

REGISTERED NURSES in California



Healthcare is one of the largest employers in California, providing a wide range of well-paying career opportunities for residents. In 2014, the Centers of Excellence partnered with the Health Workforce Initiative (HWI) and the California Hospital Association (CHA) on two healthcare surveys to **assess workforce needs** at both state and regional levels. The surveys targeted three healthcare sectors:

- **Hospitals** provide medical, diagnostic, and treatment services to inpatients and some outpatient services.
- **Ambulatory Healthcare Services** provide healthcare services to outpatients in settings such as offices of physicians, outpatient care centers, and laboratories.
- **Nursing and Residential Care Facilities** provide residential care combined with either nursing, supervisory, or other types of care as needed.

Statewide, 190 hospitals responded to the hospital survey and 1,600 clinics, labs and facilities responded to the ambulatory and residential care survey, providing an excellent sample to analyze healthcare workforce demand across the state and in several regions. The research focused on identifying: (1) labor market demand for key occupations in healthcare industries, (2) training supply supporting healthcare industries, and (3) key issues impacting supply and demand.

This report is one in a series of reports profiling healthcare occupations in California. There are 12 occupational profiles in the series: certified nursing assistants, home health aides, licensed vocational nurses, medical assistants, medical coders, registered nurses, physician assistants, healthcare social workers, medical laboratory technicians, clinical laboratory scientists, occupational therapy assistants and respiratory therapists.

Labor Market Demand

In California, there are approximately 23,600 registered nursing (RN) jobs in the ambulatory and residential care subsectors. Over the next 12 months, employers in these subsectors will need to fill over 7,100 openings created by new job growth and replacement needs.

Projected Employment for Registered Nurses¹

Ambulatory & Residential Care Industries	2014 Employment	12-Month Growth	Replacement Jobs	Total Openings (Growth + Replacements)
	23,618	2,829	4,274	7,103

California Hospital Association members that responded to the survey employ approximately 72,000 registered nurses. This sample does not include an estimate of total hospital employment because not all of California's hospitals participated in the survey.

Current Employment for Registered Nurses¹

Hospitals	Current Employment*	Full-time Positions	Part-time Positions	Per Diem Jobs
	72,028	50,420	21,608	12,057

*Ending headcount for the 4th quarter of 2013.

Labor Market Trends

Ambulatory & Residential Care

- 94% of RNs employed by ambulatory and residential care facilities were identified as experienced.

Hospitals

- 30% of RNs employed by hospitals work part-time.
- Only 1.5 percent of RNs employed by hospitals are classified as traveling nurses.

¹ Ambulatory/residential care and hospital employment counts include full-time and part-time employment. Additional data on per diem employment for hospitals is totaled separately.

Hiring Trends

In the ambulatory and residential care survey, employers were asked about their hiring preferences.

- Two out of three employers stated that they are more likely to hire a nurse with a bachelor’s degree in nursing than an associate degree in nursing. This indicates a strong preference for BSN degrees.
- Seventy-one percent of registered nurses working in ambulatory and residential care focus primarily on clinical activities and 29% focus primarily on administrative work. When hiring new RNs, two out of three new hires will be assigned to an entirely clinical role or to a role with more clinical than administrative duties. This indicates that new graduates need to have relevant clinical experience and coursework to compete for open positions.



Difficulty Hiring

Two-out of three employers in the ambulatory and residential care subsectors reported difficulty finding qualified applicants for entry-level registered nurse positions.² Minimum qualifications may include RN license, clinical experience in a specific division (i.e. surgery, emergency services); more than one language, and/or knowledge of specific records software.



Training Supply

In California, there are 123 registered nursing programs: 83 Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs and 40 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs.

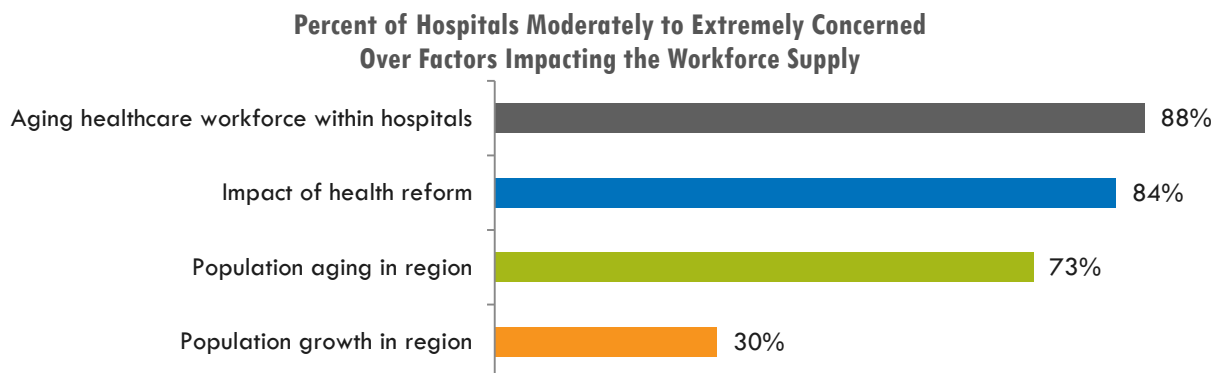
Degrees/Certificates Conferred (3-yr annual average)	CA Community Colleges (ADN)	Public Universities (BSN)	Private Education (ADN)	Private Education (BSN)	Annual Average (All)
	5,847	2,567	753	2,788	11,955

This estimate is based on data reported to the California Community College Chancellor’s Office Data Mart and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Higher education institutions are required to report completion data to NCES if they participate in any federal financial assistance program authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. Completion data not reported to the NCES or CCCCCO Data Mart were not included in the estimate.

² Hospitals were not asked about the level of difficulty they experienced in finding qualified applicants for entry-level RN positions.

Supply Challenges

The healthcare sector is facing a variety of factors that may have a direct impact on the workforce supply. Across California, the majority of hospitals are concerned that health reform, the aging hospital workforce, and the aging population will have a significant impact on the state’s ability to keep up with healthcare workforce demand. Healthcare reform is expanding coverage to thousands of uninsured residents, which is increasing demand for healthcare services across the board. The aging population will expand demand for certain types of services, creating additional need for skilled workers.



While these two factors will increase demand for new healthcare workers, the aging healthcare workforce within hospitals creates a need for replacement workers. In the hospital setting, one out of five registered nurses in direct care (excluding new graduates) is in the age cohort of 56 or older. Two out of five registered nurses who do not provide direct care, but serve in other capacities are in the age cohort of 56 and older.³ As healthcare workers retire at greater numbers, the training supply will also need to increase.

Ambulatory and Residential Care: Employer Perspective

Two-thirds (65%) of ambulatory and residential care facilities provide professional development (either in-house or sponsored training) for their RNs. Some of the options include: continuing education units to keep licensure current, CPR, infection control and prevention, specialized training for various procedures and equipment, and emergency preparedness. Ambulatory and residential care employers discussed the topics that community colleges could offer or improve upon to support professional development for their existing staff. The following suggestions were offered:

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| Offer | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses in communication (written and spoken and customer service skills) with patients and family members • Training on mental health, including assessments/diagnostics and treatment options • Training on changes in law and scope of practice • Training on quality improvement processes • Training on managing patients with chronic diseases |
| Improve | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate critical thinking, time management, supervisory, and organization skills into existing training • Integrate case studies and practice exercises on ethics into existing training • More hands-on training (IV's, catheters, etc.) • Incorporate ACA guidelines and regulations in existing training |

Sidebar Discussion

Ambulatory and residential care employers stated a preference to hire registered nurses with a BSN.

What motivates the preference for BSNs?

How should community colleges address this issue – working with state legislation to allow community colleges to offer BSN degrees or adjusting existing curriculum within an ADN program?

³ Hospital Survey, statewide data.

In Summary

Key issues affecting supply and demand for registered nurses include:

- 63% of employers report difficulty finding qualified applicants for entry-level registered nurse positions.
- There is an employer preference (ambulatory & residential care) for BSNs, yet more than half of the RN graduates in the state graduate from ADN programs.
- In the hospital setting, one out of five registered nurses in direct care is approaching retirement age (56+).
- Hospitals are concerned that health reform, the aging hospital workforce, and the aging population will have a significant impact on the state's ability to keep up with healthcare workforce demand.

Community colleges can play a role in removing barriers in the training supply by working with healthcare employers to address key issues, such as an increasing preference for RNs with a BSN. Community colleges and other training institutions should continue to monitor the impact of the aging population, aging workforce and healthcare reform. By staying connected with local healthcare employers, community colleges can be responsive to their workforce needs.

In the short-term, ambulatory and residential care employers suggested that community colleges (1) integrate critical thinking, time management, supervisory, and organization skills into existing training, (2) offer courses in communication (written and spoken and customer service skills) with patients and family members, and (3) offer training on changes in law and scope of practice.

For More information

This document and others are available to download at www.coeccc.net/health.

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Health Workforce Initiative

More about the Health Workforce Initiative: The HWI provides education and training programs to meet emerging demands for healthcare industry workers; to determine needs, facilitate development of innovative solutions and to locate resources to implement planned responses; to evaluate and initialize health-related educational programs. More information about the Health Workforce Initiative is available at www.ca-hwi.org.



More about the Centers of Excellence: The Centers of Excellence (COE), in partnership with business and industry, deliver regional workforce research customized for community college decision making and resource development. This information has proven valuable to colleges in beginning, revising, or updating economic development and Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, strengthening grant applications, assisting in the accreditation process, and in supporting strategic planning efforts. More information about the Centers of Excellence is available at www.coeccc.net.

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