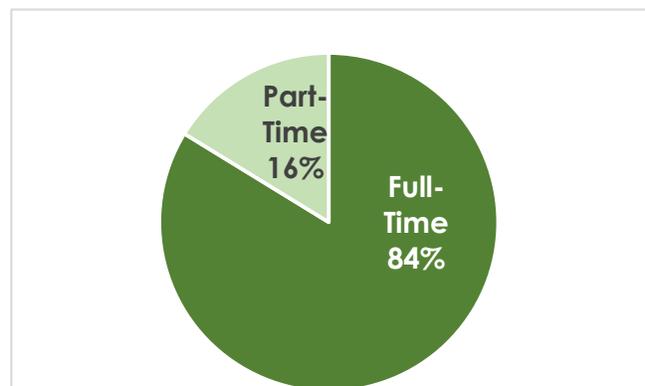
**Figure 44: Nursing Faculty by Comparative Size, Degree and Average Age.**

Faculty Degree	Age
Bachelor	41
Master	49
Doctorate	58

## EMPLOYMENT

The majority of nursing faculty works Full-Time (84%). See Figure 45. Nearly four out ten faculty that holds a Bachelors degree works Full-Time (42%). Nine out of ten faculty that holds a Masters degree works Full-Time (90%). 93% of nursing faculty that holds a Doctorate degree works Full-Time.

**Figure 45: Faculty Employment Status**



## RETIREMENT PLANS

Nearly two out of ten nurse educators are planning to leave their employment in the next 12 months (2014 RN Renewal Survey).

See Figure 46. The main top three reasons for those who are planning to leave are: Retirement (22%), Dissatisfaction with salary (19%), and Dissatisfaction with job (13%).

Doctoral faculty is the group with the lowest percentage who indicated that they are planning to leave their employment in the next twelve months (16%), followed by Bachelors degree faculty (17%), and then by Masters degree faculty (20%).

The main reason for Doctoral degree faculty to leave their employment is “Retirement”; for Masters degree level faculty, it’s “Dissatisfaction with salary”, and for Bachelors degree faculty, it’s “Other”.

**Figure 46: Faculty planning to leave their employment in the next 12 months.**



## SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH CURRENT JOB

According to the 2014 RN Renewal Survey, overall, nurses are highly satisfied with their current job, as 95.7% indicated that they were either somewhat satisfied or very satisfied. When selecting only nurses who are faculty, similar results were found as a total of 97.3% responded that they were satisfied with their current job. No significant differences in terms of satisfaction levels were found when comparing by faculty degree, although satisfaction levels decreased as the education level increased (Bachelors degree: 98.5%; Masters degree: 97.4%; and Doctoral degree: 96%).