
Nebraska LPN Survey Report 2008

Based on Data Collected During License Renewal in 2007

by

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BACKGROUND	3
DEMOGRAPHICS	4
Gender.....	4
Age	4
Racial/Ethnic Background	5
Family Status	6
SALARY	7
EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT	7
Hours Worked per Week	7
Frequency and Percent of Work Situation.....	8
Employers of Nurses	9
EMPLOYMENT	10
Activity	10
Setting.....	11
EDUCATION	12
OPINIONS ABOUT NURSING.....	14
Choosing Nursing Again.....	15
Encouragement of Others	15
Leaving Principal Employment.....	16
Reasons for Leaving.....	16
LICENSURE.....	17
Method of Licensure.....	17
SIGN LANGUAGE FLUENCY AND LANGUAGES SPOKEN	19
LOCATION OF NEBRASKA NURSES.....	19
Distribution of Licensed Practical Nurses with Nebraska Licenses	19
SUMMARY.....	24
Appendix A.....	25

BACKGROUND

Since November 2000, the Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce Survey has been included with the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) renewal application. In 2000, the Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Center for Nursing to address the nursing shortage. The 16-member board was appointed by the Governor and charged with developing a strategic plan. There was a need for current, comprehensive data about the supply and demand of nurses in Nebraska to enable the Board to satisfy its mandate. Therefore a comprehensive survey was conducted in November 2000, 2003 and in 2005 in conjunction with LPN renewal notices. In August of 2007, Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) were again surveyed in conjunction with LPN renewal notices.

A total of 6,558 Workforce Surveys were collected and entered for data analysis. From this total, 4,510 were completed on-line, and 2,048 on paper. In order to merge the Workforce Survey responses with the database information, the license number, which was stamped on the survey prior to mailing or was typed by an online survey participant, was used to merge the survey responses with the information from the database. This information was used to calculate demographic characteristics of the sample, such as age and gender. Of the 6,558 surveys collected, 5543 identified themselves as being principally employed in Nebraska. A copy of the survey form can be found in Appendix A.

The number of active Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) has remained fairly steady since 1988. Table A provides the number of LPNs licensed in Nebraska at the end of the calendar year. Numbers are reported for even-numbered years. LPN licenses expire in the later part of the year in odd-numbered years. At the time of renewal the total number of LPNs licensed in the state always drops significantly because of LPNs who do not renew a license due to retirement, death, leaving the state or ceasing to practice nursing. The total number of LPNs licensed in the state then continues to grow until the next renewal when it once again falls. The total number licensed at the end of even-numbered years was chosen for comparison because it represents the midpoint between when the major fluctuations occur. This number includes all licensees, and does not distinguish whether the nurse practiced or lived in Nebraska. Nebraska joined the Nurse Licensure Compact in January 2001. LPNs residing in another compact state could not renew their Nebraska license in 2001, hence the drop in the number of active licensed practical nurses in 2002.

Table A. Number of Active Licensed Practical Nurses in Nebraska 1988 - 2006

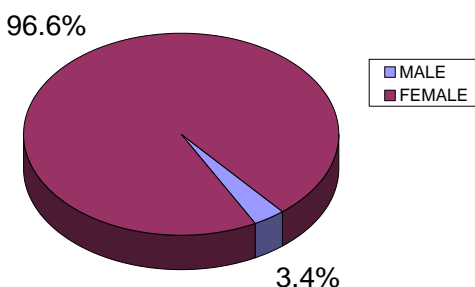
1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
5,833	6,029	6,340	6,330	6,989	6,787	6,202	5,943	6,620	6,863

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

In Nebraska, 3.4% of LPNs identified themselves as male and 96.6% as female, which shows a slight increment in male nursing participation in comparison to 2005 data (2.7% for males). Chart 1 shows the percentage of male and female nurses in Nebraska for the current 2007 survey.

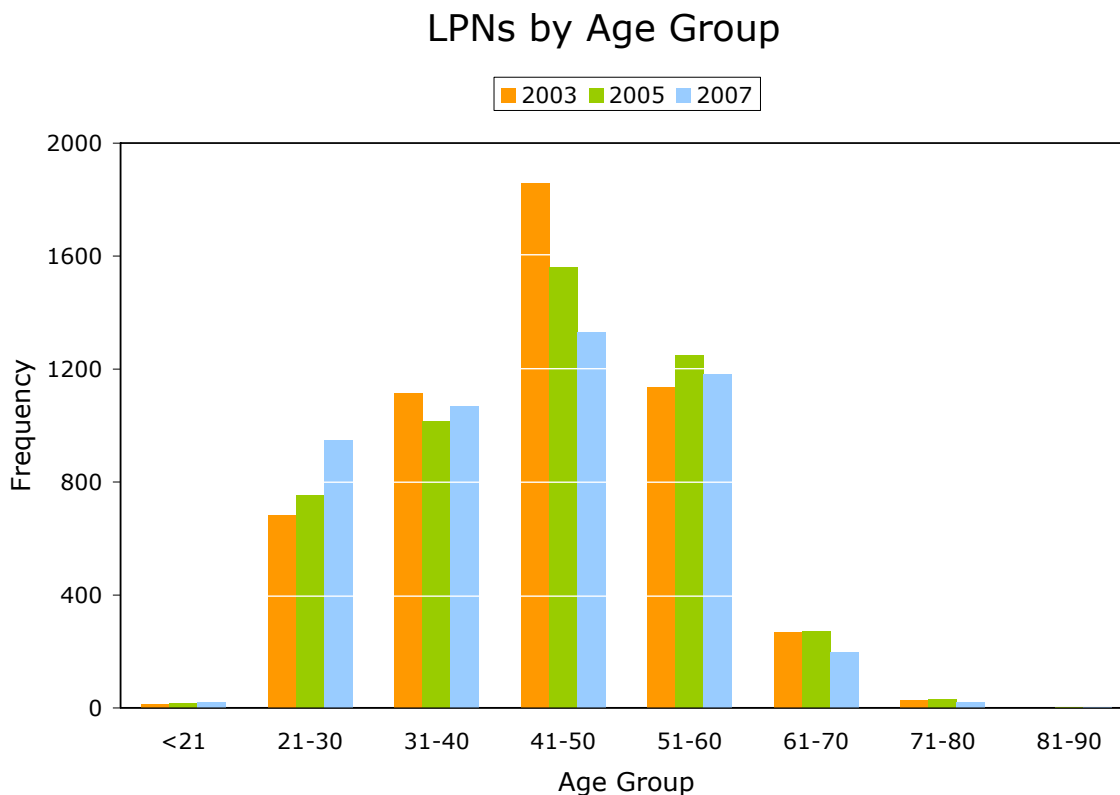
Chart 1. Distribution of Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses by Gender in 2007



Age

Chart 2 depicts the distribution of Nebraska LPNs by age compared to 2005. In Nebraska the average age increased from 42 years in 1997 to 44.1 years in 2005 and was 42.6 years in 2007. In the LPNs under 40 category, Nebraska had 70% in 1980, only 37.6% in 2000, and 40.1% in 2007. In 1980, 42.3% of Nebraska's LPNs were under age 30. This number dropped to 14.3% in 2000, and was 17.8% in 2005.

Chart 2. Distribution of Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses by Age

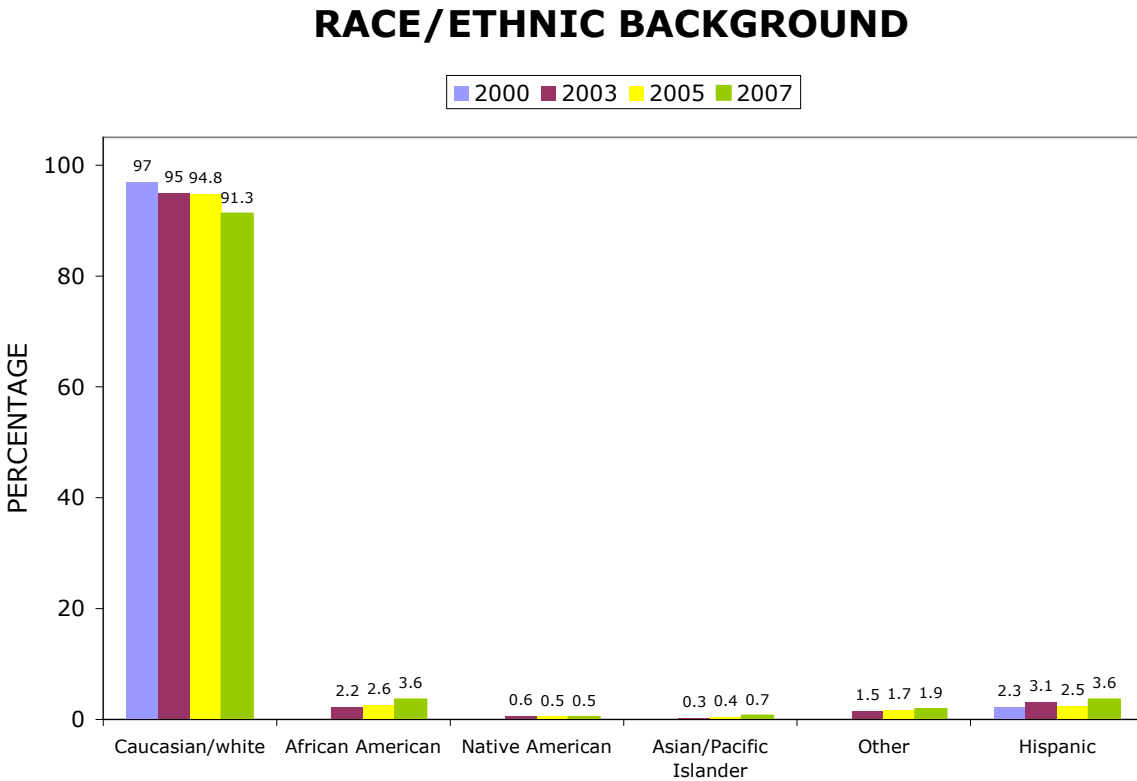


Racial/Ethnic Background

Chart 3 shows the distribution of LPNs in Nebraska according to self-reported racial/ethnic categories compared to 2000, 2003 and 2005. The preponderance of nurses were Caucasian, 91.3%. In 2000 this figure was 97%, in 2003 95%, and in 2005 it was 94.8%. In the general population of Nebraska, 84% are Caucasian, 4% are African American, 8% Hispanic/Latino, and 4% Other (statehealthfacts.org).

The Nebraska survey asked a separate question—whether or not the respondent was of Hispanic origin or descent. It is possible respondents could have indicated either Caucasian or African-American and also Hispanic. The Hispanic category is therefore only mutually exclusive when data from that variable are analyzed separately and there is a possible double count of some nurses. Nebraska's percentage of racial/ethnic nurses rose from 5.2% in 2005 to 8.7% in 2007. The percentage indicating Hispanic origin or descent increased from 2.5% in 2005 to 3.6% in 2007 ($n = 238$).

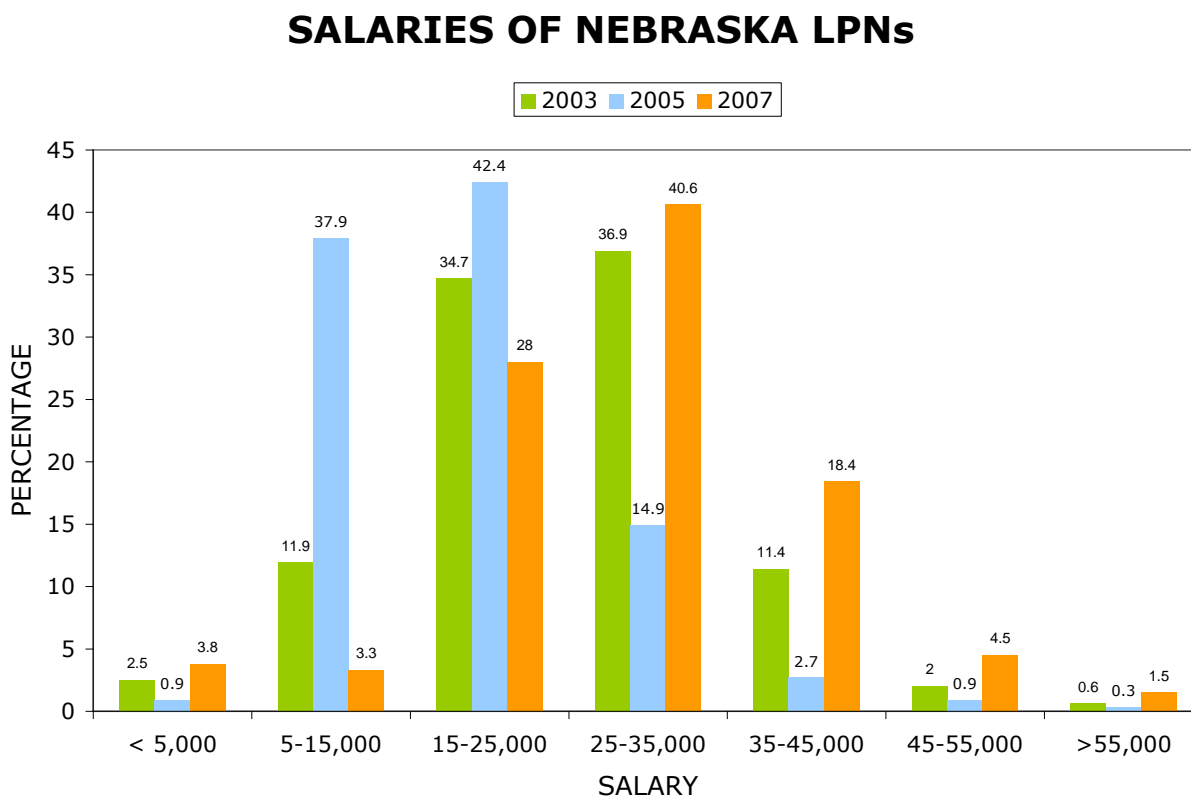
Chart 3. Distribution of Nebraska LPNs by Racial/Ethnic Background



SALARY

The Nebraska respondents were asked to describe their salary ranges. Chart 4 displays the reported salary information. The highest percentage (42.4%) of LPNs earned \$25-35,000 followed by 37.9% earning \$5-25,000.

Chart 4. Salaries of Nebraska LPNs

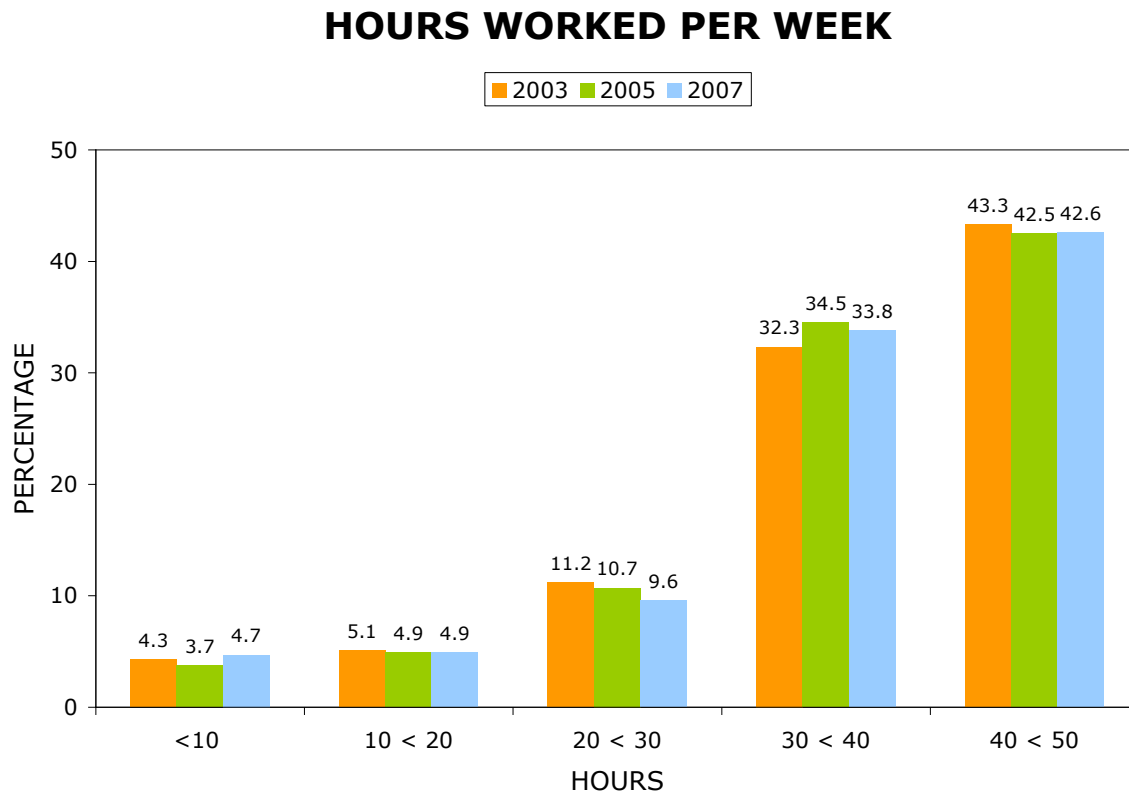


EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT

Hours Worked per Week

Chart 5 shows the amount of time Nebraska LPNs work each week. The category “10 hours or less” may include licensees who do not work as a nurse at all. There were minimal numbers of unemployed currently licensed LPNs in Nebraska, because active practice has been a condition of license renewal since 1995. The percentage of employed LPNs increased after 1997, at which time 94.2% of LPNs reported working full or part-time. In 2003, 97.8%, in 2005, 96.4% and in 2007 95.3% of Nebraska LPNs were working in nursing full or part-time. The highest percentage of LPNs reported working at least 40 but less than 50 hours per week (42.6%), followed by 33.8% working at least 30 but less than 40 hours per week.

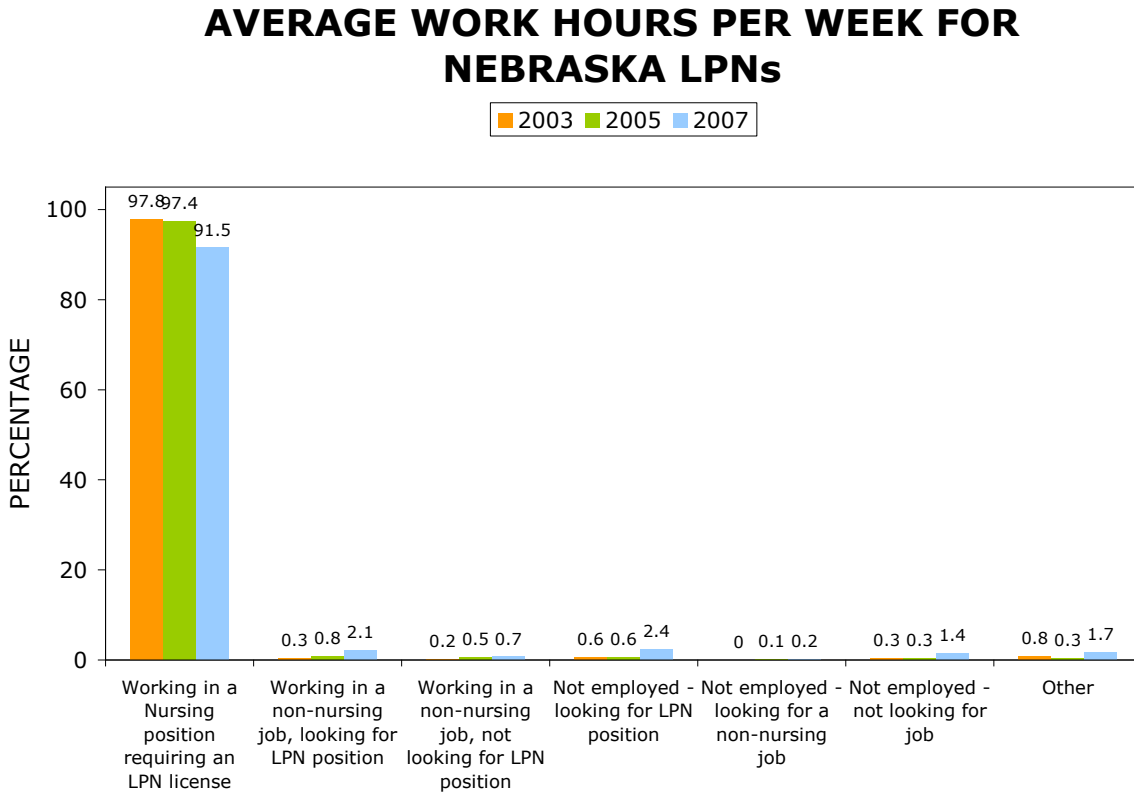
Chart 5. Average Work Hours Per Week for Nebraska LPNs



Frequency and Percent of Work Situation

The majority of the entire sample (91.5%) was working in nursing positions that required a LPN license compared to 97.4% in 2005 and 97.8% in 2003. The number of LPNs working in non-nursing positions was 0.5% in 2003, 1.3% in 2005 and 2.8% in 2007. Four percent were not employed, and of these non-employed licensees, 2.4% were looking for positions in nursing. Chart 6 depicts the percentages of licensees in reported work situations compared to 2003 and 2005.

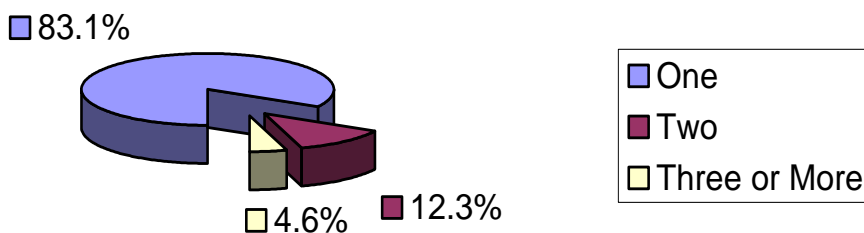
Chart 6. Percentages of Nebraska LPNs Work Situation



Employers of Nurses

Nebraska LPNs identified how many employers they worked for at the time of the survey. Chart 7 is based on these numbers. In 2007, 83.1% of LPNs worked for one employer, 12.3% for two, and 4.6% for three or more. In 2005, 82.6% of LPNs worked for one employer, 11.8% for two, and 5.6% for three or more. In 2003, 81.3% worked for one employer, 12.5% worked for two, and 6.2% worked for three or more.

Chart 7. Numbers of Employers

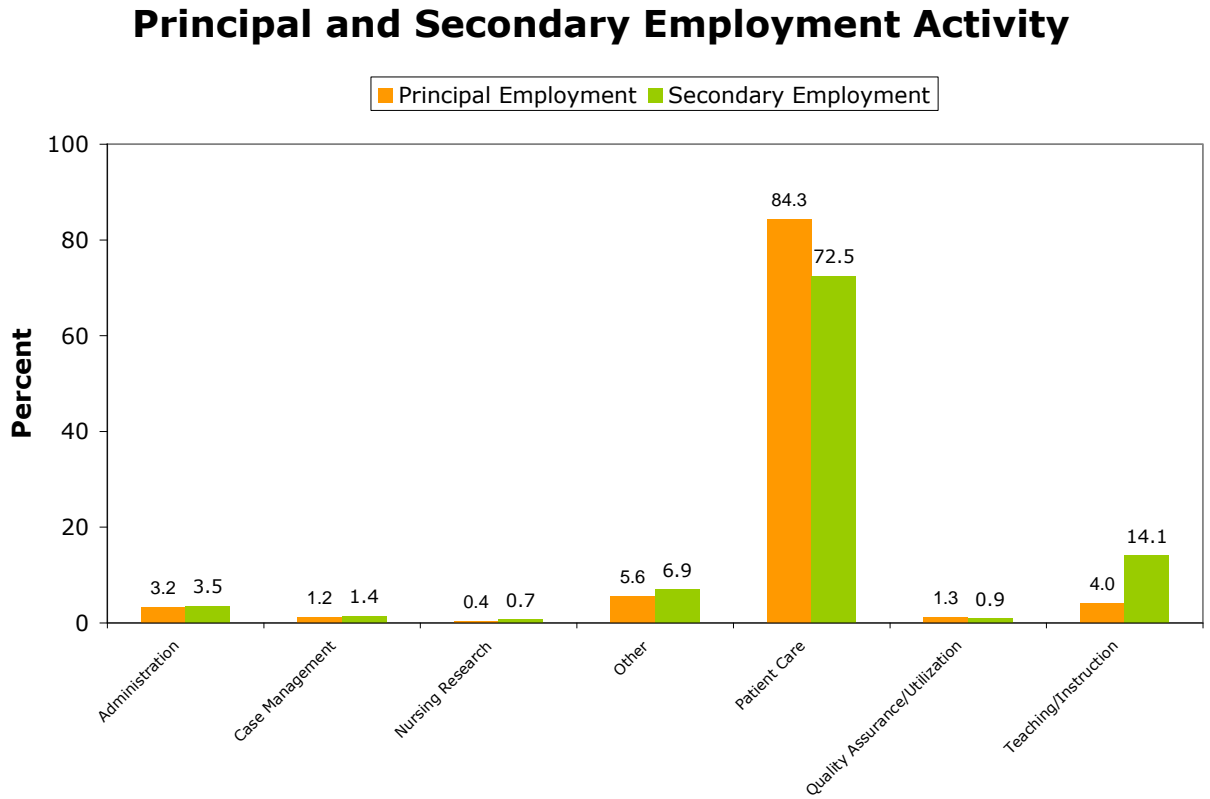


Employment

Activity

LPNs identified the types of employment activities they engaged in. The preponderance of LPNs worked in patient care (84.3%) compared to 85.9% in 2005. Those nurses who had secondary employment also worked predominately in patient care (72.5%). Smaller numbers were dispersed among teaching/instruction, administration, quality assurance/utilization review, case management, nursing research and other work activities. The distribution of principal and secondary employment activity is presented in Chart 8.

Chart 8. Principal and Secondary Employment Activity



Setting

In Nebraska, Long Term Care is the major employer of LPNs with 42.6% of LPNs working in Long Term Care compared to 38.9% in 2005. The total principal employment setting identification follows in Table B. Data were collected in the following principal employment setting categories: Hospital, Long Term Care (includes: Hospice, Assisted Living Facility, Nursing Home, and Parish Nursing), Nursing Education, Alcohol/Detox/Halfway House, Public/Community/Home Health, Student Health/School, Occupational Health, Ambulatory Care, Physician's Office, Self-employed, Agency Staff, Insurance Company/HMO and "Other."

Table B. Percent by Principal Employment Setting in Nebraska

	Nebraska Percentage
Long Term Care	42.6
Hospital	21.8
Physician's Office	19.9
Other	4.7
Public/Community/Home Health	4.2
Ambulatory Care	1.3
Agency Staff	1.0
Student Health/School	1.1
Occupational Health	.7
Self-employed	.4
Nurse Education	1.1
Alcohol/Detox/Halfway House	.3
Insurance/HMO	.2
Dialysis Center	.8

EDUCATION

Most Nebraska LPNs (87.1%) graduated from a Nebraska LPN program, 12.7% were educated in other states, and 0.2% were foreign educated. This information is depicted in Chart 9. In 2005, 87.8% graduated from a Nebraska LPN program, 11.6% were educated in other states, and 0.6% were foreign educated.

Of the LPNs who responded to the paper survey ($n = 1,990$. The on-line survey on this particular question encountered technical difficulties and results were not recorded), 93.5% reported receiving a diploma from a practical nursing program, 6.3% reported completing an associate degree in nursing, 0.1% reported completing a BSN program, and 0% reported completing a masters degree program. In 2005, 99.2% reported receiving a diploma from a practical nursing program, 2.1% reported completing an associate degree in nursing, 0.1% reported completing a BSN program, and 0% reported completing a masters degree program. It should be noted that this survey was completed only by persons currently holding an active LPN license. Most LPNs who go on to RN education do not maintain their LPN license once they receive a RN license. Therefore these numbers are not reflective of the total percentage of LPNs who complete RN education. LPNs reporting that they had a non-nursing degree before they entered the LPN program were 11.2%

compared to 9.9% in 2003. LPNs reporting they were currently enrolled in a nursing education program leading to a degree or certificate were 12.6% compared to 11.4% in 2005. Chart 10 shows the percentage of current LPNs who are enrolled in various types of nursing education programs.

Chart 9. Educated in Foreign Country Comparison

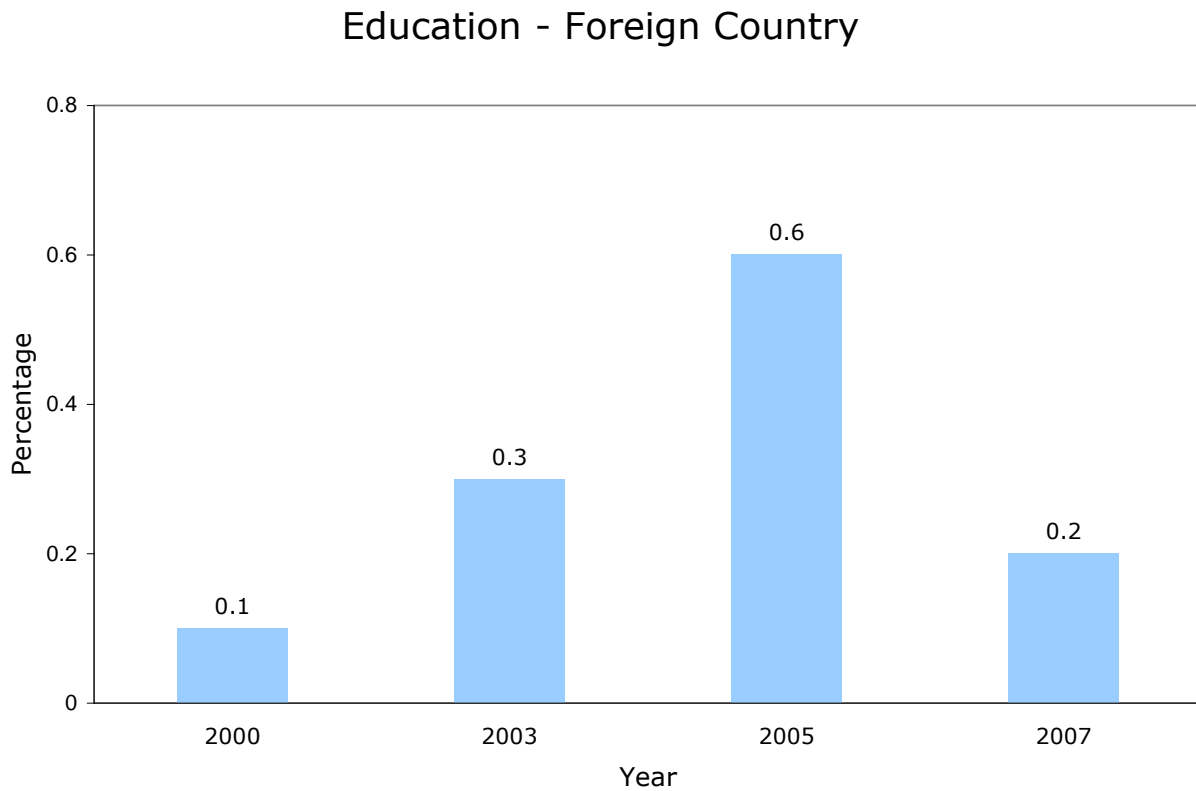
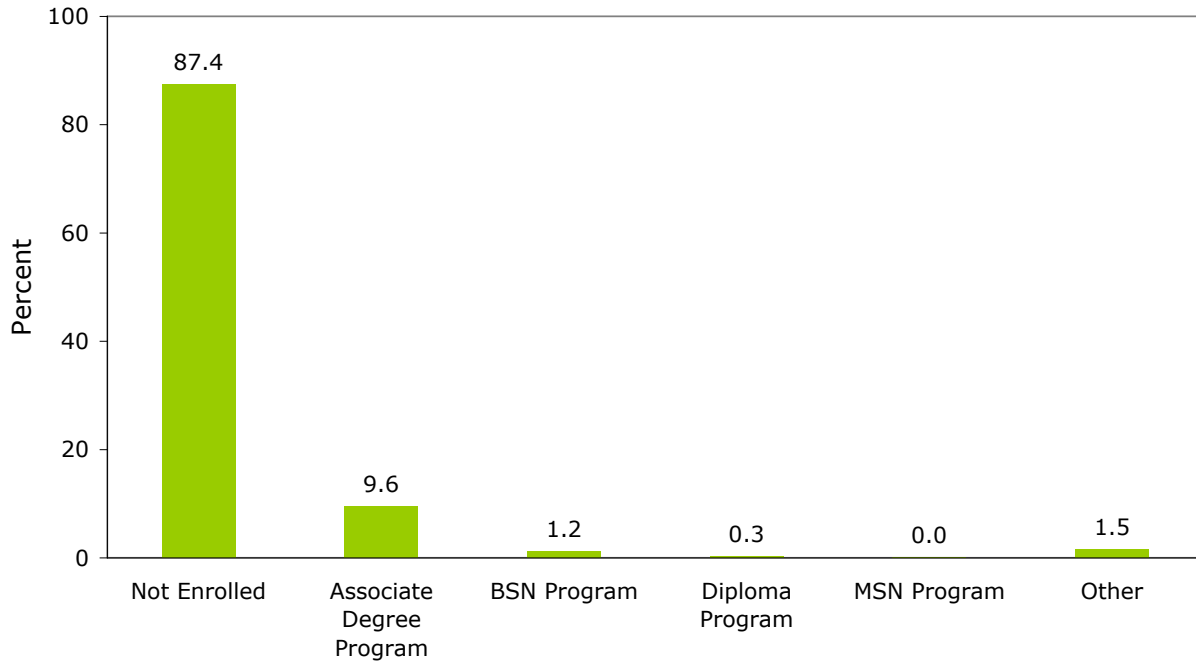


Chart 10. LPNs Currently Enrolled in Nursing Education Programs

LPNs Currently Enrolled in Nursing Education Programs



OPINIONS ABOUT NURSING

Charts 11 and 12 indicate what nurses liked most and least about their principal nursing employment. Nurses most liked the patients (38.9%) and the work itself (30.8%). Salary (24.6%) was the least liked aspect of nursing.

Chart 11. Most Liked Aspect of Nursing

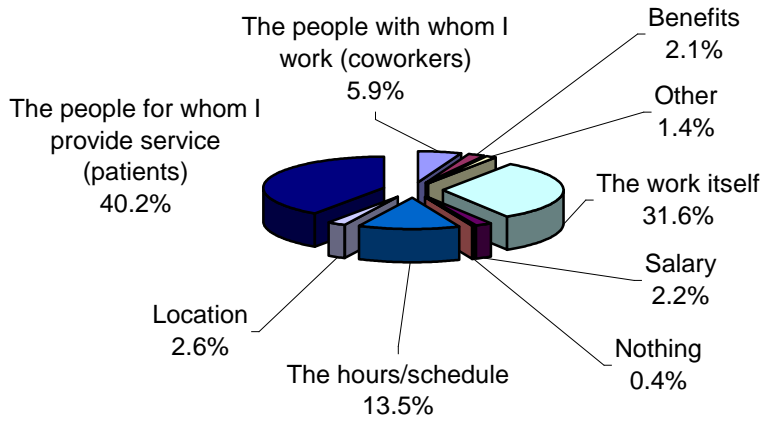
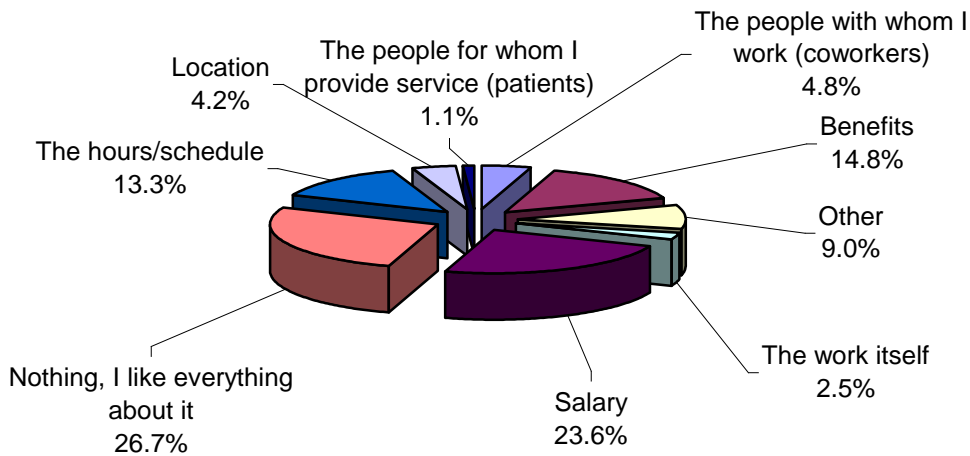


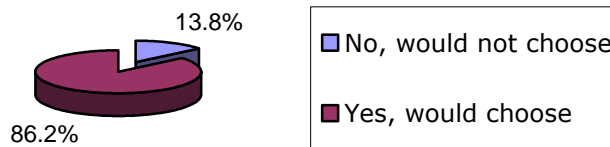
Chart 12. Least Liked Aspect of Nursing



Choosing Nursing Again

Chart 13 shows the percentages of LPNs that would or would not choose nursing as a career if they had to do it over. In 2005, 86.2% indicated they would choose nursing again. In the 2005 survey, 85.7% indicated they would choose nursing again.

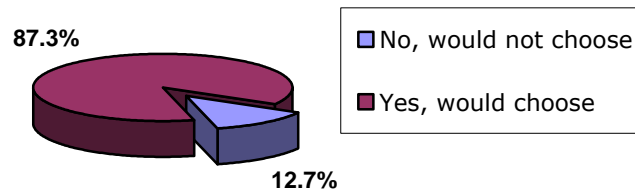
Chart 13. Choosing Nursing Again



Encouragement of Others

LPNs responded on whether they would encourage others to choose nursing as a career. There were not significant differences for those LPNs that indicated they would encourage others to choose nursing as a career in 2007 (87.3%) in comparison to 2005 (87.0%). Chart 14 shows the percentage of nurses who would and would not encourage others to choose a career in nursing.

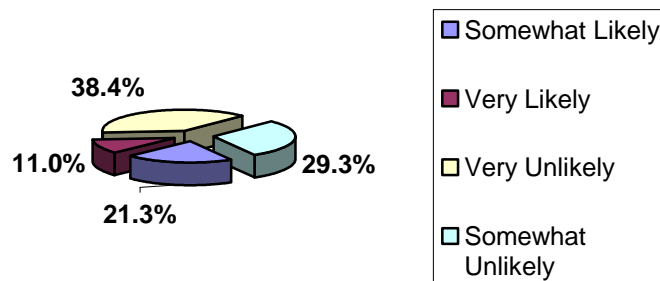
Chart 14. Encourage Others to Choose Nursing As A Career



Leaving Principal Employment

Nearly one-third of LPNs (38.4%) found it very unlikely that they would leave nursing as their principal employment in the next twelve months compared to 69.8% in 2005. Chart 15 expresses in percentages the likelihood of nurses leaving their principal employment. Some LPNs (29.3%) answered that leaving was somewhat unlikely, 21.3% of LPNs said leaving was somewhat likely, and 11.0% of LPNs indicated that their departure was very likely to occur.

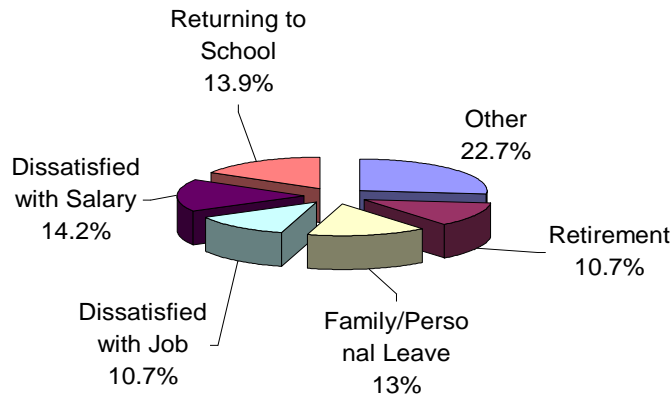
Chart 15. Likelihood of Leaving Principal Employment



Reasons for Leaving

Those Nebraska LPNs who plan to leave their principal employment as nurses identified main reasons for leaving. Over twenty percent (22.7%) of the respondents selected "other". Another 14.2% chose "dissatisfied with their salary". "Dissatisfaction with their jobs" was given as the main reason for planning to leave by 10.7% of the respondents. Chart 16 provides the percentage and main reason for LPNs who plan to leave their principal employment. In 2005, 28% selected "other" as the main reason for leaving, 17% chose "dissatisfied with their salary", and 15.4% chose "dissatisfaction with their jobs".

Chart 16. Main Reason for Planning to Leave Principal Employment



LICENSURE

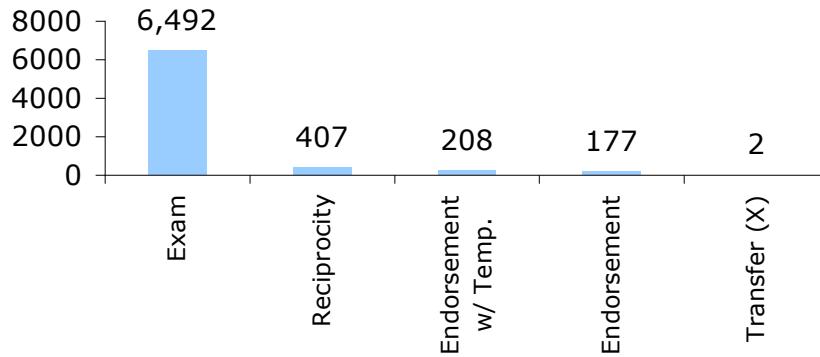
Method of Licensure

Nurses can attain a Nebraska license in one of two ways, by examination or endorsement/reciprocity. Endorsement/reciprocity is a process by which a nurse who has been licensed in another state may obtain a license in a different state. In the 2005 Nebraska sample, the large majority of LPNs obtained their initial licenses by examination in Nebraska. This was also noted in 2003. The frequency and percentage of each category are located on Table C. Data are illustrated in Chart 17.

Table C. Number and Percent of Nurses Licensed by Exam and Reciprocity

	Frequency	Percent
Exam	6,452	89.0%
Reciprocity	407	5.6%
Endorsement w/ Temp.	208	2.9%
Endorsement	177	2.4%
Transfer (X)	2	.0 %
Total	7,246	100 %

Chart 17. Number of Nurses Licensed by Exam and Reciprocity



Between the years 1950 and 2000, 87.3% of Nebraska LPNs were licensed by examination. Table D depicts the licensing method percentages by decades.

Table D. Date Licensed by How One was Licensed

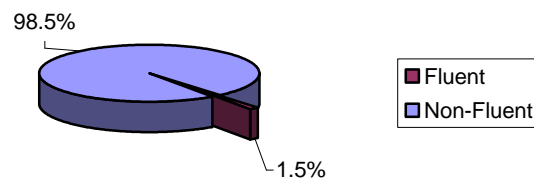
		Licensed by	
		Exam	Reciprocity
1950-1960	Count	19 .5%	5 .1%
1961-1970	Count	264 6.9%	26 .7%
1971-1980	Count	926 24.2%	101 2.6%
1981-1990	Count	951 24.8%	12 3.2%
1991-2000	Count	1181 30.9%	231 6%
Total	Count	3341 87.3%	485 12.7%

SIGN LANGUAGE FLUENCY AND LANGUAGES SPOKEN

The survey asked LPNs about fluency in sign language and languages spoken. Only 1.5% ($n = 89$) of LPNs surveyed are fluent in sign language and 98.5% ($n = 6,023$) are not fluent. Chart 18 shows the percentage of sign language fluency for Nebraska LPNs.

LPNs were asked if they could speak a language other than English. Of the 266 LPNs that speak a language other than English, 103 speak Spanish, 20 can speak German, 20 are fluent in French, and 123 speak another language.

Chart 18. Percentage of Sign Language Fluency for Nebraska LPNs



LOCATION OF NEBRASKA NURSES

Distribution of LPNs with Nebraska Licenses

Nebraska LPNs are not evenly dispersed within the state. Table E portrays the number of LPNs by county. The largest percentage (72%) of LPNs live outside of Douglas and Lancaster counties and 58.3% of all Nebraskans live outside these counties.

Table E. Location of Nebraska LPNs by County

County	Number of LPNs
Adams	96
Antelope	31
Arthur	0
Banner	0
Blaine	0
Boone	32
Box Butte	75
Boyd	8
Brown	7
Buffalo	233
Burt	24
Butler	30
Cass	26
Cedar	28
Chase	17
Cherry	20
Cheyenne	25
Clay	20
Colfax	30

Cuming	35
Custer	69
Dakota	14
Dawes	17
Dawson	70
Deuel	12
Dixon	16
Dodge	111
Douglas	1,045
Dundy	13
Fillmore	33
Franklin	13
Frontier	2
Furnas	20
Gage	130
Garden	7
Garfield	9
Gosper	8
Grant	1
Greeley	11
Hall	236
Hamilton	29
Harlan	11

Hayes	0
Hitchcock	5
Holt	66
Hooker	4
Howard	15
Jefferson	40
Johnson	20
Kearney	37
Keith	10
Keya Paha	0
Kimball	5
Knox	36
Lancaster	799
Lincoln	155
Logan	0
Loup	0
Madison	266
McPherson	0
Merrick	26
Morrill	33
Nance	14
Nemaha	18
Nuckolls	21

Otoe	46
Pawnee	11
Perkins	6
Phelps	66
Pierce	48
Platte	133
Polk	29
Red Willow	48
Richardson	40
Rock	14
Saline	53
Sarpy	127
Saunders	37
Scotts Bluff	199
Seward	42
Sheridan	11
Sherman	4
Sioux	0
Stanton	11
Thayer	36
Thomas	0
Thurston	17
Valley	28

Washington	29
Wayne	25
Webster	13
Wheeler	0
York	47
Total	5,325

SUMMARY

The results of the Nebraska Licensed Practical Nursing Workforce Survey 2007 indicated the vast majority of LPNs were female and Caucasian with a mean age of 43 years. The percent of LPNs under age 40 has dropped from 70% in 1980 to 40% in 2007. The percentage of racial/ethnic nurses rose over five percentage points to 8.7% in the last seven years. The salary range of most LPNs (70%) was more than \$5,000, but less than \$35,000. Most LPNs were principally employed in Nebraska, working for one employer in patient care, and in a position requiring a LPN license. Long term care is the major employer of LPNs. Most LPNs were educated in Nebraska in a practical nursing program receiving a diploma and were licensed by examination. The most liked aspect of nursing was “patients” and the least liked aspect was “salary”. The large majority of LPNs would choose nursing again, were very unlikely to leave nursing as their principal employment, and would encourage others to choose nursing as a career. “Other” was the main reason LPNs would choose to leave nursing as a career. The largest percent of LPNs live outside of Douglas and Lancaster counties. Very few LPNs are fluent in sign language or speak a language other than English.

Appendix A

Practical Nursing Workforce Survey 2007

1. Race Ethnic Category:

- Caucasian/White
- African American/Black
- Native American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other _____

3. Do you have minor children or adults living in your home who are dependent on you for their care? (Please indicate yes or no for each age group)

	Yes	No
Newborn to 6 years	___	___
7-14 years	___	___
15-18 years	___	___
Adults	___	___

5. Which nursing education programs have you completed? (Mark **all** that apply)

- Practical Nursing Program Diploma
- Practical Nursing Program – Associate Degree
- RN Diploma Program
- Associate Degree RN Program
- Baccalaureate Degree Program
- Master’s Degree Program
- Post-Master’s Certificate
- Doctoral Program

7. If you have a non-nursing degree(s), did you earn this degree **before** entering your basic nursing education program that prepared you for LPN licensure?

- Yes
- No

10. Which of the following best describes your current primary work situation? (Select **one**)

- Working in a nursing position requiring an LPN license or a position enhanced by my nursing knowledge and license.
- Working in a non-nursing job – looking for an LPN position
- Working in a non-nursing job – not looking for an LPN position
- Not employed – looking for an LPN position
- Not employed – looking for a non-nursing job
- Not employed – not looking for job
- Other _____

If you selected the first option to question #10, please continue.

If you selected any option except the first option to question # 10, please answer questions 17, 25 and 26.

11. For how many employers do you currently work for as an LPN?

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

13. What is your current annual salary for **all** nursing employment?

- Less than \$5,000
- \$5,000 - \$15,000
- More than \$15,000 but less than \$25,000
- More than \$25,000 but less than \$35,000
- More than \$35,000 but less than \$45,000
- More than \$45,000 but less than \$55,000
- More than \$55,000

2. Hispanic origin or descent? ___ Yes ___ No

2.b. If you speak a language other than English, please indicate. Spanish ___ French ___ German ___ Other (list): _____

2.c. Are you fluent in sign language? ___ Yes ___ No

4. Where was the location of the basic nursing education program that prepared you to take the LPN licensing examination.

- Nebraska
- Other state or US territory
- Foreign country

6. Are you currently enrolled in a nursing education program leading to a degree/certificate?

- Not currently enrolled
- Associate Degree Program
- Diploma Program
- Baccalaureate Degree Program
- Master’s Degree Program
- Other

8. Are you currently an LPN-C? (LPN certified for IV or NG tube therapy)

- Yes
- No

9. If yes, are you currently working in that role?

- Yes
- No

12. List all of the states in which you are currently practicing nursing. (Practicing nursing includes a variety of roles as defined in the Nurse Practice Act. Providing education/consultation, providing or managing direct patient care or using technology –telephone, computer, etc. – to assess, teach or advise patients in another state constitutes practicing nursing in that state.)

(CONTINUED ON REVERSE SIDE)

For the following questions, please use the following definitions:

Principal Employment: Employment where the greatest number of your LPN working hours are spent.

Secondary Employment: Employment where the second greatest number of your LPN working hours are spent.

14. Please identify the type of **setting** that most closely corresponds to your nursing practice positions:

	Principal Employment (Select <u>one</u>)	Secondary Employment (Select <u>one</u>)
Hospital	_____	_____
Long Term Care	_____	_____
Nursing Education	_____	_____
Alcohol/Detox/Halfway House	_____	_____
Public/Community/Home Health	_____	_____
Student Health/School	_____	_____
Occupational Health	_____	_____
Ambulatory Care	_____	_____
Physician's office	_____	_____
Self-employed	_____	_____
Agency Staff (temporary or scheduler)	_____	_____
Insurance Company/HMO	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

15. Please choose the major activity that best corresponds to your:

	Principal Employment (Select <u>one</u>)	Secondary Employment (Select <u>one</u>)
Patient Care	_____	_____
Teaching/Instruction	_____	_____
Administration	_____	_____
Quality Assurance/Utilization Review	_____	_____
Case Management	_____	_____
Nursing Research	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

16. How long have you been employed by your current facility/employer?

	Principal Employment	Secondary Employment
Less than 1 year	_____	_____
1-3 years	_____	_____
More than 3, but less than 5 years	_____	_____
5 or more, but less than 10 years	_____	_____
10 or more years	_____	_____

17. Of the total years you have been licensed as an LPN, how many years have you been employed in nursing? _____

18. Write in the city and state of your principal employment

_____ city _____ state

19. On the average, how many hours per week (all employment) do you work as an LPN?

- _____ 10 hours or less
- _____ more than 10 hours, but less than 20 hours
- _____ at least 20 hours, but less than 30 hours
- _____ at least 30 hours, but less than 40 hours
- _____ at least 40 hours, but less than 50 hours
- _____ 50 hours or more

20. Only answer this question if you plan to retire in the next 5 years. If you are planning to retire in the next 5 years, what would persuade you to delay your retirement?

- _____ Increased salary
- _____ Continued benefits
- _____ Shortened/flexible work hours
- _____ A position that is less physically demanding
- _____ Other (specify) _____

21. What do you like **most** about your principal nursing employment? (Select one)

- _____ The work itself
- _____ Salary
- _____ The hours/schedule
- _____ The location
- _____ The people for whom I provide service (patients)
- _____ The people with whom I work (co-workers)
- _____ The benefits (insurance, paid vacation, retirement, etc.)
- _____ Other _____
- _____ I don't like anything about it

22. What do you like **least** about your principal nursing employment? (Select one)

- _____ The work itself
- _____ Salary
- _____ The hours/schedule
- _____ The location
- _____ The people for whom I provide service (patients)
- _____ The people with whom I work (co-workers)
- _____ The benefits (insurance, paid vacation, retirement etc.)
- _____ Other _____
- _____ Nothing – I like everything about it

23. How likely are you to leave your principal employment in the next 12 months?

- Very unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Somewhat likely
- Very likely

25. If you had it to do over, would you choose nursing as a career?

- Yes
- No

24. If very likely or somewhat likely that you will leave your principal employment in the next 12 month, what is the main reason? (Select one)

- Retirement
- Family/personal leave
- Dissatisfaction with salary
- Returning to school
- Dissatisfaction with job
- Other _____

26. Would you encourage others to choose nursing as a career?

- Yes
- No