

Minnesota's Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce – 2008



The Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Nursing, collects information about the demographics, employment and career plans of licensed practical nurses (LPNs). Minnesota LPNs voluntarily complete workforce surveys during the licensing renewal process. Unless noted, all data presented is based on the information collected from these 2006-2008 surveys. **Contact ORHPC with questions or data requests about LPNs or other Minnesota health care professionals at (651) 201- 3838, or visit ORHPC at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce.**

Overall Statistics:

- A total of 20,732 licensed practical nurses (LPNs) renewed their Minnesota licenses from 2006 to 2008, according to the Minnesota Board of Nursing (MBN). Not all LPNs holding licenses were actively practicing in Minnesota. ORHPC received 13,487 survey responses, representing a 65 percent response rate.
- Approximately 16,300 LPNs (311 per 100,000 population) were practicing in Minnesota.
- Among LPNs who responded to the survey, 79 percent were working at least part time.

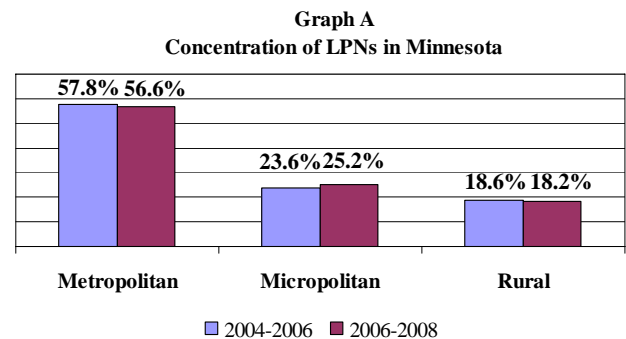
Gender, Race and Ethnicity:

- Most LPNs were female (96 percent) and only 4 percent were male.
- Almost 94 percent of LPNs identified themselves as White.
- Only 6 percent of LPNs identified themselves as African American, Native American, Asian, Hispanic or multirace.

Geographic Distribution:

- A comparison with the last survey period (2004-2006) shows LPNs continued to be concentrated in the metropolitan¹ areas of Minnesota (Graph A).
- Half (52 percent) of the female LPNs practiced in a metropolitan area. Male LPNs were more likely (69 percent) to practice in

metropolitan areas.



Age Range:

- Approximately 60 percent of LPNs who worked in Minnesota were 45 or older.
- The median age of LPNs who worked in Minnesota was 48 years old.
- The median age of LPNs was 48 years old in both metropolitan and rural² areas of Minnesota, and 47 years old in micropolitan³ areas.

Training:

- Most LPNs (92 percent) received their nurse training and education from a Minnesota nursing program.
- Most LPNs (98 percent) received a post-secondary educational degree or certificate in preparation for licensure.
- Only 15 percent reported receiving an associate degree and less than 1 percent a bachelor's degree prior to becoming an LPN.

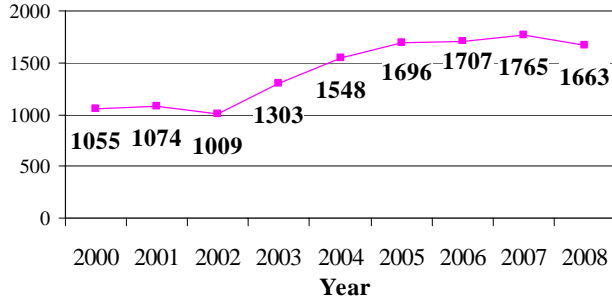
¹ Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) = 21 counties included in seven metropolitan statistical areas (Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Cloud, Rochester, Duluth-Superior, Fargo, Grand Forks and La Crosse).

² Rural = 46 counties outside MSAs and Micropolitan areas.

³ Micropolitan counties = 20 counties surrounding smaller urban centers of at least 10,000 people.

- Based on Minnesota Board of Nursing data, the number of LPN applicants obtaining their first license increased overall from 2002 to 2008 (Graph B).

Graph B
Number of LPNs by Year of First License
Minnesota 2000-2008



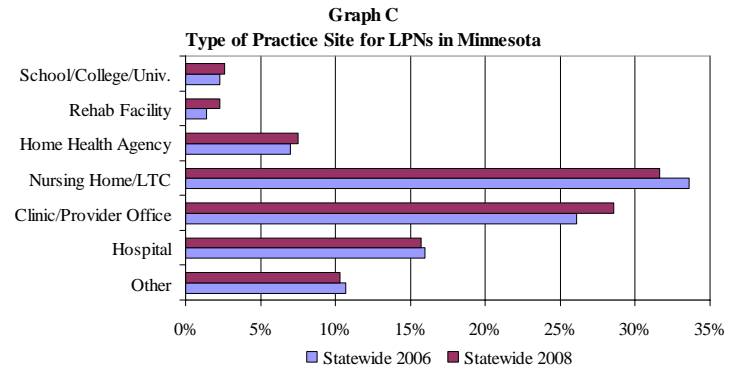
Source: Minnesota Board of Nursing

Practice Longevity Plans:

- Most LPNs (60 percent) planned to practice another 10 years or more.
- Only 19 percent intended to practice another six to 10 years and 18 percent expected to stop practicing within the next five years.

Primary Practice Setting:

- LPNs worked an average of 10 years at their employer or facility.
- LPNs worked an average of 34 hours per week.
- The most common area of practice statewide was long term care (32 percent). The percentage of LPNs who practiced in long term care was greater in rural areas (42 percent) than in metropolitan and micropolitan areas (approximately 30 percent in each).
- The percentage of LPNs who reported clinic and provider offices as their primary practice sites increased from 26 percent in 2006 to 29 percent in 2008. (Graph C).
- The percentage of LPNs who practiced in clinics and provider offices was higher in metropolitan and micropolitan areas (approximately 30 percent in each) than in rural areas (24 percent).



Primary Activity:

- A majority (90 percent) of LPNs spent at least some of their time performing direct patient care.
- The next most frequently reported activities were patient supervision and telephone triage, in which about 30 percent of LPNs reported spending a portion of their time.
- LPNs spent the least amount of time in case management, insurance/utilization, and public and school health activities.

Hospital Settings:

- Only 16 percent of LPNs worked in a hospital (Graph C).
- Among LPNs in hospitals, most practiced in the medical and surgical units (35 percent).
- Smaller numbers of LPNs practiced in emergency care (10 percent), operating rooms (5 percent), recovery (5 percent), and intensive care units (5 percent).
- LPNs in rural hospitals were more likely to be in emergency and intensive care (51 percent) and operating and recovery (43 percent), while most LPNs in metropolitan hospitals worked in outpatient care (53 percent).
- Ten percent of LPNs who were working in rural hospitals reported practicing in a psychological or behavioral unit. It was more common for LPNs in metropolitan and micropolitan hospitals to work in the psychological or behavioral unit (47 percent and 43 percent respectively).