



Hospital Staffing Survey Summary & Update on Key Workforce Initiatives

Survey Background

Demand for Hospital Workers

In late 2005, OHA surveyed member and non-member hospitals throughout the state in order to determine Oklahoma's need for hospital nurses and allied health workers today and in the future. A summary of statewide vacancies, vacancy rates and turnover rates is included. During this same timeframe, a similar survey was also sent to Oklahoma nursing homes, home health agencies and ambulatory care facilities, with survey collection efforts continuing.

Production of Workers

At the same time, a survey was being conducted of program directors for nursing and allied health care programs in Career Techs, and two- and four-year colleges and universities across the state.

How Many Workers Are Needed?

The collective goal of these joint efforts is to provide a realistic estimate of our state's current demand for health care workers, along with our educational system's capacity to meet these demands.

Health Care Industry Chosen for Pilot Study

The quantitative research, along with focus groups conducted of health care industry representatives, is being done as part of a pilot study being undertaken by the Governor's Council for Workforce & Economic Development. Staff support for the pilot is being led by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The health care industry was selected as the first of several industries to be studied based on the following factors:

- 1** Its importance to the state in terms of the provision of essential services it provides Oklahoma citizens;
- 2** Its contribution as a major employer and economic engine for the state and local communities;
- 3** The significant amount of work already done over the past five years through collaborative partnerships with more than 20 organizations via OHA's Workforce Steering Committee and the Nursing Workforce Task Force.

Governor's Council for Workforce & Economic Development

Established in early 2005, the vision of the Governor's Council for Workforce & Economic Development is to integrate Oklahoma's workforce and economic development efforts in order to give Oklahoma a competitive advantage as a desirable place to work and live. One of the Council's five broad-based goals is to ensure that Oklahoma has a labor pool that is competitive, advances the economic objectives of the state and local communities, and meets the employment interest of industry clusters and employer groups.

Governor's Health Care Workforce Resources Task Force

In September 2005, Gov. Brad Henry signed Executive Order 2005-20, establishing the Governor's Health Care Workforce Resources Task Force. The order followed an unsuccessful attempt to pass SB1010 during the 2005 legislative session. The purpose of the task force is to "provide a comprehensive assessment of government and private sector efforts to meet supply and demand needs for Oklahoma's health care workforce. The Task Force shall focus its assessment on health care professionals in short supply including, but not limited to, nurses, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, imaging technologists, medical laboratory technologists and technicians, surgical and scrub technicians, and physical therapists.

In addition, the Task Force shall evaluate current health care worker supply and demand, future supply and demand, and gap analysis; resources and support available for the education and training of health care workers in both the short and long term; recruitment needed to increase the level of awareness among Oklahoma's youth and adults of opportunities in health care; and the job satisfaction and vacancy and turnover rates for Oklahoma health care employees."

A key activity of the task force will be to garner state support and commitment to assist with the establishment of a Health Care Workforce Resources Center.

The task force met initially on Dec. 20, 2005, and provided a status report of its work to the governor prior to the Jan. 1, 2006 deadline, as was set forth in the executive order. The group will reconvene on Jan. 31, 2006.

Background on Legislation to Create Workforce Center

SB1010, authored by Sen. Susan Paddack, (D-Ada) and Rep. Doug Cox, (R-Grove) an emergency room physician, was initiated by OHA and other members of its Workforce Steering Committee. Its purpose was to establish a clearinghouse, funded by public and private resources, to coordinate, facilitate and communicate statewide efforts by many organizations to meet supply and demand needs for Oklahoma's health care workforce. While SB1010 passed through the Senate processes with no debate or opposition, the House leadership refused to allow the bill to be heard or advance.

SB1394, modeled after SB1010, has already been drafted and introduced for consideration during the upcoming 2006 legislative session. Sen. Paddack and Rep. Cox have agreed again to carry the bill.



Hospital Staffing Assessment 2005 Survey

(Data Collected October - December 2005)

Position	Total Budgeted FTEs	Vacant / Intend to Fill	Vacancy Rate ¹	Separated FTEs <i>(in last 12 months)</i>	Turnover Rate ²
LPN	2,624	221	8.4%	601	22.9%
RN	11,193	1,129	10.1%	1,717	15.3%
Total LPN/RN	13,817	1,349	9.8%	2,318	16.8%
Pharmacists	606	39	6.4%	54	8.9%
Respiratory Therapists	850	57	6.7%	109	12.8%
Medical Technologist	1,444	48	3.3%	73	5.0%
Lab Technologist (MLT)	319	17	5.2%	56	17.5%
Radiographer	709	35	4.9%	82	11.5%
Ultrasound Technologist	223	15	6.5%	25	11.1%
Nuclear Medical Tech	118	4	3.4%	11	9.3%
CT Technologist	234	13	5.6%	27	11.4%
Radiation Therapist	112	3	3.0%	8	7.4%
Vascular/ Interventional	111	7	6.3%	24	21.8%
MR Technologist	100	13	13.0%	15	14.5%
Physical Therapists	498	83	16.7%	80	16.1%
Occupational Therapists	201	38	18.9%	31	15.3%
Scrub Techs	676	44	6.6%	117	17.2%

The positions represented above are those in which Oklahoma hospitals have the greatest need in terms of staffing.

Survey responses represented 84% of all (15,740) licensed hospital beds in Oklahoma. Responses within OHA's six regions (NE, NW, SE, SW, OKC and Tulsa) ranged from 76-88%.

The American Hospital Association reports that as of January 2005, hospitals nationwide had an estimated 109,000 vacant positions for registered nurses, which represents 8.1 percent of full and part-time hospital RN positions. Other national hospital vacancy rates reported at this time were hospital imaging technicians (5.4%), laboratory technicians (5%), pharmacists (7.4%), LPNs (6.7%), and nursing assistants (6.7%).

¹ Vacancies / Total Budgeted FTEs.

² Separated FTEs / Total Budgeted FTEs.