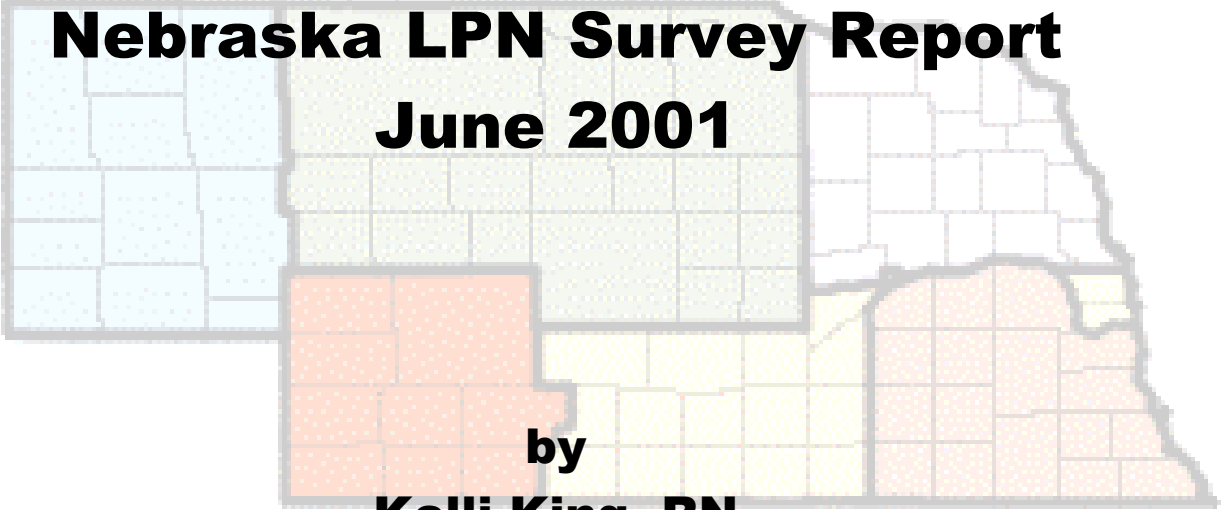


Nebraska Health and Human Services System



**Nebraska LPN Survey Report
June 2001**

by

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&

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BACKGROUND

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 (Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce Survey 2000) was mailed to all Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in Nebraska in November 2000.

A total of 6,673 surveys were sent out with 4,383 Workforce Surveys returned to the Nebraska Center for Nursing. They were then sent to the Nebraska Evaluation and Research Center (NEAR) and entered for data analysis. If a returned survey were incomplete, or if the respondent was not part of the Nebraska Health and Human Services database, the survey was deleted from the analysis. This left 4,373 nurses providing data from both survey and the database. Of these 4,373 nurses, 3,828 identified themselves as being principally employed in Nebraska. The number of respondents fluctuates from table to table due to omitted responses to some of the variables. Only when all nurses responded to both variables being crossed with the total number of respondents equal 3,828. A copy of the survey form can be found in Appendix A.

The Nebraska survey data were compiled by Sara J. Finney, MA; Jenenne A. Geske, MA; Michael D. Toland, BS; and R. J. De Ayala, PhD, of the Nebraska Evaluation and Research Center, University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

The number of active Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) has remained fairly steady in the past ten years. 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.

Table A. Number of Active Registered Nurses in Nebraska 1985 - 2000

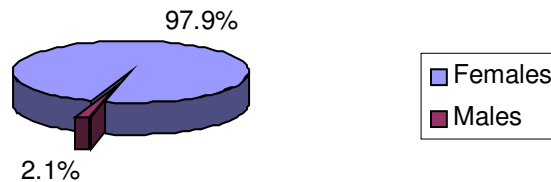
1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
5,833	6,029	6,340	6,330	6,989	6,787	6,202

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

In Nebraska 2.1% of LPNs identified themselves as male and 97.9% as female. Chart 1 shows the percentage of male and female nurses in Nebraska for the current 2000 survey.

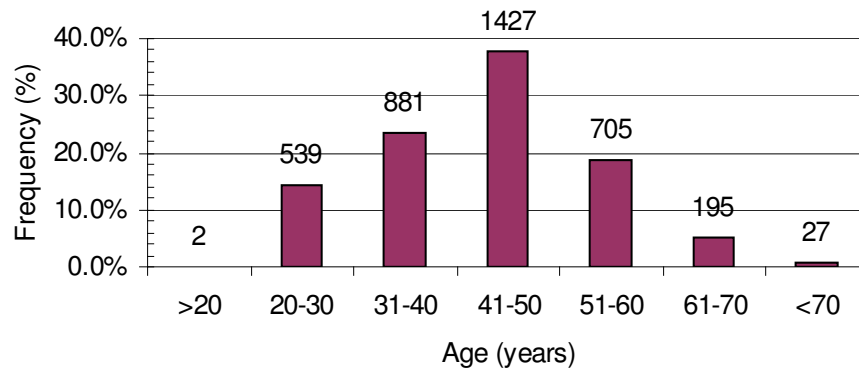
Chart 1. Distribution of Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses by Gender in 2000



Age

Chart 2 depicts the distribution of Nebraska LPNs by age. The mean age was 44.6 years of age.

Chart 2. Distribution of Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses by Age

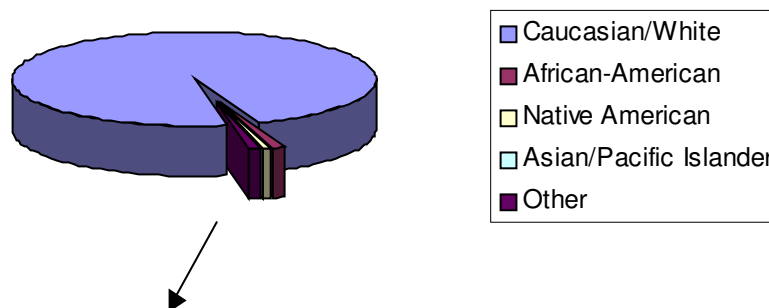


In Nebraska the average age increased from 42 years in 1997 to 44.6 years in 2000. In the LPNs under 40 category, Nebraska had 70% in 1980 and only 37.6% by 2000. In 1980, 42.3% of Nebraska's LPNs were under age 30. This number dropped to 14.3% in 2000.

Racial/Ethnic Background

Chart 3 shows the distribution of LPNs in Nebraska according to self-reported racial/ethnic categories. The preponderance of nurses were Caucasian, 97%. Chart 4 depicts the distribution of Nebraska's general population.

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



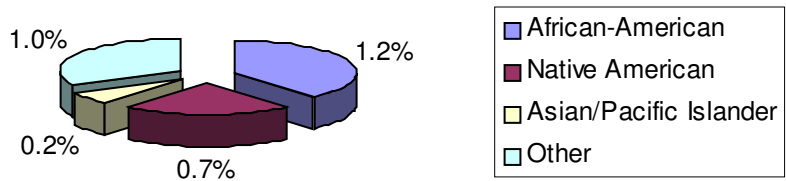
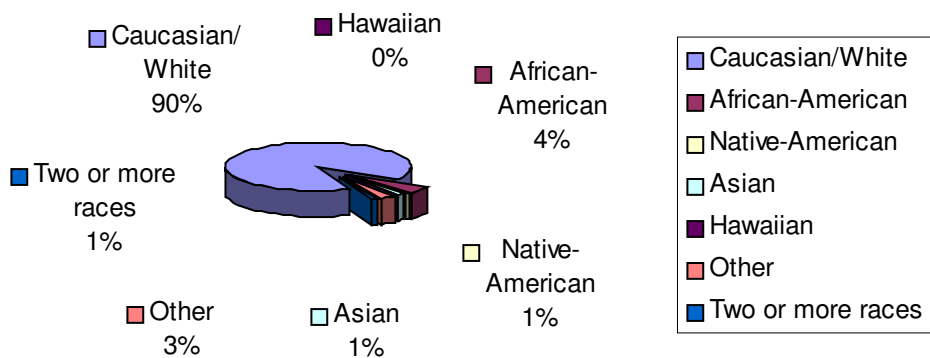


Chart 4. Distribution of Nebraska's General Population by Racial/Ethnic Background



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. Even with the possible double count of some nurses, Nebraska's percentage of racial/ethnic nurses was 3.1%. Those indicating Hispanic origin or descent comprised 2.3%.

Family Status

Marital status was not a variable of the Nebraska survey. Minor children or adults dependent on the nurse's care were the choices. Nebraska LPNs reported that 25.3% have children 6 years old or younger, 39.5% have children 7 to 14 years old, and 31.6% have children ages 15 to 18. 18.6% reported that they have adults living in their home who are dependent upon them for care.

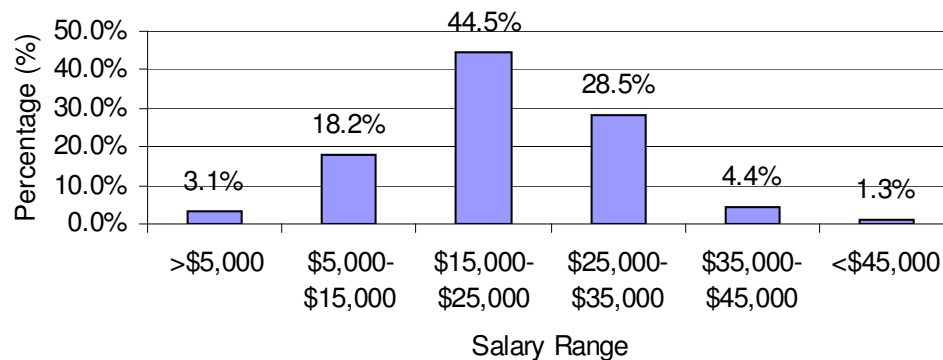
SALARY

The Nebraska respondents were asked to describe their salary ranges. Chart 5 and Table B display the reported salary information. No data was available to correlate hours worked with salary. Lower reported salaries may reflect part-time employment.

Table B. Percent Nebraska LPN Salary

Salary Range	Percent of Respondents
< \$5,000	3.1%
\$5-15,000	18.2%
\$15-25,000	44.5%
\$25-35,000	28.5%
\$35-45,000	4.4%
>\$45,000	1.3%

Chart 5. Salaries of Nebraska LPNs



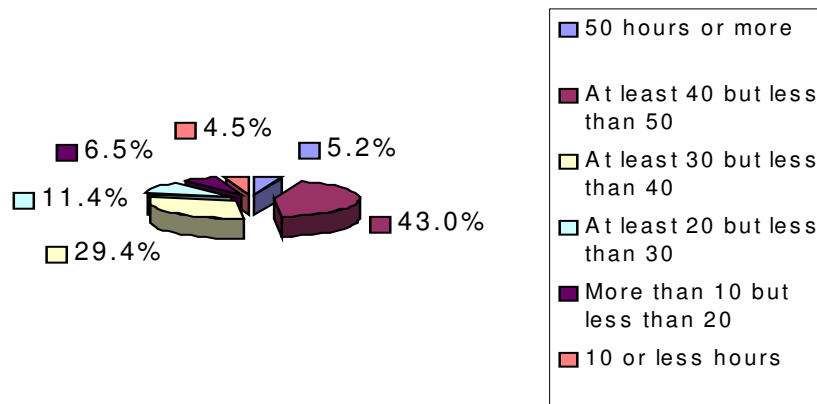
EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT

Hours Worked per Week

Data were collected that quantify 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.) A graph showing nurses' hours worked per week comprises Chart 6.

There were minimal numbers of unemployed, currently licensed LPNs in Nebraska, because active practice is 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 2000, 97.6% of Nebraska LPNs were working in nursing full or part-time.

Chart 6. Average Work Hours Per Week for Nebraska LPNs



Frequency and Percent of Work Situation

Nearly the entire sample (96.5%) was working in nursing positions that required an LPN license. Small numbers were working in non-nursing positions (0.9%). Only 0.5% were not employed, and of these non-employed licensees, only half were looking for positions in nursing. Table C depicts the percentages of licensees in reported work situations.

Table C. Percentages of Nebraska LPNs Work Situation

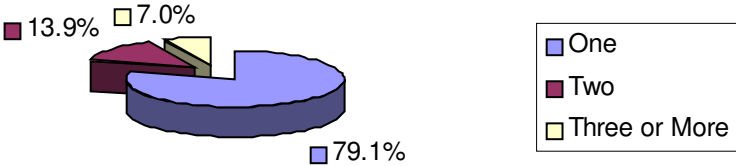
	Percent
Working in a Nursing position requiring an LPN license	96.5%
Working in a non-nursing job, looking for LPN position	0.3%
Working in a non-nursing job, not looking for LPN position	0.6%

Not employed - looking for LPN position	0.2%
Not employed - looking for a non-nursing job	0.0%
Not employed - not looking for job	0.3%
Other	2.1%
Total	100%

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. The percentage of LPNs who cited only one employer was 79.1%. Fewer LPNs (13.9%) worked for two employers, and 7% of LPNs worked for three or more employers.

Chart 7. Number of Employers



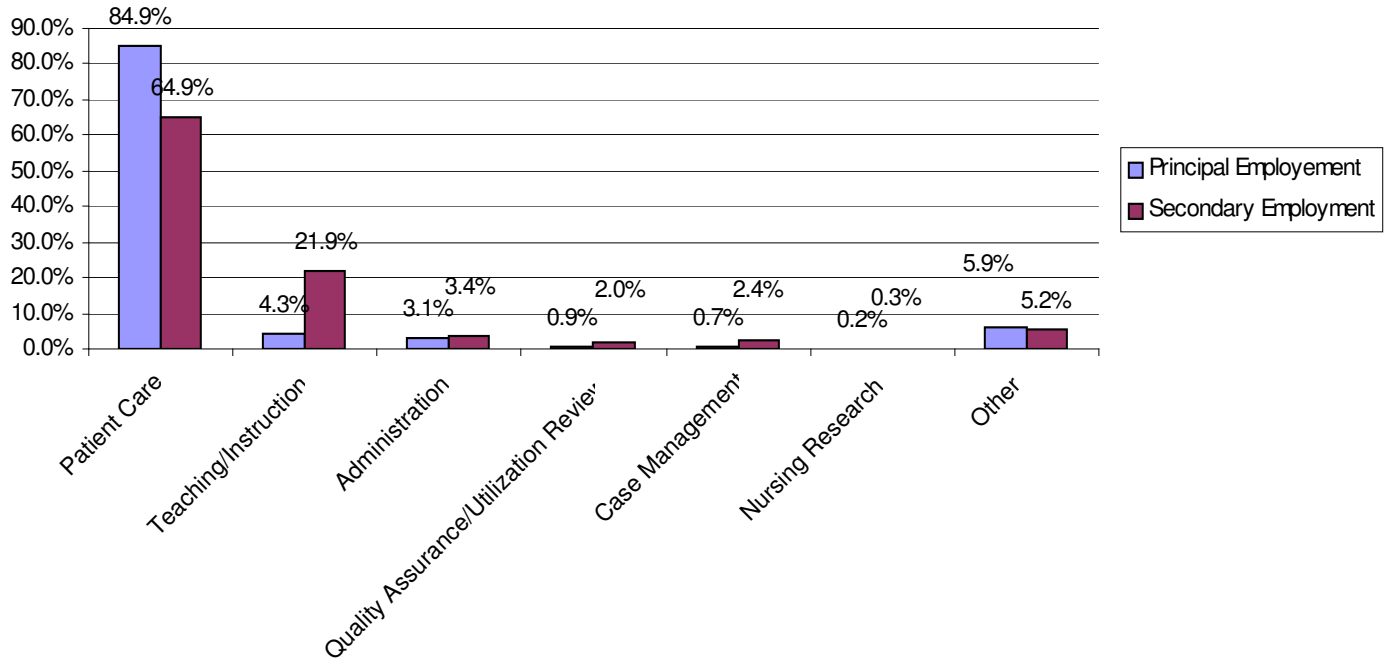
Employment

Activity

LPNs identified the types of employment activities they engaged in. The preponderance of LPNs worked in patient care (84.9%). Those nurses who had

secondary employment also worked predominately in patient care. 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. 37.3% of LPNs in Nebraska work in Long Term Care. The total employment-setting identification follows in Table D. Data were collected in the following employment setting categories: 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, Insurance Company/HMO and "Other."

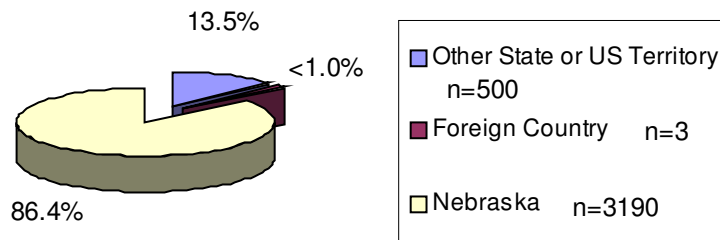
Table D. Percent by Employment Setting in Nebraska

	Nebraska Percentage
Long Term Care	37.3
Hospital	25.7
Physician's Office	20.3
Other	5.9
Public/Community/Home Health	4.5
Ambulatory Care	1.8
Agency Staff	1.6
Student Health/School	1.2
Occupational Health	.5
Self-employed	.5
Nurse Education	.2
Alcohol/Detox/Halfway House	.2
Insurance/HMO	.2

EDUCATION

86.5% of Nebraska's LPNs graduated from a Nebraska LPN program, 13.5% were educated in other states, and 1.0% are foreign educated. This information is depicted in Chart 9.

Chart 9. Location of Nursing Preparation



Of the LPNs who responded to the survey 93.7% reported receiving a diploma from a practical nursing program, 6.1% reported receiving an associate degree from a practical nursing program, 0.8% reported they had completed an associate degree in nursing, 0.3% reported completing a BSN program, and

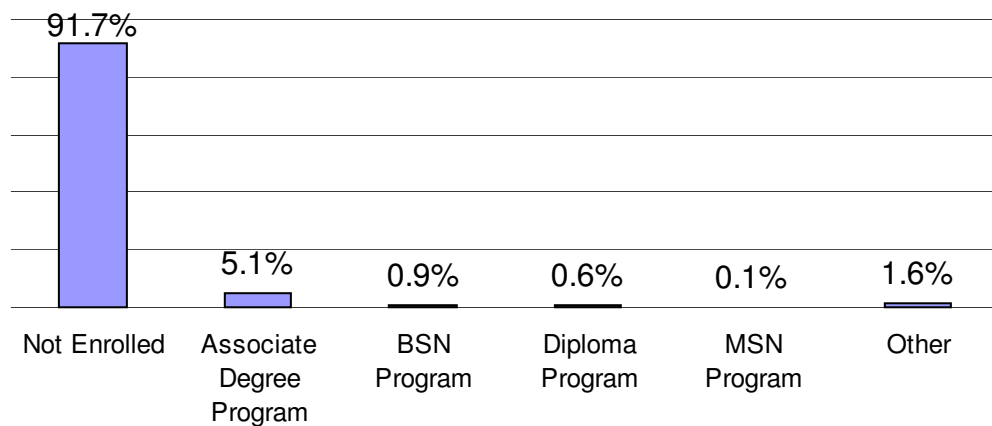
0.1% reported completing a masters degree program. It should be noted that this survey was completed only by persons currently holding an active LPN license. Most LPNs who go on to RN education do not maintain their LPN license once they receive an RN license. Therefore these numbers are not reflective of the total percentage of LPNs who complete RN education.

12.8% of the LPNs who responded to the survey reported that they had a non-nursing degree before they entered the LPN program.

8.3% of the LPNs who responded reported they are currently enrolled in an RN nursing program.

Chart 10 shows the percentage of current LPNs who are enrolled in various types of nursing education programs.

Chart 10. LPNs Currently Enrolled in RN Programs



OPINIONS ABOUT NURSING

LPNs were asked to identify what they liked both least and best about their careers. Categories included: the work itself, salary, hours/schedules, location, patients, coworkers, benefits and other. Chart 11 breaks down what nurses liked best and Chart 12 categorizes what nurses liked least. In total, 32.7% of nurses most liked the work itself. Salary (32.3%) was the least liked aspect of nursing.

Chart 11. Most Liked Aspect of Nursing

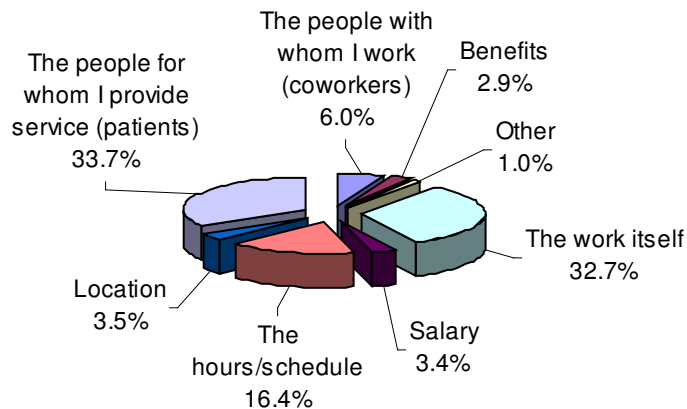
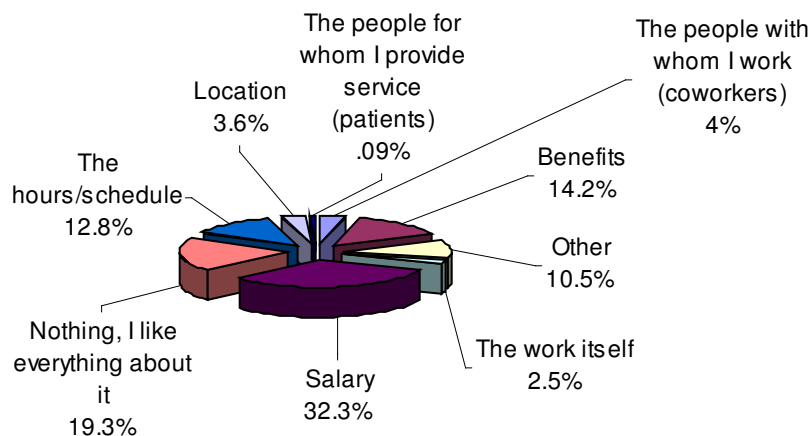


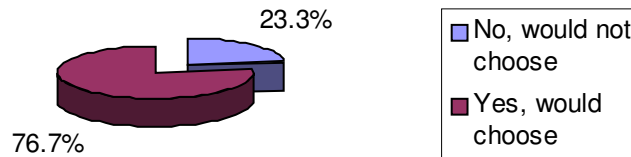
Chart 12. Least Liked Aspect of Nursing



Choosing Nursing Again

LPNs surveyed were asked if they had it to do over again would they choose nursing as a career? 76.7% indicated they would choose nursing again.

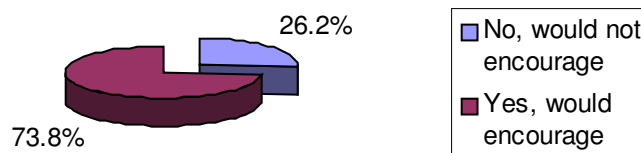
Chart 13. Choosing Nursing Again



Encouragement of Others

LPNs supplied their opinions on whether they would encourage others to choose nursing as a career. Most (66%) responded that they would. Chart 14 shows the percentage of nurses who would and would not encourage others to choose to practice nursing.

Chart 14. Encourage Others to Choose Nursing As A Career

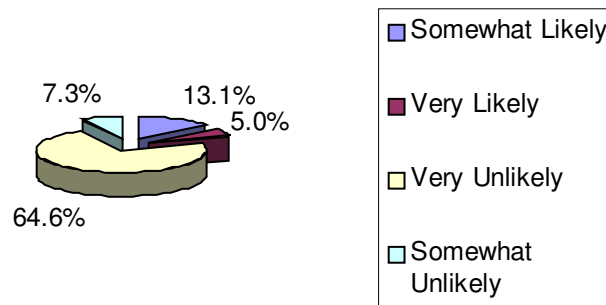


Leaving Principal Employment

Most LPNs (64.6%) found it very unlikely that they would leave nursing as their principal employment. Chart 15 expresses in percentages the likelihood of nurses leaving their principal employment.

Some LPNs (7.3%) answered that leaving was somewhat unlikely, 13.1% of LPNs said leaving was somewhat likely, and only 5% of LPNs indicated that their departure was very likely to occur.

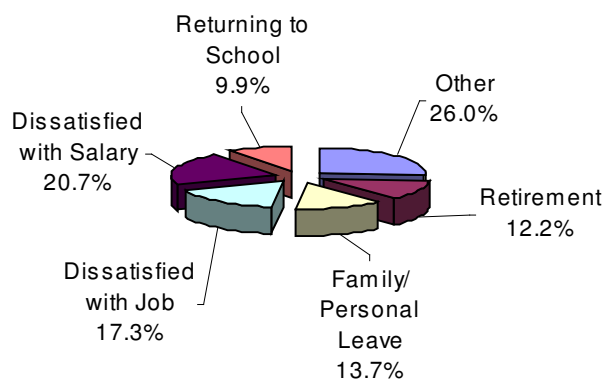
Chart 15. Likelihood of Leaving Principal Employment



Reasons for Leaving

Those Nebraska LPNs who plan to leave their principal employment as nurses identified main reasons for leaving. Over a fourth (26%) of the respondents selected "other." Another 20.7% chose "dissatisfied with their salary." "Dissatisfaction with their jobs" was given as the main reason for planning to leave by 17.3% of the respondents. Chart 16 provides the percentage and main reason for LPNs who plan to leave their principal employment.

Chart 16. Main Reason For Planning to Leaving Principal Employment



LICENSURE

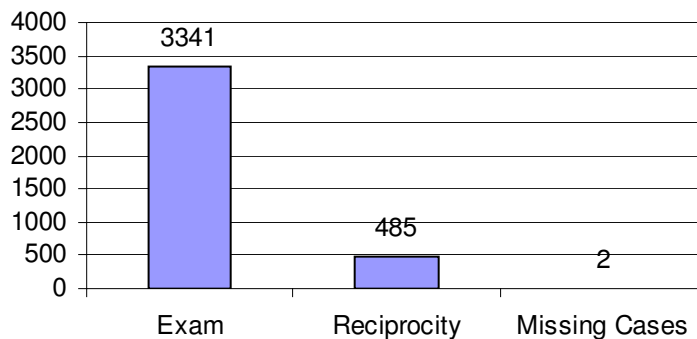
Method of Licensure

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 Nebraska sample, the large majority of LPNs obtained their initial licenses by examination in Nebraska. The frequency and percentage of each category are located on Table E. These data are illustrated in Chart 17.

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

	Frequency	Percent
Exam	3341	87.3%
Reciprocity/Endorsement	485	12.7%
Total	3828	100.0%
Missing unknown	2	

Chart 17. Number of Nurses Licensed by Exam and Reciprocity



Since 1950 87.3% of Nebraska LPNs were licensed by examination. Nebraska. Table F depicts the licensing method percentages by decades.

Table F. 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%

LOCATION OF NEBRASKA NURSES

Nebraska LPNs are not evenly dispersed within the state. Table G portrays the number of LPNs by county. Counties not listed had no LPNs in that county. The largest percentage (59%) of LPNs live outside of Douglas, Lancaster, or Sarpy County. Yet, only 52% of all Nebraskans outside these counties.

Table G. Location of Nebraska LPNs by County

County	Number of LPNs
Adams	102
Antelope	42
Arthur	2
Banner	3

Blaine	5
Boone	45
Box Butte	94
Boyd	16
Brown	15
Buffalo	251
Burt	43
Butler	49
Cass	61
Cedar	48
Chase	20
Cherry	19
Cheyenne	39
Clay	36
Colfax	49
Cuming	42
Custer	72
Dakota	25
Dawes	40
Dawson	93
Deuel	6
Dixon	28
Dodge	110

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Douglas	900
Dundy	19
Fillmore	36
Franklin	21
Frontier	10
Furnas	44
Gage	164
Garden	16
Garfield	15
Gosper	12
Grant	5
Greeley	25
Hall	216
Hamilton	47
Harlan	29
Hayes	3
Hitchcock	18
Holt	55
Hooker	2
Howard	22
Jefferson	53
Johnson	31
Kearney	43

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Keith	32
Keya Paha	4
Kimball	16
Knox	55
Lancaster	818
Lincoln	184
Logan	4
Loup	5
Madison	254
McPherson	3
Merrick	51
Morrill	42
Nance	25
Nemaha	20
Nuckolls	25
Otoe	47
Pawnee	20
Perkins	14
Phelps	64
Pierce	63
Platte	155
Polk	48
Red Willow	60

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Richardson	56
Rock	12
Saline	73
Sarpy	226
Saunders	47
Scotts Bluff	240
Seward	53
Sheridan	32
Sherman	11
Sioux	2
Stanton	20
Thayer	37
Thomas	5
Thurston	24
Valley	28
Washington	48
Wayne	31
Webster	22
Wheeler	1
York	55
Total	6,173

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SUMMARY

The results of the Nebraska Licensed Practical Nursing Workforce Survey 2000 indicate that Nebraska has an aging LPN population. The overall number of LPNs in the state has remained relatively stable over the past ten years. The vast majority of LPNs are female Caucasians. The primary worksite for LPNs is long-term care and they are involved in providing patient care. LPNs most like the “work itself” and least like their salaries. Almost three fourths would encourage others to become nurses. LPNs in Nebraska were largely “very unlikely” to “unlikely” to leave their current employment. For those who did indicate they would leave employment a variety of reasons were cited. The “average” LPN works between 40 and 50 hours a week and earns \$15,000 - \$25,000 annually. Nebraska nurses were not distributed evenly throughout the state. A large proportion of LPNs live and work outside of the metropolitan areas. Most LPNs licensed in Nebraska were educated in Nebraska and licensed by examination.

Appendix A

Practical Nursing Workforce Survey 2000

1. Race Ethnic Category:

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

2. Hispanic origin or descent? Yes No

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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7-14 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15-18 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.)

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

(CONTINUED ON REVERSE SIDE)

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