

January 2020

Review of Florida's Nursing Education Programs, Academic Year 2018-19

At a Glance

Consistent with Florida Statute 464.019, the Florida Center for Nursing evaluated program-specific data for approved and accredited nursing programs for Academic Year (AY) 2018-19. This report considers program approval, capacity, enrollment, and graduation for AY 2018-19, program characteristics as of Fall 2019, and changes over time.

- ❖ The state of Florida had **369 pre-licensure nursing education programs**,¹ a 116% net increase since the 2009 statutory modifications.²
- ❖ The Florida Department of Health imposed a penalty for non-compliance with this data request, which contributed to a **14% increase in survey response rate** since 2018. Increased response rates may affect changes in counts between years.³
- ❖ The Board of Nursing comprehensively **approved 406 of 436 (93%) new program applicants** since the 2009 statutory modifications.
- ❖ 33 RN and 8 LPN programs were **terminated** in 2019; 1 RN program closed voluntarily.
- ❖ 8 RN and 6 LPN programs were newly placed on **probation** in 2019.
- ❖ 67% of active pre-licensure RN programs were **accredited** as of October 2019.
- ❖ **Seats available and new student enrollment increased** since 2018.
- ❖ **Total student enrollment increased 17%** between September 2018 and 2019.
- ❖ 83% of nursing program students were **retained** or graduated in AY 2018-19.
- ❖ **Graduation rates increased** for all program types.
- ❖ **80% of AY 2016-17 graduates were employed in patient care areas** during 2018.

Scope

The Florida Legislature directs the Florida Center for Nursing to annually review and report on nursing education program approval, capacity, enrollment, graduation and accountability processes.⁴ The review considers self-reported program characteristics and information obtained from the Board of Nursing (FBN) and the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP). A subsequent report on nursing licensure exam data for the 2019 calendar year will be provided, as data were not available from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing at the time of this report's publication.

¹ Programs active on the Florida Board of Nursing website on September 6, 2019.

² Previous reports indicate a total of 171 pre-licensure nursing programs in Florida in 2009.

³ e.g. Higher student enrollment may be due to more programs providing information, rather than an increase in the number of students pursuing nursing education

⁴ Reports previously generated by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (OPPAGA). In 2017, FS 464.019 directed the Florida Center for Nursing to provide this report through January 30, 2020.

Background

Ch. 464, *Florida Statutes*, authorizes the Florida Board of Nursing (FBN) to adopt rules, discipline nurses violating regulations, and approve and monitor education programs to ensure quality nursing practice in Florida. FBN reviews new nursing program applications and determines program approval. It also monitors approved nursing programs by reviewing student licensing exam scores on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination (NCLEX).

In 2009, the Legislature modified program approval and termination processes in statute to address nursing shortages and encourage a growth in the number of nurse education programs. **Since this modification, the number of nursing programs has more than doubled.** However, not all programs are able to meet other legislative requirements such as minimum average graduate licensure exam passage rate, and some have been put on probation or terminated.

The 2014 Legislature made further efforts to improve program quality, establishing nursing licensure exam passage rate standards and requiring pre-licensure registered nurse (RN) programs to be accredited by July 1, 2019 or within five years after enrolling their first students.⁵ **Programs must be accredited by a specialized nursing accrediting agency nationally recognized by the United States Secretary of Education.**

In 2017, Florida Statute 464.019 was amended to include an Implementation Study, directing the Florida Center for Nursing (FCN) to report on and evaluate the effectiveness of statutory changes on “increasing the availability of nursing education programs and the production of quality nurses.”

Report Aims and Method

The Florida Center for Nursing requested data from 369 programs with NCLEX codes via an online survey. The Center provided a minimum of four email invitations and reminders to the last known contact provided by the Board of Nursing.⁶ Surveys were accessible between October 1, 2019 and November 14, 2019.⁷ Programs were surveyed about the 2018-19 Academic Year (AY).

This report considers prelicensure nursing education programs offered by Florida state universities, colleges, public school districts, private institutions licensed by the Commission for Independent Education, private institutions that are members of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF), and religious institutions authorized by law to offer nursing programs. RN to BSN programs and graduate nursing programs are not represented in this report.

Among the 369 pre-licensure programs surveyed, 356 submitted valid responses (96% response rate). Survey participation increased 14% since the previous survey cycle. Multiple factors may have contributed to increased response rates. The Florida Center for Nursing continued direct outreach to a) ensure awareness of the requirement and survey deadline and b) provide information to updated contacts as needed. FCN's IT partner enabled the capability of emailing multiple contacts at a single institution which increased the reach to relevant parties; and, importantly, the Florida Department of Health implemented a citation and \$1,000 penalty for

⁵ RN programs with students enrolled prior to July 1, 2014 were required to be accredited by July 1, 2019.

⁶ Additional outreach efforts were made via phone and organization partnerships when email addresses were deemed invalid/undeliverable, and to encourage participation as deadlines approached.

⁷ The survey time frame was extended two weeks to allow all programs an opportunity to participate.

non-participation. The Center provided a report to FBN in December 2019 with a list of non-responding programs so appropriate action can be taken (see Appendix A).

Of the 356 respondents, 66 did not have students enrolled during AY 2018-19. Among the 66 programs with no student enrollment, 86% were proprietary, for-profit schools.⁸ **This report considers characteristics of 290 responding programs with student enrollment.**

Findings

Florida Pre-licensure Nursing Education Programs and Curriculum Offerings

As of September 2019, Florida has had a net increase of 198 pre-licensure nursing education programs (↑ 116%) since the 2009 legislation.

At the time of survey distribution, 369 nursing education pre-licensure programs were active in the state. Between the 2017-18 and 2018-19 survey cycles, 22 programs closed⁹ and 35 new programs opened.¹⁰ Counts do not include RN to BSN programs in Florida as they advance the education of students already licensed to practice and do not add new nurses to the workforce.

Since AY 2017-18, the number of BSN programs and LPN programs increased, while the number of ADN programs stayed the same. Florida had a net increase of 13 nursing programs between AY 2017-18 and AY 2018-19, including eight (8) LPN and five (5) BSN programs.

Figure 1: In Academic Year 2018-19, 290 Florida Nursing Education Programs Offered Licensed Practical Nursing Certificates, Associates Degrees, and Baccalaureate Degrees

Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) 108 Programs Offered	Associate Degree in Nursing (RN) 115 Programs Offered	Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) 67 Programs Offered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 106 Generic Tracks • 5 Bridge Track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 112 Generic Tracks • 55 Bridge Tracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 Generic Tracks • 27 Second Degree Tracks

Source: 2019 FCN Survey of Nursing Education Programs

Among the 290 respondents,¹¹ 108 offered licensed practical nursing certificates, 115 offered an associate degree in nursing, and 67 offered nursing baccalaureate degrees (Figure 1). Programs offered one or more tracks within each pre-licensure NCLEX code, such as generic/traditional curriculum tracks and/or second degree/bridge curriculum (expedited programs based on previous nursing licensure, healthcare experience, or completed college degree).

Board of Nursing Approval and Program Monitoring

Since legislative changes took effect in July 2009, the Florida Board of Nursing (FBN) approved a total of 406 new nursing programs. FBN approved 49 of the 52 applications received in 2019 (Figure 2, next page). Approved programs include 17 LPN, 21 ADN, and 11 BSN

⁸ 52% of participants were proprietary; they are *overrepresented* among programs with no enrollment.

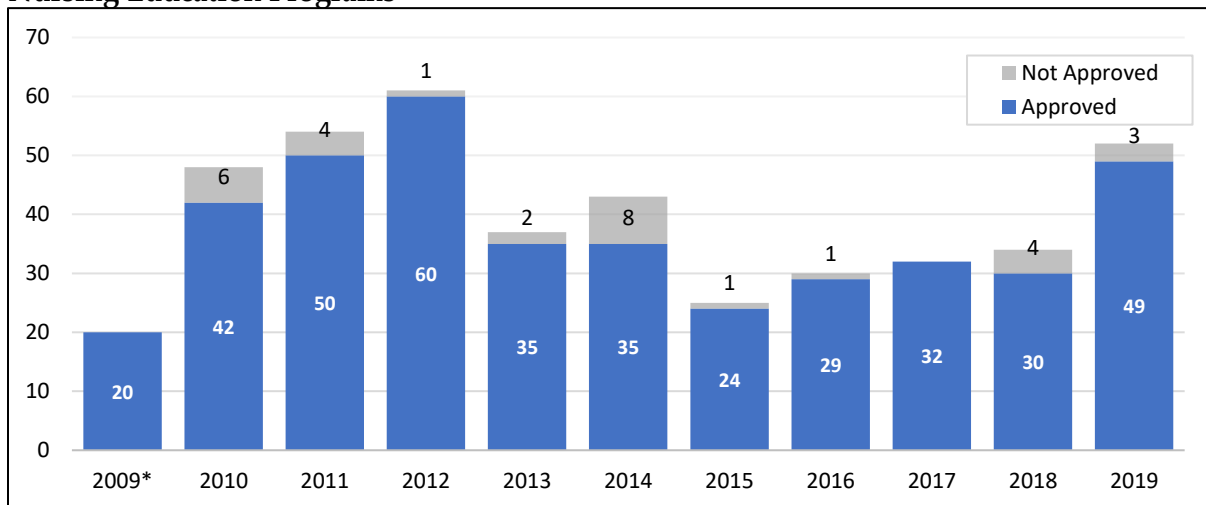
⁹ NCLEX codes no longer listed on BON site between previous and current survey cycle. Includes 14 ADN programs, 2 BSN programs, and 6 LPN programs. Does not include RN to BSN programs.

¹⁰ NCLEX codes added since the previous survey cycle (16 ADN, 7 BSN, and 12 LPN programs).

¹¹ Each unique NCLEX code represents one respondent. Includes only programs with students enrolled.

programs. Compared to 2018, the number of program applicants and approvals increased. This increase in program applicants and approvals follows a significant six-year drop after 2012.

Figure 2: Since July 2009, the Florida Board of Nursing Approved 406 New Pre-Licensure Nursing Education Programs



* data include applicants after July 2009 when legislative changes took effect

Note: Trend data may differ from earlier reports. 2009-2017 totals were recalculated using FBN data received Dec. 2018.

Not all programs have been able to meet requirements specified by law, and some were put on probation or terminated. During the 2019 calendar year, FBN monitored program compliance with statutory requirements related to graduate passage rates, annual report submissions, and accreditation pursuant to Florida Statute 464.019. In 2019...¹²

- **8 RN and 6 PN** programs were newly **placed on probation**
- **17 RN and 6 PN** programs were granted **extensions to probations**
- **13 RN and 10 PN** program directors were **required to appear** before the board
- **33 RN and 8 PN** programs were **terminated**; **1 RN** program **voluntarily closed**
- **8 RN and 4 PN** programs were reversed from **probation to approved status**

Nursing Education Program Accreditation

As of the 2019 survey cycle, **122 of Florida's 182 ADN and BSN programs (67%) were accredited** (Figure 3, next page). Thirty-seven (37) RN programs were in the process of accreditation. Among them, 38% were new applicants and 32% achieved candidate status.

The proportion of accredited schools increased 6.5% since the previous survey cycle. The increase in accredited programs may be attributed to increased survey participation and/or 2014 legislation requiring accreditation within five years of first enrolling students. Programs with students enrolled prior to July 1, 2014 were required to be accredited by July 1, 2019.

Following the July 2019 statutory effective date, the Florida Board of Nursing reviewed 26 ADN and four (4) BSN programs for non-compliance with accreditation requirement. Four (4) programs were terminated, four (4) voluntarily closed, and seven (7) cases were dismissed as

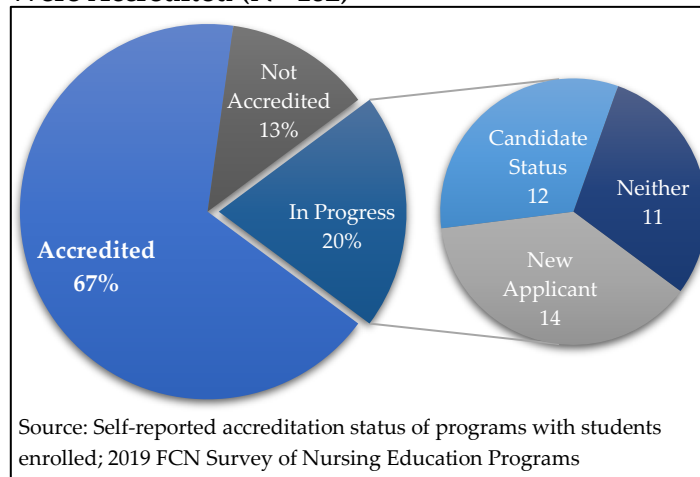
¹² According to Florida Center for Nursing's analysis of FBN 2019 public Board Meeting Minutes.

not applicable to the current rule. Fifteen (15) notices of intent to vacate remain pending or in appeals process.

Twenty-three (23) approved RN programs active in September 2019 were not yet working toward accreditation. These programs may risk termination by the Board of Nursing in the future if accreditation status is not achieved within five years of first student enrollment.

Although state law does not require practical nursing programs (LPN) to achieve accreditation, ten of the 108 LPN participants reported they were accredited (9%) and ten (9%) were in the accreditation process.

Figure 3: 67% of RN Program Survey Participants Were Accredited (N =182)



Nursing Education Program Capacity

Compared to AY 2017-18, seats available for new students, admission, and enrollment of new students increased in AY 2018-19 (Table 1). The number of seats for new students increased 28% and the number of newly admitted students who enrolled increased 17% since the previous academic year. Increases may, in part, be explained by greater survey participation, as 40 more programs reported capacity metrics compared to the last survey cycle.

Increases in available seats and/or student enrollment does not represent a full picture of the future nurse supply without an understanding of forecasted nurse demand and consistent survey participation each year. Additional research is needed to monitor the impact of this trend.

Table 1: Program Capacity and Enrollment Counts Increased since AY 2018-19

Capacity Measure	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change from 2017-18
# Seats for New Students	51,590	43,186	31,544	28,074	35,956	↑ 28%
# Applications Received	63,066	53,023	59,467	59,346	66,794	↑ 13%
# Qualified Applicants	42,014	37,214	37,796	39,393	44,335	↑ 13%
# Students Admitted	30,169	26,404	25,629	27,653	31,415	↑ 14%
# Students Admitted & Enrolled	26,306	23,500	21,779	23,747	27,743	↑ 17%

Source: 2019 FCN Survey of Nursing Education Programs

Note: Counts should be interpreted with caution as response rates vary over time; counts exclude non-respondents.

Total student enrollment also increased for all program types compared to AY 2017-18 (Table 2, next page). Total enrollment represents all students enrolled at any stage of the corresponding program, as of September 30, 2019. Total reported enrollment in all LPN programs increased about 16% and reported enrollment in pre-licensure RN programs (ADN + BSN) increased 17%. Enrollment growth may, in part, be attributed to increased response rates, with 40 more programs reporting enrollment metrics, compared to the previous survey cycle.

In AY 2018-19, 5,804 students were enrolled in LPN programs, 23,593 students were in ADN programs, and 13,325 students were enrolled in pre-licensure BSN programs.

Table 2: Total Student Enrollment Counts Increased since AY 2017-18

Curriculum Type	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change from 2017-18
Practical Nursing (LPN) – Generic	7,464	6,063	5,884	4,986	5,731	14.9%
Practical Nursing (LPN) – Bridge	111	142	230	†	73	†
Associate (ADN) – Generic	21,567	17,611	18,383	18,878	20,036	6.1%
Associate (ADN) – Bridge	4,306	3,045	3,709	3,524	3,557	0.9%
Bachelor's (BSN) – Generic	8,115	7,998	8,671	7,808	10,989	40.7%
Bachelor's (BSN) – 2nd Degree	1,203	1,370	1,303	1,416	2,336	65.0%
TOTAL ENROLLMENT	42,766	36,229	38,180	36,612	42,722	16.7%

† Bridge program data not available to retain anonymity; fewer than 5 programs reported program information

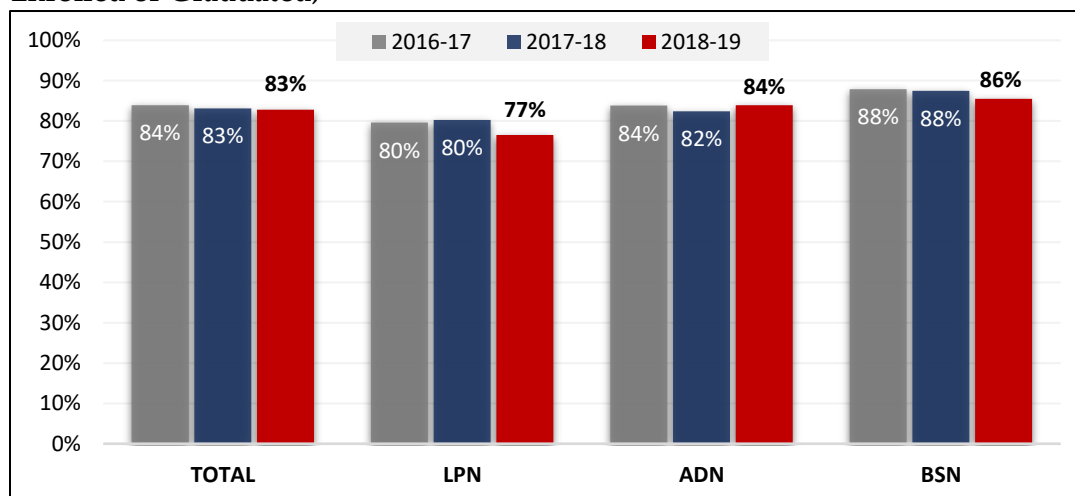
Note: Counts should be interpreted with caution as response rates vary over time and counts exclude non-responders.

Enrollment counts exclude programs in “teach out” – those that were terminated or voluntarily closed with students still completing their degree. Programs in “teach out” are no longer considered active by the Florida Board of Nursing and are removed from the list of all Florida prelicensure programs on the FBN website. As a result, they were not included in the survey.¹³

Student Retention

Retention rates consider the proportion of a cohort of newly enrolled students that have graduated or are still enrolled one year later, compared to those that leave without completing their degree program. Participants were asked to report on the status of a cohort of students one year after their first enrollment in Fall 2017, Spring 2018, or Summer 2018 (AY 2017-18).

Figure 4: Retention Rates in Generic/Traditional Pre-Licensure Programs (Still Enrolled or Graduated)



Note: Counts should be interpreted with caution as response rates vary over time

¹³ Three representatives voluntarily reported information on their programs in “teach out” status, indicating that at least 79 additional students are enrolled in programs with an anticipated graduation date in 2020. The total number of programs in “teach out” and their remaining enrollment is unknown.

In total, 10,153 students were enrolled in generic/traditional programs for the first time during AY 2017-18.¹⁴ Among them, Practical Nursing programs enrolled 2,084 new students, Associate Degree programs enrolled 5,235 new students, and pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs enrolled 2,834 new students.

Overall, 44.5% of students that enrolled in a pre-licensure program during Fall 2017, Spring 2018, or Summer 2018 were still enrolled one year later. Another 38% had graduated. This represents an overall retention rate of 82.5%. Pre-licensure programs had a 17% attrition rate, (students who left the programs without completing their degree).¹⁵ LPN programs had the highest rate of attrition (24%), followed by ADN programs (16%), and BSN programs (15%).

Compared to the previous survey cycle, LPN retention decreased 3.8%, BSN retention decreased 2%, and ADN program retention increased 1.5% (Figure 4, previous page). Declining retention rates affect Florida’s ability to produce new, quality nurses. However, trends should be interpreted with caution as response rates vary over time.¹⁶

Student Graduation

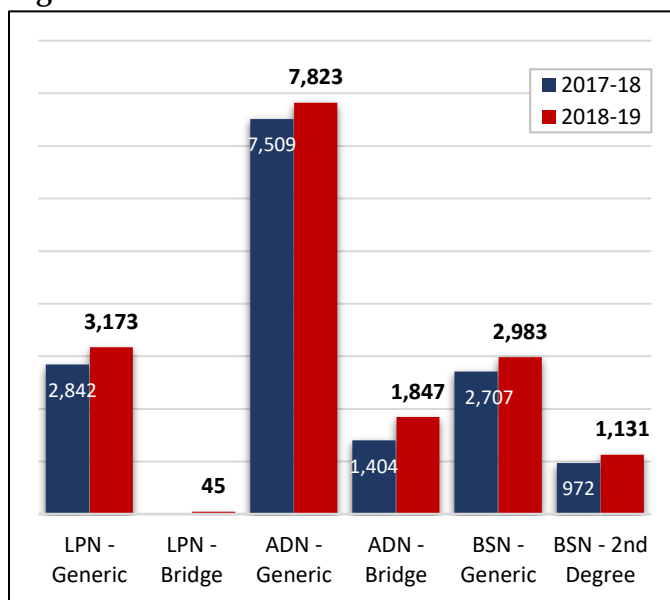
AY 2018-19 participants reported higher graduation rates for all pre-licensure program types compared to AY 2017-18.

Generic/traditional ADN programs continue to produce the largest number of graduates (Figure 5). Programs reported 7,823 generic/traditional ADN program graduates in AY 2018-19, compared to 7,509 in AY 2017-18 (+4%).

Generic/traditional LPN respondents reported 331 more graduates in the most recent academic year, compared to those reported in the last survey cycle. Generic/traditional BSN programs reported 276 more graduates this year, a 10% increase since AY 2017-18.

ADN Bridge graduates increased 32% and second degree BSN graduates increased 16%, compared to AY 2017-18. Increased response rates and small numbers of graduates in expedited programs may make increases appear more drastic compared to generic programs.

Figure 5: Graduation Rates Increased in AY 2018-19



Note: Counts should be interpreted with caution as response rates vary over time and counts exclude non-respondents.

Increases in graduation rates may contribute to greater production of nurses, but successful passage of licensure exams is required to gain employment as an LPN or RN. In 2018, Florida’s

¹⁴ Information on bridge (LPN, ADN) or second degree (BSN) program retention is not available.

¹⁵ This research does not consider whether students left a program and re-enrolled in another.

¹⁶ Twenty more programs provided retention information compared to the previous survey cycle. Increased response rates provide more accurate representations of total population.

total LPN and ADN passage rates were at least ten percentage points below national averages.¹⁷ A report on 2019 licensure exam passage rates will be provided as data is made available by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

Employment Status of Graduates

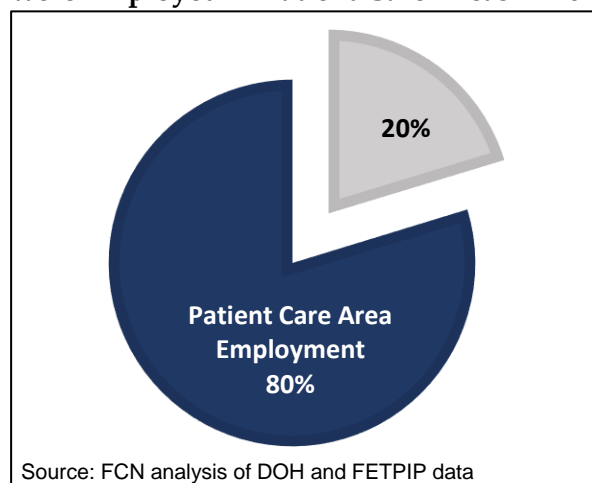
This section explores the 2018 employment of AY 2016-17 graduates of pre-licensure programs with active nursing licenses in 2018.¹⁸ Only nurses who received their *initial* license following AY 2016-17 graduation are included here to best represent the number of *new* nurses that may potentially work in Florida.¹⁹

There were 15,815 new graduates in AY 2016-17 with active nursing licenses in 2018.²⁰

Among the AY 2016-17 graduates of prelicensure programs who received their first nursing license in Florida following their graduation, and held active licenses in 2018...

- 35% graduated in Fall 2016 and 65% graduated in Spring or Summer 2017.
- 83% received their original license in 2017; 12% received their license in 2018.
- 82% hold a rank of Registered Nurse; 18% are Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).
- 5% held active licenses in 2018 but went delinquent due to non-renewal in 2019; 2% were no longer eligible to practice in 2019 due to a license status change.

Figure 6: 80% of Active AY 2016-17 Graduates were Employed in Patient Care Areas in 2018



Employment data do not indicate roles or position titles, but licensed nurses working in patient care areas may *likely* have been employed as a nurse. **Eighty percent (80%) of graduates with active licenses were employed in patient care areas at some point during 2018** (Figure 6).

This does not represent the number of licensed nurses *currently* working in patient care. This proportion represents graduates who (likely) became employed as practical or professional nurses in Florida at some point during the first year following their education and licensure.

No employment records were found for 12% of the new AY 2016-17 graduates with active nursing licenses in 2018 (12% of all new RN and 10% of all new LPN actively licensed graduates). This may represent graduates that were either employed outside of Florida or were unemployed

¹⁷ Florida Center for Nursing (2019). [“Review of Florida Nurse Education Program Graduate Passage Rates on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensure Examination: Calendar Year 2018.”](#)

¹⁸ Obtained from Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).

¹⁹ Cases filtered to students with graduation date between Sept. 1, 2016 and Aug. 31, 2017 to represent AY 2016-17 graduates. Only graduates of pre-licensure programs and graduates whose original license date followed their 2016-17 graduation are included. See Appendix B for sample inclusion model.

²⁰ Includes graduates with an ACTIVE and eligible to practice license status as of the end of 2018. Graduates who were working in 2018 may be excluded if their license changed to an ineligible status during the 2018 calendar year. Excludes 2,247 AY 2016-17 graduates that were not initially licensed until 2019

for all of 2018. Two-hundred thirty-six (236) of the 1,891 graduates with no Florida employment in 2018 were in a continuing education program.

Overall, 26% of new graduates with active licenses in 2018 were continuing education in AY 2017-18 and/or AY 2018-19. Graduates who were unemployed throughout 2018 while pursuing continuing education represent only 6% of all newly licensed graduates who were continuing education. This may suggest that licensed nurses are pursuing education beyond their initial license while maintaining employment, either to advance their capabilities as nurses or become more marketable to move into an employment industry more fitting to their preferences.

Twenty percent (20%) of new graduates with active licenses were employed in more than one industry (patient care, healthcare related, or non-healthcare) during 2018. This includes nurses working in multiple career areas at the same time, and those who may have left or entered employment in healthcare throughout the year.

More research is needed to track employment pathways of nurses entering or leaving patient care or healthcare industries. Additional research is also needed to identify characteristics of licensed nurses working in non-healthcare settings at the same time, or in place of, healthcare or patient care settings.²¹ However, preliminary estimates suggest 73% of these graduates were employed in patient-care industries in the last quarter of 2018.

In 2018, **60% of nurse graduates worked in only patient care areas.** The number of nurse graduates employed in only patient care areas increased throughout 2018, which may correspond with additional graduates becoming licensed and acquiring employment (Table 3).

Table 3: Employment Categories by Number of Areas Employed by Quarter

	2018				2018 (Annual)	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	#	%
One Employment Categories	11,341	11,394	11,888	11,901	10,764	68.1%
Patient Care Areas Only	9,683	9,761	10,377	10,335	9,465	59.8%
Other Health Careers Only	48	51	61	69	42	0.3%
Non-Health Careers Only	1,610	1,582	1,450	1,497	1,257	7.9%
Two Employment Categories	1,460	1,304	1,261	1,250	3,137	19.8%
Patient Care + Non-Healthcare	1,412	1,259	1,222	1,209	3,061	19.4%
Patient Care + Other Health Career	32	36	32	30	58	0.4%
Other Health + Non-Health	16	9	7	11	18	0.1%
All Three Employment Categories	3	3	2	0	23	0.1%
No Employment Found	1,908	1,899	1,907	1,905	1,891	12.0%
Total	14,712	14,600	15,058	15,056	15,815	100.0%

Notes: Table tracks counts by quarter, not employment pathways of graduates. Represents employment in patient care areas, other health careers, and non-health employment. Industries coded into categories by FCN. Includes AY 2016-17 graduates of prelicensure programs who received initial nursing license after graduation. Excludes graduates licensed in 2019. Counts do not represent # of positions held or facilities employed at (either at the same time or throughout the quarter/year). The "Three Employment Categories" 2018 (Annual) total best represents changes between categories throughout the year, more so than year-round employment in all three categories.

²¹ Employment data include industries of employment at each quarter of 2018. Analyses do not track pathways into or out of healthcare/patient care industries or combined employment types (e.g. patient care + non-healthcare or healthcare related + non-healthcare, etc.)

Interestingly, 8% of AY 2016-17 graduates of pre-licensure programs with active licenses in 2018 were only employed in non-health related arenas throughout 2018. This may include nurses who became licensed toward the end of 2018 and those maintaining employment while seeking work as a nurse. However, additional research is needed to understand if licensed nurses are working in industries outside of healthcare in ways that use their nursing degree, or if these nurses are more likely to remain in non-nursing employment.

Newly licensed graduates were more likely to be employed in patient care employment industries and/or non-nursing related positions, compared to other (non-nursing) healthcare industries. Less than 1% of the population were employed in other healthcare related industries in 2018, either exclusively (0.3%), in addition to patient care areas (0.4%), with non-healthcare employment (0.1%), or some combination of all three employment categories (0.1%).

Final Thoughts

The Florida Center for Nursing (the Center, FCN) has been directed by Legislature to report on and evaluate the effectiveness of statutory changes “increasing the availability of nursing education programs and the production of quality nurses”²² since 2017. Program representatives are also directed in statute to comply with the Center’s data requests. In 2019, the Florida Department of Health imposed a citation and \$1,000 penalty for programs that do not participate in this request. The current report is the first since the penalty was imposed. The increased response rate (↑14%) highlights the significant impact of enforcing this mandate. **Current response rates are the closest the Center has come to 100% participation (96% response).**

Response rates are directly correlated with the Center’s ability to provide evaluations of student enrollment, capacity measures, retention rates, and more. Accurate and comprehensive values allow for more precise understandings of “the availability of nursing education programs and the production of quality nurses.”²¹ As a result, the current survey provides the most comprehensive values required for this review. **Mandated participation and enforcement of consequences offer valuable opportunity for greater reliability in current estimates and future analyses of trends over time.**

While the support of the Florida Department of Health and Board of Nursing played a critical role in increased participation, FCN employed multiple approaches to ensure survey participation. Efforts to identify appropriate representatives when programs do not provide updates to the Board of Nursing, email and telephone correspondence with programs to remind them of survey due dates and ensure their awareness of non-participation penalties, and responding to program questions and technical troubleshooting is time intensive and resource demanding.

It is important that measures presented in this report are not viewed in isolation without understanding program passage rates on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination (NCLEX), and vice versa. Both successful graduation and passage of the NCLEX are necessary to practice as a licensed nurse. The Center is directed to prepare and submit this report to the Governor, the President of the senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 30th of each year included in the mandate. However, licensure passage rate data are not made available to the Center early enough to include in the same report as that of the annual education survey. The difference between the number of graduates and

²² Florida Statute 464.019(10)

those eligible to work as nurses in Florida is an example of a critical measure which cannot be fully understood without the context of licensure exam passage rates.

More research is needed to compare characteristics of programs and NCLEX passage rates in relation to Florida's financial investment into nursing education programs. The Florida Legislature may wish to consider delaying the reporting date for the implementation study to allow time for additional analyses of program characteristics, NCLEX passage rates, and nurse employment patterns. It may also be beneficial to the state to support additional research aims, guided by Florida's interests in supporting nursing education programs which produce quality nurses, eligible and willing to practice in the state. **It is important to identify the pathways into or out of the nursing workforce following graduation and licensure.** This information is beneficial to understanding the current and future supply of nurses in the state, and Florida's return on investment for nursing education programs.

Lastly, **updated demand and forecasting data is essential to provide a more complete view of the nurse pipeline** from education to the workforce supply and between the (current and future) nurse supply, industry demand, and population needs. Arbitrarily increasing production of nurses without considering demand within employment settings or specialties, emerging roles, or regional maldistribution of nurses will not be enough to ensure Florida's access to an adequate and qualified nursing workforce to meet Florida's healthcare needs today and in the future.

However, in recent years the Center has been unable to successfully collect and analyze demand data or provide forecasted estimates due to limited funding and low response rates by facilities. As a result, the state is operating under outdated state-level assumptions, relying on national demand/forecasting reports or piecemeal and anecdotal reports from industry. Analyses by national groups significantly underestimate Florida's current needs and do not provide accurate estimates of future demand for this state. The Florida Center for Nursing must have the support, authority, and sustainability to pursue demand efforts and provide this critical information at the state level, so policymakers and stakeholders have all of the tools needed for decision-making.

APPENDIX A – Notice of Non-Responders

FLORIDA CENTER FOR NURSING’S 2019 SURVEY OF NURSING PROGRAMS NON-PARTICIPATION AMONG PRE-LICENSURE PROGRAMS

Florida Statute 464.019 requires the Florida Center for Nursing (FCN) to collect and evaluate program-specific data for education programs and indicates “[t]he department and each approved program or accredited program shall comply with requests for data from the Florida Center for Nursing.” As of the current survey cycle, the Florida Department of Health’s citation 64B9-8.003(4) imposes “a penalty of \$1,000... by not complying with a request for data as required by section 464.019(10), F.S.” The following document provides the Florida Board of Nursing (BON) with a list of contacted programs that did not provide responses to this data request during the 2019 cycle.

The 2019 Florida Center for Nursing’s Survey of Nursing Programs targeted 369 programs, a net increase of 13 schools, compared to 2018. Program and contact information were acquired through the BON website²³ and direct contact with BON.

Among the 369 programs included in the sample, 145 were Practical Nursing programs, 143 were Associate Degree programs, and 81 were pre-licensure BSN programs. Each program’s last known contact received a minimum of four email invitations/reminders beginning on October 1, 2019, and FCN engaged in additional direct outreach efforts to encourage survey participation.²⁴ The overall response rate was approximately 96.5%.

Table 1: 2019 Florida Center for Nursing Survey of Nursing Programs Response Rate

	Survey Participants	Non- Responders	Response Rate
Number of Programs	356	13	96.5%
Program Type			
LPN Programs	139	6	95.9%
ADN Programs	138	5	96.5%
BSN Programs	79	2	97.5%
Did not Submit in 2018	57	0	-
Became Inactive During Survey Cycle	3	2	-
New Program Since Last Survey Cycle	33	2	-

Two Year Comparison

The response rate increased 19% from 2018. Improved responses may be attributed to additional direct outreach, improved descriptive language in invitations, and/or improved program capabilities and administration. More particularly, the 2019 survey cycle was the first that non-responders would receive a citation and \$1,000 fine from the Florida Department of Health. This consequence for non-participation likely had a major impact in the Florida Center for Nursing’s ability to legitimize this

²³ Full list of nursing education programs obtained on September 6, 2019 from <https://apps.mqa.doh.state.fl.us/MQASearchServices/NursingPrograms>

²⁴ Email invitations were sent on Oct. 1. Some programs received invitations one or more days later when emails were undeliverable and alternate contacts were needed. Reminders were sent on Oct. 15, Oct. 29, and Nov. 7. The Oct. 29th reminder also included a two-week extension, to provide all schools the opportunity to complete the survey. Direct outreach efforts were attempted via phone and email between Oct. 10th and Nov. 14th to programs that had not started or completed surveys. Schools active in nursing organizations received additional reminders via their group’s leadership.

state-mandated data request and encourage participation. Support from the state Legislature and the Florida Department of Health are essential to maintaining consistent and high response rates.

In 2018, 62 programs did not respond.²⁵ In 2019, **the number of non-responders decreased to thirteen (13) programs.** Among the 2018 non-responders, 57 programs *did* participate in the current survey cycle. Five (5) of the 2018 non-responders were no longer active programs by the 2019 survey cycle.

Among the thirteen (13) non-responders in the current survey cycle, eleven (11) submitted a response in 2018 and two (2) did not have active programs in 2018. This means that **none of the current non-responders were also non-participants in the previous year.**

Table 2 lists all schools that did not submit a valid response in the current survey cycle.

Table 2: 2019 Florida Center for Nursing Survey of Nursing Program Non-Responders

NCLEX	School Name	No Response		
		2017	2018	2019
70-712	Azure College	-	-	X
70-772	Azure College, Inc.	-	†	X
70-526	Azure College, Inc.	-	-	X
70-528	Azure College, Inc.	-	-	X
70-774	FMI Career School	-	-	X
70-288	Harris-Casel Institute	-	-	X
70-206	Horizon Healthcare Institute	X	-	X
70-246	Horizon Healthcare Institute, Inc.	X	-	X
70-4145	Horizon Healthcare Institute, Inc.	N/A	N/A	X
70-4138	Horizon Healthcare Institute, Inc.	N/A	-	X
70-149	Horizon Healthcare Institute, Inc.	X	-	X
70-113700	Horizon Healthcare Institute, Inc.	N/A	-	X
70-1130	Inlet Grove Community High School	X		X

† This program has an original licensure date of 2013, but the program was not active during 2018, and was not included in the sample for that year. This program did submit a response in the 2017 survey cycle.

Table 3 (next page) outlines detailed logs of direct contact attempted for each non-responder. Correspondence described in this table are in addition to survey instructions sent on October 1, 2019, and three reminders sent on October 15, October 29, and November 7, 2019. The October 29th email extended the deadline two weeks to allow all programs a chance to provide a completed response.

²⁵ Excludes two programs that were dropped from the 2018 sample after submitting a response due to missing data corresponding with statutory requirement, as these programs were originally included in the response rate

Table 3: 2019 Florida Center for Nursing Log of Contact Efforts Made to Non-Responders

NCLEX	School Name	Contact Efforts Exceeding Four Formal Emails
70-712 70-772 70-526 70-528	Azure College	<p>10/16: Called and reached voicemail for Marie Lazare (ext. 203). Left voicemail outlining four surveys due for Azure College and \$1,000 FDOH fine. Left phone and email info for her to contact FCN.</p> <p>11/12: Called and reached voicemail for Marie Lazare (ext. 203). Left message outlining 4 surveys due and \$1,000 FDOH fine for each incomplete survey. Left phone number and email address for her to contact FCN. Found marielazare@azure.edu email address on BON annual report submitted on 10/31/19. Sent info via email. Received delivery confirmation.</p> <p>11/15: Received voicemail from Marie Lazare while at FL-AC Summit stating she is returning my call but provided no other explanation.</p> <p>11/18: Returned call to 772-631-5605 per 11/15 voicemail, did not ring but got voicemail after a moment. VM was not personalized so didn't leave many details on message. Stated the message was for Marie Lazare, referenced survey, 11/14/19 deadline, and provided FCN phone number.</p>
70-774	FMI Career School	<p>10/23: Called and spoke with a man who confirmed Jakie Badere is one of the associates at the school but was not available at that time. Explained the purpose of call. He confirmed the contact information we had was correct. Explained the FDOH fine and the Oct. 31 deadline and told them to call FCN with any questions.</p> <p>11/13: Called and spoke with the same man who confirmed Jakie Badere has been receiving the information but didn't know if she had completed it. Told him this was a final courtesy call as she has not even opened the survey and the extended deadline is 11/14. He indicated he would pass the message on as urgent for her to take care of it.</p>
70-288	Harris-Casel Institute	<p>10/23: Called and received automated answering service - selected option to speak to campus director and was disconnected; called back and followed prompts to speak to receptionist and immediately got a voicemail which stated they would be closed on 9/12 (more than a month ago) and would reopen on 9/13. Left message explaining the purpose of my call, \$1,000 fine, deadline, the contacts information was sent to, and left FCN phone number and email address.</p> <p>11/13: Called and got same voice message from September. Did not leave message. Google lists Harris-Casel as permanently closed. Sent final courtesy email to both contacts with delivery and read receipts. Not deliverable to Harris email addresses. Prior correspondence to these addresses did not return as undeliverable. Additional contacts unknown.</p>
70-206 70-246 70-4145 70-4138 70-149 70-113700	Horizon Healthcare Institute	<p>10/21: Called 239-939-1992 and got voicemail for Courtney Robinson with Horizon Healthcare Institute. Left contact information, explanation of fine and deadline, etc. Called 941-889-7506 and received same voicemail for Courtney Robinson. Did not leave additional message. Looked through MQA site for any additional contacts but all current information matches FCN records.</p> <p>11/13: Called number listed on Google (321-914-4533). Bridgett Burroughs wasn't available but person on call confirmed she was the director. Asked to leave a message for Ms. Burroughs about 6 outstanding surveys and deadline tomorrow. She asked me to re-send the information to the same email address. Sent with delivery and read receipts. Delivery confirmed. No read receipt.</p>
70-1130	Inlet Grove Community High School	<p>10/23: Called and spoke with Rebecca Blair, she hasn't received any correspondence but confirmed email address. Re-sent from @ucf.edu email address and gave her direct number in case she doesn't receive it. Sent with delivery and read receipts.</p> <p>11/12: Received email reply to 11/7 final reminder from Rebecca Blair stating she couldn't log in. Sent her an email outlining common reasons for this difficulty and she replied that she was successfully able to log in.</p> <p>11/15: Checked partially complete survey to identify whether participant intended to submit. Several sections remained incomplete.</p>

APPENDIX B

Sample Inclusion for 2018 Employment Status of AY 2016-17 Prelicensure Graduates

Source: Analysis of data received from FETPIP, applicable to Employment Status of New Graduates section (pages 8-10)

