

2019 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce:

Characteristics of Employed RNs by Highest Level of Nursing Education

Background

Since the Future of Nursing 2010 Report (Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2011) called for the development of a more highly educated nursing workforce, Hawai'i has worked to increase the proportion of RNs with a baccalaureate (BSN) or graduate degree in nursing. As of 2019, 74% of Hawai'i's RNs¹ have a BSN or higher which is 15 percentage points higher than the state's BSN+ rate in 2010 and 17 percentage points higher than the national average in 2018 (Campaign for Action, 2020).

Though the majority of Hawai'i's RNs have a BSN or graduate nursing degree, four of Hawai'i's community colleges continue to produce about 140 new ADN-prepared RNs each academic year (Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, 2020). Though Hawai'i's ADN-prepared RNs have opportunities to pursue educational advancement through RN-to-BSN programs offered online from in-state and out-of-state institutions, they often experience significant time, financial, and socio-emotional barriers that can impede educational progression (National Education Progression in Nursing Collaborative, 2021b).

Purpose

To facilitate the reduction of barriers and to promote understanding of the potential return on investment for advancing their education, it helps to understand the characteristics of Hawai'i's ADN-prepared RNs. To that end, this report compares selected demographic, educational, and employment characteristics of RNs whose highest nursing education is an RN diploma or ADN to those RNs with a BSN or graduate degree. Identifying the characteristics and key differences between ADN- and BSN/graduate-prepared RNs can help workforce developers formulate more targeted messaging to key segments of the ADN-prepared workforce about the value of progressing to the BSN or graduate level.

Data Source

This report contains data collected on the 2019 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply Survey. The statewide report contains additional data and the study methodology (Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, 2019).

¹ Includes APRNs because APRNs are required to hold an RN in Hawai'i and to maintain consistency with the calculation method used by the Campaign for Action.

Key Conclusions

ADN-prepared nurses are, on average, older and have been in practice longer than RNs with a BSN or graduate degree. Further, about 16% of ADN-prepared RNs plan to retire from the workforce by 2023. Despite the national push toward increasing the rate at which ADN-prepared nurses return to school, older, experienced RNs looking toward retirement are unlikely to be motivated to pursue a BSN. As many as 40% of Hawai'i's ADN-prepared RNs are unlikely to be motivated by messaging that the BSN improving critical thinking, clinical judgement, are opportunities for professional advancement. Rather, motivating this subset of ADN-prepared RNs to pursue educational advancement may be more likely when messaging emphasizes the value of graduate education and the potential for these nurses to pursue post-retirement employment as adjunct faculty.

ADN-prepared RNs who are younger, less expert in their practice, and/or have expectations of career advancement may be motivated to return to school through financial incentives, support in managing time and work-life balance, and advisement about how additional education aligns with their professional goals (National Education Progression in Nursing Collaborative, 2021a).

Data Tables

General Information

Following are 13 tables which present selected characteristics of RNs employed in Hawai'i by their highest level of nursing education. The "Total" column represents all RNs regardless of educational attainment. All tables are layered by the county of RNs' primary employment location. For the sake of brevity and readability, the term "C&C of Honolulu" is used to indicate the City & County of Honolulu. Tables are organized into three sections: [Demographics](#), [Educational Characteristics](#), and [Employment Characteristics](#).

Demographics

Table 1. Gender

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Male	13.2%	14.1%	12.9%
	Female	86.2%	85.4%	86.5%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%
C&C of Honolulu	Male	13.9%	14.9%	13.6%
	Female	85.6%	84.7%	85.8%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%
Hawai'i County	Male	11.5%	13.2%	10.4%
	Female	88.0%	86.1%	89.2%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%
Maui County	Male	11.8%	14.3%	9.7%
	Female	88.0%	85.7%	90.0%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%
Kaua'i County	Male	8.2%	5.8%	10.4%
	Female	91.2%	93.5%	89.0%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
County Not Reported	Male	15.0%	20.4%	12.7%
	Female	82.7%	77.9%	84.7%
	Other/Prefer Not to Say	2.4%	1.8%	2.6%

Table 2. Mean and Median Age in 2019

	Total		ADN or Diploma		BSN or Graduate	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
C&C of Honolulu	44.48	44.00	50.15	51.00	42.97	42.00
Hawai'i County	46.39	46.00	49.83	51.00	44.20	42.00
Maui County	45.77	45.00	47.52	47.00	44.33	43.00
Kaua'i County	46.34	45.00	49.52	50.00	43.23	42.00
Not Reported	42.91	40.00	49.35	50.50	40.25	38.00

Table 3. Age Cohort in 2019

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	20-24	1.5%	0.7%	1.8%
	25-34	23.8%	12.1%	28.1%
	35-44	25.9%	23.1%	27.0%
	45-54	23.6%	25.1%	23.1%
	55-59	9.0%	13.8%	7.2%
	60-64	9.6%	15.4%	7.4%
	65-74	6.1%	8.6%	5.1%
	75 and older	0.5%	1.2%	0.3%
C&C of Honolulu	20-24	1.4%	0.7%	1.6%
	25-34	24.3%	11.0%	27.9%
	35-44	26.3%	22.2%	27.4%
	45-54	24.1%	25.2%	23.8%
	55-59	8.7%	14.5%	7.2%
	60-64	8.9%	16.2%	7.0%
	65-74	5.6%	8.6%	4.9%
	75 and older	0.5%	1.6%	0.2%
Hawai'i County	20-24	1.3%	0.8%	1.6%
	25-34	21.2%	10.7%	27.8%
	35-44	23.6%	21.1%	25.2%
	45-54	23.1%	27.7%	20.2%
	55-59	10.4%	15.7%	7.1%
	60-64	11.7%	14.5%	10.0%
	65-74	8.2%	9.1%	7.6%
	75 and older	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Maui County	20-24	2.2%	0.4%	3.6%
	25-34	20.8%	15.0%	25.5%
	35-44	25.5%	28.3%	23.3%
	45-54	22.6%	25.7%	20.0%
	55-59	10.4%	9.7%	10.9%
	60-64	12.4%	15.0%	10.2%
	65-74	5.8%	5.3%	6.2%
	75 and older	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Kaua'i County	20-24	1.5%	0.0%	3.1%
	25-34	21.2%	16.4%	26.0%
	35-44	25.9%	21.1%	30.5%
	45-54	20.1%	20.3%	19.8%
	55-59	10.4%	16.4%	4.6%
	60-64	11.6%	13.3%	9.9%
	65-74	8.5%	10.9%	6.1%
	75 and older	0.8%	1.6%	0.0%
Not Reported	20-24	2.0%	1.4%	2.3%
	25-34	29.7%	12.5%	36.8%
	35-44	26.8%	27.8%	26.4%
	45-54	23.6%	20.8%	24.7%
	55-59	5.7%	8.3%	4.6%
	60-64	6.1%	13.9%	2.9%
	65-74	5.3%	13.9%	1.7%
	75 and older	0.8%	1.4%	0.6%

Table 4. Race/Ethnicity

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Two or More Races	20.0%	21.6%	19.2%
	White	27.7%	33.9%	25.1%
	Black/African American	1.1%	1.2%	1.0%
	Chinese	2.7%	1.9%	3.0%
	Filipino	32.6%	25.9%	35.5%
	Japanese	9.8%	8.3%	10.5%
	Other Asian	3.0%	3.0%	2.9%
	Native Hawaiian	1.6%	1.7%	1.5%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.7%	1.0%	0.5%
	Other Race	0.9%	1.4%	0.7%
C&C of Honolulu	Two or More Races	18.8%	19.0%	18.7%
	White	23.3%	30.3%	21.2%
	Black/African American	1.2%	1.8%	1.0%
	Chinese	3.5%	3.2%	3.6%
	Filipino	35.4%	27.0%	38.0%
	Japanese	11.4%	10.6%	11.6%
	Other Asian	3.5%	4.7%	3.2%
	Native Hawaiian	1.3%	0.8%	1.4%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.9%	1.4%	0.7%
	Other Race	0.7%	1.0%	0.6%
Hawai'i County	Two or More Races	26.3%	29.3%	24.1%
	White	41.1%	39.4%	42.3%
	Black/African American	0.8%	0.6%	0.9%
	Chinese	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
	Filipino	19.1%	18.3%	19.6%
	Japanese	6.4%	5.3%	7.3%
	Other Asian	1.5%	0.9%	1.9%
	Native Hawaiian	2.6%	3.0%	2.4%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other Race	1.6%	2.6%	0.9%
Maui County	Two or More Races	21.6%	22.4%	20.8%
	White	39.4%	40.6%	38.4%
	Black/African American	0.5%	0.0%	0.9%
	Chinese	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
	Filipino	28.3%	26.1%	30.3%
	Japanese	4.6%	4.9%	4.3%
	Other Asian	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%
	Native Hawaiian	2.4%	2.3%	2.5%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%
	Other Race	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%
Kaua'i County	Two or More Races	20.0%	22.7%	17.2%
	White	35.2%	30.6%	40.0%
	Black/African American	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Chinese	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Filipino	34.7%	35.9%	33.5%
	Japanese	5.5%	5.4%	5.5%
	Other Asian	0.9%	0.6%	1.2%
	Native Hawaiian	1.5%	2.4%	0.6%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%
	Other Race	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%

Not Reported	Two or More Races	18.3%	19.4%	17.8%
	White	28.0%	39.5%	22.6%
	Black/African American	2.5%	2.0%	2.7%
	Chinese	2.4%	1.0%	3.1%
	Filipino	32.4%	23.5%	36.5%
	Japanese	10.4%	8.8%	11.1%
	Other Asian	3.6%	1.0%	4.9%
	Native Hawaiian	1.2%	2.9%	0.4%
	Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	1.0%	0.0%
	Other Race	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%

Table 5. Native Hawaiian Ancestry

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Yes	10.6%	10.9%	10.5%
	No	87.5%	86.3%	87.9%
	Unsure	1.9%	2.8%	1.6%
C&C of Honolulu	Yes	9.9%	9.5%	10.0%
	No	88.4%	88.2%	88.4%
	Unsure	1.7%	2.2%	1.6%
Hawai'i County	Yes	16.2%	15.5%	16.6%
	No	82.0%	81.3%	82.4%
	Unsure	1.8%	3.2%	0.9%
Maui County	Yes	13.1%	12.0%	14.0%
	No	85.2%	85.7%	84.7%
	Unsure	1.7%	2.3%	1.3%
Kaua'i County	Yes	7.3%	10.4%	4.3%
	No	90.2%	86.4%	93.9%
	Unsure	2.5%	3.2%	1.8%
Not Reported	Yes	7.3%	9.4%	6.4%
	No	88.7%	84.0%	90.6%
	Unsure	4.0%	6.6%	3.0%

Educational Characteristics

Table 6. Initial Nursing Education

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	LPN Certificate	5.8%	10.1%	4.2%
	RN Diploma	6.7%	19.3%	2.0%
	ADN	26.8%	70.6%	10.3%
	BSN	58.3%	0.0%	80.2%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	2.4%	0.0%	3.3%
C&C of Honolulu	LPN Certificate	4.8%	8.4%	3.8%
	RN Diploma	5.9%	21.1%	1.8%
	ADN	21.8%	70.5%	8.7%
	BSN	65.2%	0.0%	82.6%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	2.4%	0.0%	3.1%
Hawai'i County	LPN Certificate	5.0%	6.3%	4.1%
	RN Diploma	6.7%	14.1%	1.8%
	ADN	42.6%	79.6%	18.5%
	BSN	43.6%	0.0%	71.9%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	2.2%	0.0%	3.7%
Maui County	LPN Certificate	12.0%	13.9%	10.3%
	RN Diploma	9.5%	15.7%	4.2%
	ADN	40.9%	70.4%	15.5%
	BSN	34.8%	0.0%	64.8%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	2.8%	0.0%	5.2%
Kaua'i County	LPN Certificate	11.9%	20.1%	4.2%
	RN Diploma	11.3%	20.1%	3.0%
	ADN	38.9%	59.7%	19.4%
	BSN	36.1%	0.0%	69.7%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	1.9%	0.0%	3.6%
Not Reported	LPN Certificate	5.2%	10.4%	2.9%
	RN Diploma	8.6%	24.6%	1.6%
	ADN	24.8%	64.9%	7.4%
	BSN	59.5%	0.0%	85.2%
	Graduate Entry (GEPN)	2.0%	0.0%	2.9%

Table 7. Time Since Completion of Initial Nursing Education

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Five Years or Less	16.5%	10.7%	18.6%
	6 to 10 Years	20.7%	17.4%	21.9%
	11 to 15 Years	15.9%	15.4%	16.1%
	16 Years or More	41.8%	50.7%	38.5%
	Not Reported	5.1%	5.9%	4.8%
C&C of Honolulu	Five Years or Less	16.7%	10.6%	18.3%
	6 to 10 Years	20.7%	14.9%	22.2%
	11 to 15 Years	16.9%	15.2%	17.4%
	16 Years or More	42.9%	55.3%	39.5%
	Not Reported	2.8%	4.0%	2.5%
Hawai'i County	Five Years or Less	17.2%	10.2%	21.7%
	6 to 10 Years	20.4%	19.0%	21.3%
	11 to 15 Years	13.0%	14.4%	12.1%
	16 Years or More	46.9%	53.5%	42.6%
	Not Reported	2.5%	2.8%	2.3%
Maui County	Five Years or Less	17.5%	10.5%	23.5%
	6 to 10 Years	25.0%	27.3%	22.9%
	11 to 15 Years	14.7%	17.6%	12.3%
	16 Years or More	40.0%	40.4%	39.7%
	Not Reported	2.8%	4.1%	1.6%
Kaua'i County	Five Years or Less	16.9%	13.6%	20.0%
	6 to 10 Years	17.6%	14.9%	20.0%
	11 to 15 Years	16.0%	16.2%	15.8%
	16 Years or More	46.1%	51.9%	40.6%
	Not Reported	3.4%	3.2%	3.6%
Not Reported	Five Years or Less	11.0%	9.0%	11.9%
	6 to 10 Years	17.3%	14.2%	18.7%
	11 to 15 Years	12.2%	13.4%	11.6%
	16 Years or More	22.7%	31.3%	19.0%
	Not Reported	36.7%	32.1%	38.7%

Table 8. Current Enrollment in a Degree-Leading Nurse Education Program

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Yes	5.9%	7.9%	5.2%
	No	94.1%	92.1%	94.8%
C&C of Honolulu	Yes	5.5%	7.8%	4.9%
	No	94.5%	92.2%	95.1%
Hawai'i County	Yes	5.7%	6.7%	5.0%
	No	94.3%	93.3%	95.0%
Maui County	Yes	7.8%	10.1%	5.8%
	No	92.2%	89.9%	94.2%
Kaua'i County	Yes	7.2%	9.1%	5.5%
	No	92.8%	90.9%	94.5%
Not Reported	Yes	7.0%	5.2%	7.7%
	No	93.0%	94.8%	92.3%

Employment Characteristics

Table 9. Primary Employment Setting Type

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Hospital	51.9%	47.9%	53.4%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	10.8%	10.1%	11.1%
	Ambulatory	13.3%	14.9%	12.7%
	Home Health/Hospice	6.6%	8.3%	6.0%
	All Other Settings	17.3%	18.8%	16.8%
C&C of Honolulu	Hospital	52.9%	49.7%	53.8%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	11.5%	10.8%	11.7%
	Ambulatory	12.3%	12.4%	12.2%
	Home Health/Hospice	5.9%	7.0%	5.6%
	All Other Settings	17.4%	20.1%	16.7%
Hawai'i County	Hospital	49.1%	44.7%	52.0%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	9.5%	10.3%	9.0%
	Ambulatory	14.5%	18.1%	12.2%
	Home Health/Hospice	8.3%	7.8%	8.5%
	All Other Settings	18.6%	19.1%	18.2%
Maui County	Hospital	45.8%	43.3%	47.9%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	8.1%	9.1%	7.2%
	Ambulatory	19.9%	20.9%	19.0%
	Home Health/Hospice	11.3%	14.8%	8.2%
	All Other Settings	15.0%	11.8%	17.7%
Kaua'i County	Hospital	46.5%	47.7%	45.4%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	10.3%	7.4%	12.9%
	Ambulatory	16.7%	18.8%	14.7%
	Home Health/Hospice	6.4%	5.4%	7.4%
	All Other Settings	20.2%	20.8%	19.6%
Not Reported	Hospital	61.4%	53.3%	65.0%
	Post-Acute/LTC Facility	9.5%	9.8%	9.4%
	Ambulatory	9.5%	6.5%	10.8%
	Home Health/Hospice	5.4%	9.8%	3.4%
	All Other Settings	14.2%	20.7%	11.3%

"Hospital" includes Acute Care and Critical Access Hospitals. "Post-Acute/Long-Term Care Facility" includes Assisted Living, Nursing Home/Extended Care Facilities, and Rehabilitation Hospitals. "Ambulatory" includes Community Health Centers, All Types of Clinics Including Dialysis and Urgent Care, Provider's Offices, and Same Day Surgery Centers. "Home Health/Hospice" includes Home Health, Inpatient Hospice, and Home Hospice.

Table 10. Holds an RN Specialty Certification

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Yes	32.1%	29.4%	33.2%
	No	67.9%	70.6%	66.8%
C&C of Honolulu	Yes	32.8%	31.7%	33.1%
	No	67.2%	68.3%	66.9%
Hawai'i County	Yes	30.4%	29.9%	30.7%
	No	69.6%	70.1%	69.3%
Maui County	Yes	30.8%	26.2%	34.8%
	No	69.2%	73.8%	65.2%
Kaua'i County	Yes	30.4%	26.6%	33.9%
	No	69.6%	73.4%	66.1%
Not Reported	Yes	31.3%	21.6%	35.5%
	No	68.7%	78.4%	64.5%

Table 11. Number of License-Relevant Positions Held

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	1 Position	82.1%	83.3%	81.6%
	2 Positions	14.5%	13.2%	14.9%
	3 or More Positions	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
C&C of Honolulu	1 Position	81.5%	81.8%	81.4%
	2 Positions	14.9%	13.9%	15.2%
	3 or More Positions	3.6%	4.3%	3.4%
Hawai'i County	1 Position	84.5%	84.2%	84.7%
	2 Positions	12.9%	13.0%	12.8%
	3 or More Positions	2.6%	2.8%	2.5%
Maui County	1 Position	83.5%	85.0%	82.3%
	2 Positions	13.0%	11.6%	14.2%
	3 or More Positions	3.5%	3.4%	3.5%
Kaua'i County	1 Position	83.4%	86.4%	80.6%
	2 Positions	14.7%	13.0%	16.4%
	3 or More Positions	1.9%	0.6%	3.0%
Not Reported	1 Position	81.5%	85.8%	79.7%
	2 Positions	14.2%	11.9%	15.2%
	3 or More Positions	4.3%	2.2%	5.2%

"License-Relevant" positions are those that require or prefer a nursing license or that enhance a person's ability to do the essential functions of the job.

Table 12. Primary Position FTE Type

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Full-time	78.0%	72.6%	80.0%
	Part-time	16.3%	20.9%	14.6%
	Per diem	5.7%	6.5%	5.5%
C&C of Honolulu	Full-time	80.0%	75.7%	81.2%
	Part-time	14.7%	18.2%	13.8%
	Per diem	5.3%	6.2%	5.0%
Hawai'i County	Full-time	78.4%	76.1%	80.0%
	Part-time	16.0%	17.6%	15.0%
	Per diem	5.6%	6.3%	5.1%
Maui County	Full-time	70.0%	66.0%	73.4%
	Part-time	25.3%	29.4%	21.8%
	Per diem	4.7%	4.5%	4.9%
Kaua'i County	Full-time	70.1%	66.0%	73.9%
	Part-time	19.8%	24.8%	15.2%
	Per diem	10.1%	9.2%	10.9%
Not Reported	Full-time	70.9%	61.9%	74.9%
	Part-time	19.2%	27.6%	15.5%
	Per diem	9.9%	10.5%	9.6%

Table 13. Has Plans to Retire by 2023

		Total	ADN or Diploma	BSN or Graduate
State	Yes	10.1%	15.9%	8.0%
	No	89.9%	84.1%	92.0%
C&C of Honolulu	Yes	9.7%	17.1%	7.7%
	No	90.3%	82.9%	92.3%
Hawai'i County	Yes	12.8%	15.8%	10.8%
	No	87.2%	84.2%	89.2%
Maui County	Yes	11.1%	12.4%	10.0%
	No	88.9%	87.6%	90.0%
Kaua'i County	Yes	14.4%	19.5%	9.7%
	No	85.6%	80.5%	90.3%
Not Reported	Yes	6.1%	10.4%	4.2%
	No	93.9%	89.6%	95.8%

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Report Information

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Contact Us

For more information about this report or other available workforce data, contact the Center's Researcher, Carrie M. Oliveira, Ph.D. by email at carrieol@hawaii.edu.