



# **California Newly Licensed RN Employment Survey**

## **Research Report**

### **Supplemental Data Analysis- Academic Progression**

**Fall 2020**

**October 2021**

## Introduction

Since 2010, *HealthImpact* has conducted a survey of newly licensed registered nurses (RNs) focused on employment and entry into the workforce. While understanding the employment of newly licensed RNs is essential in understanding workforce supply and demand, an additional focus on social and environmental factors that affected newly licensed RNs is essential for understanding the health and well-being of this nascent sector of the workforce. Therefore, additional survey questions were added in the fall of 2019 to understand the social determinants of health and education both when they were nursing students and as they entered the workplace.

This supplemental data analysis is a secondary analysis of the data requested by the California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) and the California Organization of Associate Degree Nursing (COADN). These two organizations were interested in understanding the regions in which the respondents attained their RN degree and the interest in returning to school for higher degrees, also known as academic progression.

## Key Findings

RNs newly licensed by exam in California in the prior 12-month period between September 2019 and August 2020 were invited to participate in the study. A total of 3,058 eligible nurses completed the completed survey for a 27.9% survey response rate. Not all respondents answered all questions in the survey.

- The majority of respondents earned a BSN in several regions, including San Diego/Imperial County, Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino County, Greater Sacramento, Los Angeles/Ventura County, and the San Francisco Bay Area, whereas 70% or more of RNs earned an ADN in Far Northern California, the San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, and Northern Sacramento Valley.
- Newly licensed RNs are interested in academic progression with 32.2% reporting they are currently enrolled and continuing their education to obtain a higher degree, 57.8% indicating plans to do so in the next 1-3 years, 44.5% indicating plans to do so in the next 4-6 years, 13.8% indicating plans to do so in the next 7-10 years.

## RN Program Enrollment and Future Educational Plans

### 1. Degree Attainment and Future Plans for Academic Progression, by Region

#### 1.1 RNs in the Sample, by Geographic Area and Type of Degree

Geographic Area	ADN N=1,436	BSN N=1,414	ELM N=165
Far Northern California	82.0% (91)	18.0% (20)	0.0% (0)
San Joaquin Valley	70.7% (203)	27.5% (79)	1.8% (5)
Central Coast	79.4% (81)	18.6% (19)	2.0% (2)
San Diego/Imperial	37.2% (80)	54.4% (117)	8.4% (18)
Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino	39.5% (286)	56.5% (409)	4.0% (29)
Los Angeles/Ventura	47.1% (403)	47.5% (406)	5.4% (46)
Northern Sacramento Valley	70.2% (59)	26.2% (22)	3.6% (3)
Greater Sacramento	39.4% (69)	50.3% (88)	10.3% (18)
San Francisco Bay Area	35.5% (164)	55.0% (254)	9.5% (44)

The regional distribution of RNs who responded to the survey varied by type of degree as shown in Table 1.1. In several regions, including San Diego/Imperial County, Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino County, Greater Sacramento, Los Angeles/Ventura County, and the San Francisco Bay Area, the majority of RNs earned a BSN, whereas 70% or more of RNs earned an ADN in Far Northern California, the San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, and Northern Sacramento Valley.

Newly licensed RNs are interested in academic progression that also supports career advancement, with 32.2% reporting they are currently enrolled and continuing their education to obtain a higher degree, 57.8% indicating plans to do so in the next 1-3 years, 44.5% indicating plans to do so in the next 4-6 years, 13.8% indicating plans to do so in the next 7-10 years, and 20.0% indicating a higher degree as a long-term goal as displayed in Table 1.2. The regional distribution of RNs currently enrolled in nursing education is displayed in Table 1.3 and future plans for nursing education is displayed in Table 1.4.

Table 1.2 Plan to Advance Nursing Education, in Numbers

N=2,463	Currently Enrolled 32.2%	1-3 Years 57.8%	4-6 Years 44.5%	7-10 Years 13.8%	>10 years 20.0%
BSN	664	430	29	4	4
MSN	117	754	563	84	85
MPH	5	52	65	14	27
MBA	1	30	36	15	25
DNP	5	134	323	162	186
PhD	0	9	54	42	102
MD	1	14	27	19	65

Note: the percentages will exceed 100% due to the ability to respond to more than one time period.

BSN= Bachelor of Science in Nursing, MSN= Master of Science in Nursing, MPH= Master of Public Health; MBA = Master of Business Administration; DNP= Doctor of Nursing Practice; PhD= Doctor of Philosophy; MD= Medical Doctor

Table 1.3 Currently Enrolled in Nursing Education by Region, in Numbers

N=2,463	BSN 27.0%	MSN 4.8%	MPH 0.0%	MBA 0.0%	DNP 0.0%	PhD 0.0%	MD 0.0%
Far Northern California	25	1	1	0	0	0	0
San Joaquin Valley	65	6	1	0	0	0	0
Central Coast	26	1	0	0	0	0	0
San Diego/Imperial	35	10	0	0	1	0	0
Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino	142	21	2	0	1	0	0
Los Angeles/Ventura	213	38	1	0	2	0	1
Northern Sacramento Valley	23	1	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Sacramento	44	6	0	0	0	0	0
San Francisco Bay Area	91	33	0	1	1	0	0

Table 1.4 Future Plan to Advance Nursing Education by Region, in Numbers

N=2,463	BSN 19.0%	MSN 60.3%	MPH 6.4%	MBA 4.3%	DNP 32.7%	PhD 8.4%	MD 5.1%
Far Northern California	34	52	2	1	15	4	3
San Joaquin Valley	94	132	12	13	70	20	16
Central Coast	32	55	4	4	21	6	5
San Diego/Imperial	26	101	9	10	64	15	9
Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino	101	373	35	21	202	46	21
Los Angeles/Ventura	99	442	50	34	224	68	33
Northern Sacramento Valley	24	38	2	2	17	6	3
Greater Sacramento	20	91	15	4	56	10	15
San Francisco Bay Area	37	202	29	17	136	32	20

## 2. Conclusion

The majority of respondents indicated that they were interested in furthering their academic studies. The Master of Science in Nursing (60.3%) and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (32.7%) were the most sought-after degrees among the respondents across all regions of California. Academic institutions should find ways to create opportunities for academic progression across the urban, suburban, and rural parts of the state.

### 3. Acknowledgements

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#### HealthImpact Team

Garrett Chan, PhD, RN, APRN, FAAN, President and Chief Executive Officer  
Carolyn Orlowski, MSN, RN, Director of Workforce Strategy, retired  
Edward M. Burns, Jr., MSN, RN, NPD-BC, Director of Workforce Strategy

The report is available on the *HealthImpact* website: [www.healthimpact.org](http://www.healthimpact.org)

