

**Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

**Health Professions Data Series
Registered Nurses 2010**



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Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Registered Nurses 2010

Overview

The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Registered Nurses 2010 report provides baseline data about the workforce demographics of registered nurses licensed to practice in Massachusetts. It is part of the Department of Public Health's Health Professions Data Series currently reporting on seven licensed health professions: pharmacists, dentists, dental hygienists, physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses, and licensed practical nurses.

This series responds to the need for quality and timely data on workforce demographics and characteristics of employment among these components of the Commonwealth's healthcare workforce, and is intended to provide useful information and tools to assist in workforce development initiatives and health care workforce policy development and planning in both the public and private sectors.

The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Registered Nurses 2010 report is a collaborative effort coordinated by the Health Care Workforce Center of the MDPH Bureau of Community Health and Prevention, the Division of Health Professions Licensure and the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing in the MDPH Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality, and partners from the UMass Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network.

Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008: An Act to Promote Cost Containment, Transparency, and Efficiency in the Delivery of Quality Health Care¹

The publication of this data series is a major step toward fulfilling the mandates of Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008 which established the MDPH Health Care Workforce Center (the Center). It complements and contributes to other state and federal efforts such as the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis Assessment, as well as other ongoing health care access and payment reform initiatives in the Commonwealth.

The need for timely, high quality data about the healthcare professions in the Commonwealth is constant. This initiative is ground-breaking because it utilizes the capacity of the MDPH Division of Health Professions Licensure to provide online license renewal which offers an efficient and sustainable system for collecting and analyzing workforce data submitted directly by licensed health care professionals upon renewal of their licenses.

This data series is intended to characterize the workforce from a supply perspective, and will enhance the Commonwealth's ability to identify trends and patterns in the workforce that may impact access to health care professionals and the services they provide. The resulting Health Professions Data Series promises to be a very robust, timely source of data that will be integral to future discussions and decisions about healthcare workforce development, education, training, recruitment, and retention.

Quality data collection, analysis, and reporting at the state level are integral to the development of effective health care planning and policy-making. The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series has fostered public-private collaborations that are key to the availability of a highly qualified, diverse, and culturally competent workforce to meet the current and future needs of all Massachusetts residents.

¹ Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008 is codified at MGL c.111, §§25L through 25N
<http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVI/Chapter111/Section25L>

BACKGROUND

During the 2010 license renewal cycle, 117,690 registered nurses (RNs) were sent a renewal notice with an option of renewing their license online and completing 31 workforce survey questions. The survey included questions related to demographics, employment characteristics and future work plans. A total of 44,535 (38%) RNs completed the online survey, of which 32,740 (74%) reported practicing in Massachusetts. **The results should be quoted with caution as the representativeness of the RN respondents for this report is unknown.**

The following data represents the responses of all registered nurses who completed an online renewal between October 2009 and March 2011.

DEMOGRAPHICS²

n = 44,535 – All licensed in Massachusetts

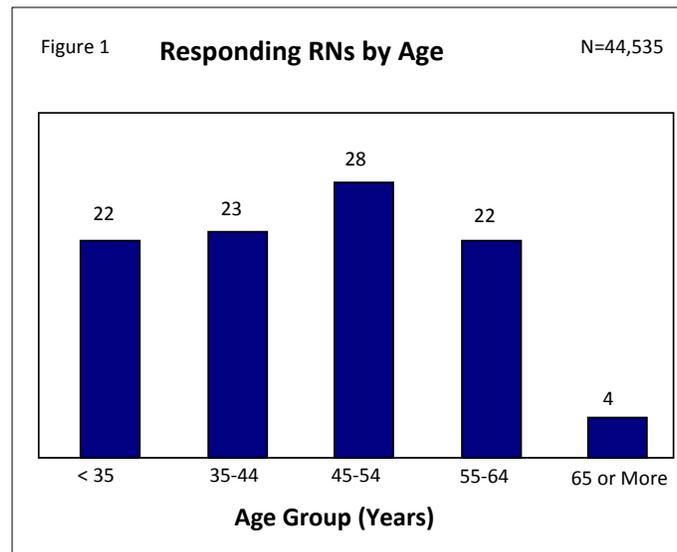
Gender: Females: 92% Males: 8%

Average Age: 45 yrs

Age Range: 21 - 90 yrs

Race:

White, Non-Hispanic (NH): 83%
 Black, NH: 4%
 Asian, NH: 3%
 Native Hawaiian/
 Pacific Islander, NH: <1%
 Hispanic: 2%
 Other: <1%
 Decline to Answer: 7%



Languages other than English most frequently spoken with sufficient fluency to provide adequate care:

Spanish 5%, Portuguese 1%, Haitian Creole 1%

EDUCATION

n = 44,535 – All licensed in Massachusetts

Initial RN licensure education by age group: Younger respondents were more likely to enter RN practice with higher nursing degrees. The majority of respondents under age 35 (63%) entered practice through a baccalaureate degree program, while 73% of nurses over age 55 entered practice through a diploma or associate degree program.

RN Age Group:	< 35 yrs	35-54 yrs	55+ yrs
Diploma	4%	15%	38%
Associate Degree	30%	44%	35%
Baccalaureate Degree	63%	39%	25%
Master's Degree	4%	3%	2%

² Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or the respondent's ability to select more than one answer.

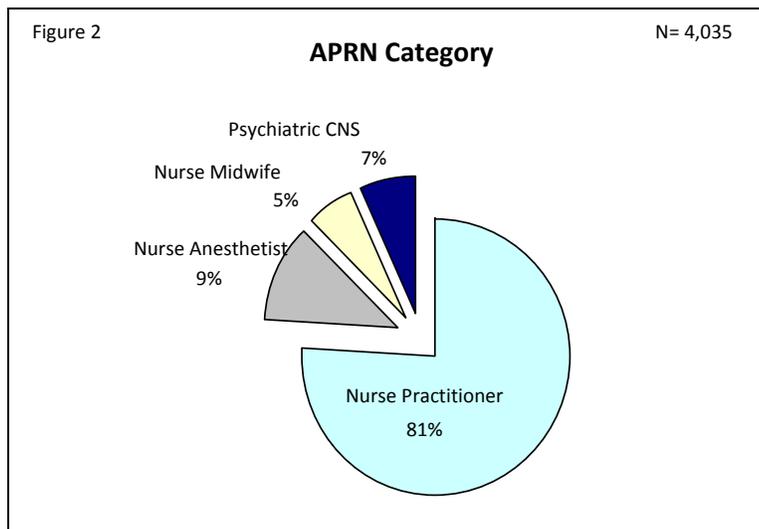
Highest level of nursing education completed: A baccalaureate degree was the highest level of nursing education completed for most (41%) of the respondents. 32% completed an associate degree, 13% completed a master's degree, and 13% completed a diploma. Less than one percent completed either a doctoral (PhD, EdD) or practice doctorate degree (DNP).

Location of initial RN licensure education: 70% of respondents reported completing their first nursing degree-credential in Massachusetts. 27% completed this first degree in another US state, 3% in a foreign country, and less than 1% in a US territory.

RNs Employed in MA: 73% of all respondents reported a Massachusetts zip code for their primary nursing position. 13% reported another US state for their primary nursing position.

RNs authorized for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) practice:

10% of respondents reported holding APRN authorization from the Board of Registration in Nursing to practice as a Certified Nurse Midwife, Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse Practitioner, or Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialist.



FUTURE PLANS:

n = 44,535 – All licensed in Massachusetts

- 39% of respondents did not intend to change their work status in the next five years.
- 21% indicated they would seek additional education.
- 5% of RNs indicated a desire to increase nursing work hours, and 4% wanted to decrease their hours within the next five years.
- 5% of RNs plan to retire, and less than 1% plan to leave the nursing profession within the next five years.
- 3% of RNs plan to return to the profession.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

n = 32,740 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts ³

Employment Status:

Full-time in nursing:	72%	Non-nursing; full, part time, or per diem:	4%
Part-time in nursing:	23%	Unemployed:	5%
Per Diem in nursing:	9%	Retired:	2%
Nurse Volunteer:	<1%		

Number of Hours Worked Per Week at Primary Nursing Position:

1-20 Hours Per Week:	8%
21-30 Hours Per Week:	16%
31-40 Hours Per Week:	58%
More than 40 Hours Per Week:	18%

PRIMARY NURSING POSITION CHARACTERISTICS ⁴

n = 32,740 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

84% of respondents routinely provided direct patient care.

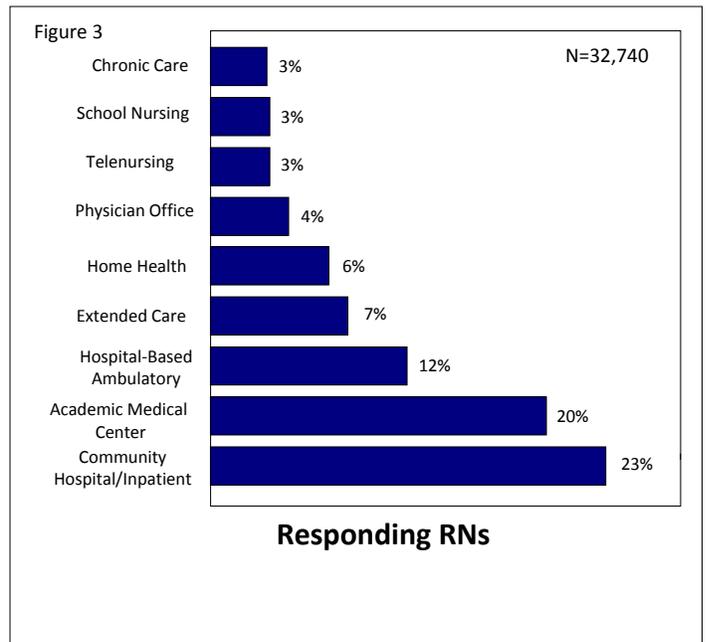
Most frequently reported practice settings were community hospital/inpatient (23%), academic medical center (20%), and hospital-based ambulatory (12%). 10% of respondents did not indicate a setting and 8% indicated multiple settings.

Most frequently reported areas of practice were acute care (20%), critical care (9%), primary care (6%), emergency/trauma (6%), long term care (6%), and home health (5%).

55% of respondents identified themselves as staff nurses. Nurse educators accounted for 2% of respondents.

16% also reported being employed in a second nursing position.

Most Frequently Reported Settings



³ Number represents all nurses who reported working either full-time, part-time or on a voluntary basis in Massachusetts

⁴ Percentages do not add to 100% due to the respondent's ability to select more than one answer.

This report was developed by the

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Bureau of Community Health and Prevention
Health Care Workforce Center

Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
Division Health Professions Licensure
Board of Registration in Nursing

in collaboration with

UMass Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
Boston Public Health Commission
Massachusetts Center for Nursing
Massachusetts Hospital Association
Organization of Nurse Leaders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island
Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor
and Workforce Development / Commonwealth Corporation

For additional information about the *Health Professions
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