

Survey of Nurses:

Should Hawai'i Join the Nurse Licensure Compact

Introduction

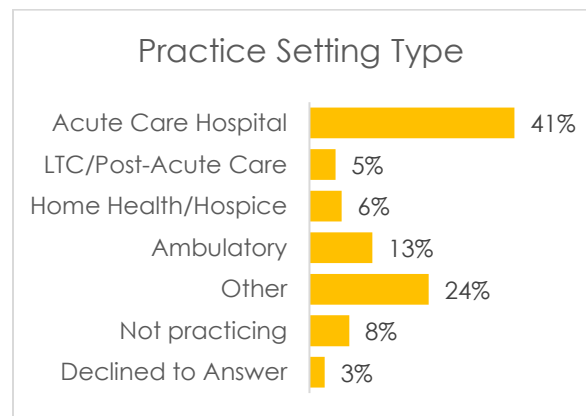
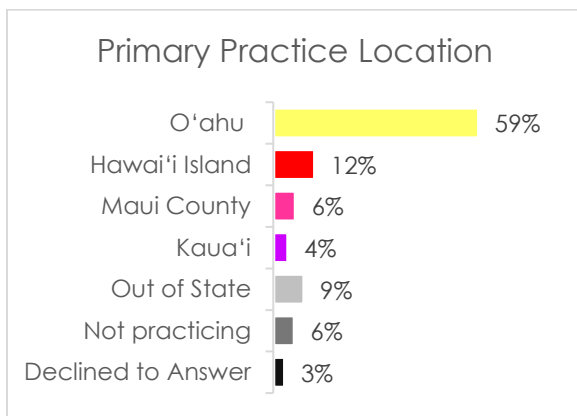
As part of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's working group to investigate the feasibility and impact of implementing the Nurse Licensure Compact in Hawai'i ([SCR 112](#)), we surveyed nurses about their knowledge and feelings about Hawai'i's possible membership in the NLC. This report summarizes the findings from that survey.

Sample

The survey was conducted using a convenience sample. The Hawai'i Chapter of the American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA) distributed the link to the online survey to its electronic mailing list and recipients of its monthly newsletter. The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing distributed the survey link through an electronic newsletter and social media posts.

The survey opened on July 25, 2023 and closed on August 15, 2023.

In total, 327 nurses participated in the survey. The majority of respondents currently practice nursing on O'ahu (59%) and were most likely to work in acute care hospitals (41%). Nurses working in long-term/post-acute care settings were slightly underrepresented and nurses working in "other" settings were slightly overrepresented in the sample as compared to the state's overall nursing workforce.



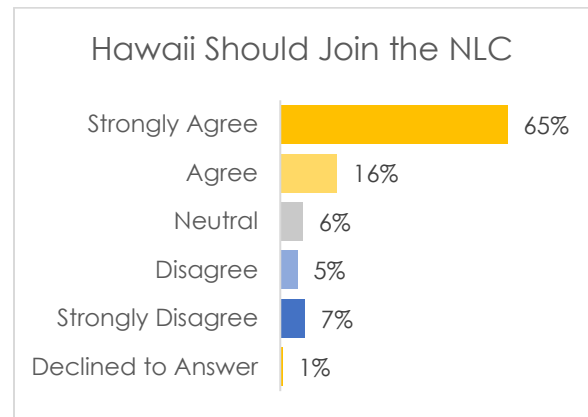
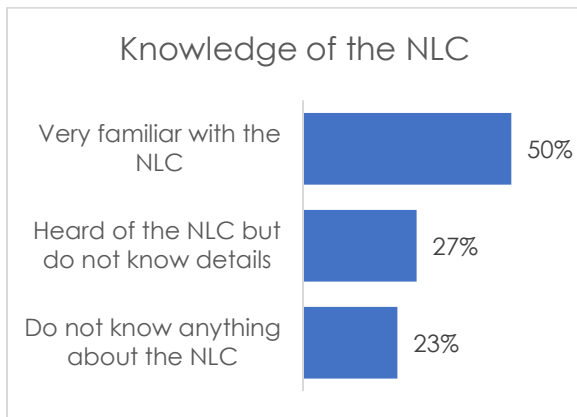
Results

Half of respondents reported that they were very familiar with the NLC while 23% indicated that they knew nothing about it.

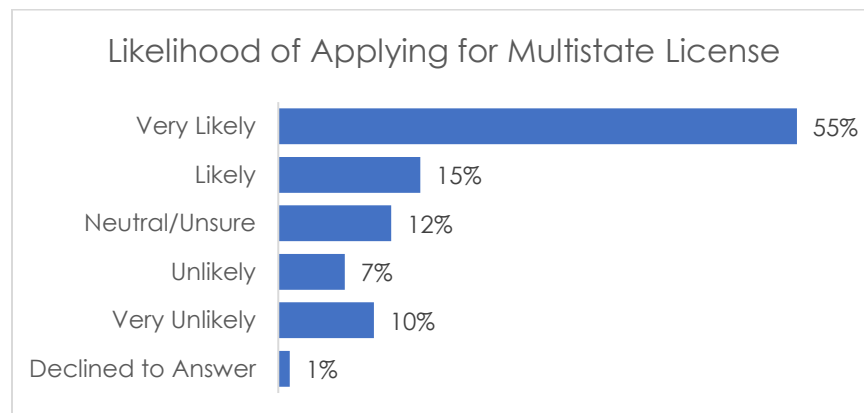
To ensure that all nurses were reasonably well-informed about the NLC for the purpose of the survey, respondents were presented with an informational statement which read:

“In summary, the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) is an agreement between 41 states/territories. It allows eligible nurses who are residents of an NLC member state to obtain a multistate license. Nurses who have a multistate license may practice nursing in all states that are members of the NLC without having to be licensed in every state they want to practice in.”

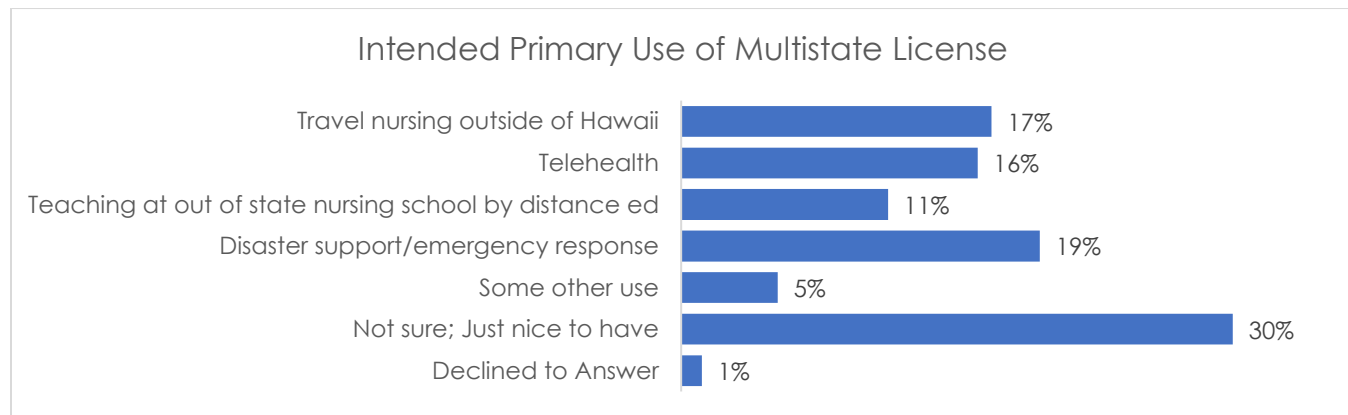
Following the informational statement, nurses reported on the extent to which they agreed that Hawai‘i should join the NLC. 81% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Hawai‘i should become a member of the NLC. 12% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that Hawai‘i should join the NLC.



Respondents also indicated how likely they would be to get a multistate license if Hawai‘i joined the NLC. 70% of respondents indicated that they would be likely or very likely to get a multistate license.



Among those respondents who indicated that they were likely or very likely to get a multistate license, the largest proportion (30%) reported that they had no specific plans for how they would use their multistate privilege. 17% of respondents reported that they would engage in travel nursing outside the state of Hawai'i. Another 11% reported that they planned to teach online for a nurse education program located outside the state.



There were some differences in nurses' intended plans for their multistate licensure depending on where they are currently employed. About 25% nurses who are currently working in long-term/post-acute settings or who are not currently practicing nursing reported that they would use their multistate license to do travel nursing outside the state of Hawai'i. Nurses working in home health/hospice or ambulatory settings were more likely than nurses in other settings to have plans to provide telehealth nursing services with their multistate privilege. Nearly one in five nurses working in "other" settings indicated that they would use their multistate license to teach at an out of state school via distance education. Note that colleges and universities are among the settings included in the "other" category.

Table 1. Nurses' Intended Primary Use of a Multistate License by Current Primary Practice Setting

	Acute Care Hospital	LTC/Post-Acute Care	Home Health/Hospice	Ambulatory	Other Type of Setting	Not Currently Practicing
Travel nursing outside of Hawai'i	18%	25%	15%	9%	15%	23%
Telehealth	12%	19%	30%	32%	11%	14%
Teaching at out of state nursing school by distance ed	10%	6%	--	6%	18%	23%
Disaster/emergency response	28%	19%	15%	18%	15%	5%
Some other use	1%	--	--	9%	15%	5%
Not sure; Just nice to have	31%	31%	40%	26%	27%	32%

Summary & Conclusion

Data from this small survey of Hawai'i nurses indicate that the majority of nurses are in favor of Hawai'i's membership in the NLC and would likely get a multistate license if they were eligible to do so.

Half of the nurses who reported the intention to get a multistate license reported that they would use their multistate privilege to provide disaster relief or that they have no specific plans to cross jurisdictional boundaries. In other words, having a multistate license would have no impact on the primary employment status of 50% of nurses.

The remaining 50% of multistate license holding nurses, however, represent a potential loss of nurses or nursing hours from the Hawai'i workforce. 28% of nurses indicate that they would use their multistate privilege to do travel nursing outside of Hawai'i or that they would provide instruction for online programs offered by out of state schools of nursing. An additional 16% of nurses plan to use their multistate privilege to provide telehealth services. While these nurses would likely remain in Hawai'i, they would be caring for a population outside of the state.

These data are generally consistent with data collected in other states that suggest that nurses favor the ability to practice across jurisdictional boundaries with a single license. There currently exists no reliable source of data that describes trends or patterns in changes to states' workforces following entry into the NLC. However, data from this survey suggest that as many as half of Hawai'i's multistate license holding nurses could divert some of their nursing practice to out of state employers. It is unclear from data collected by other states or national entities whether these workforce losses would be offset by the in-migration of nurses from other NLC member jurisdictions.