

Minnesota's Registered Nurse Workforce 2015-2016

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2015-2016 RN WORKFORCE SURVEYⁱ

Overall

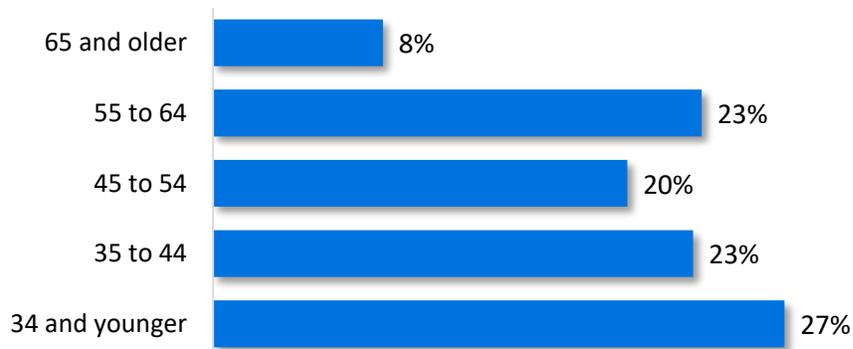
Registered nurses, the largest segment of the health care workforce, deliver primary and specialty care. According to the Minnesota Board of Nursing, as of February 2017, there were **105,988** actively licensed registered nurses (RNs).ⁱⁱ

Demographics

Sex. The RN workforce continues to be a female-dominated profession; 92 percent are women. The small number of RNs who are male rose from 8 percent in 2013-2014 to 9 percent in 2015-2016.

Age. RNs display more even distribution in age compared to other health professions. Exactly half of the RN workforce is 44 years and younger, with the highest proportion of this group 34 and younger (27 percent). The size of the RN workforce under 34 years of age suggests a growing number of new professionals are entering the field replacing those who will be retiring.

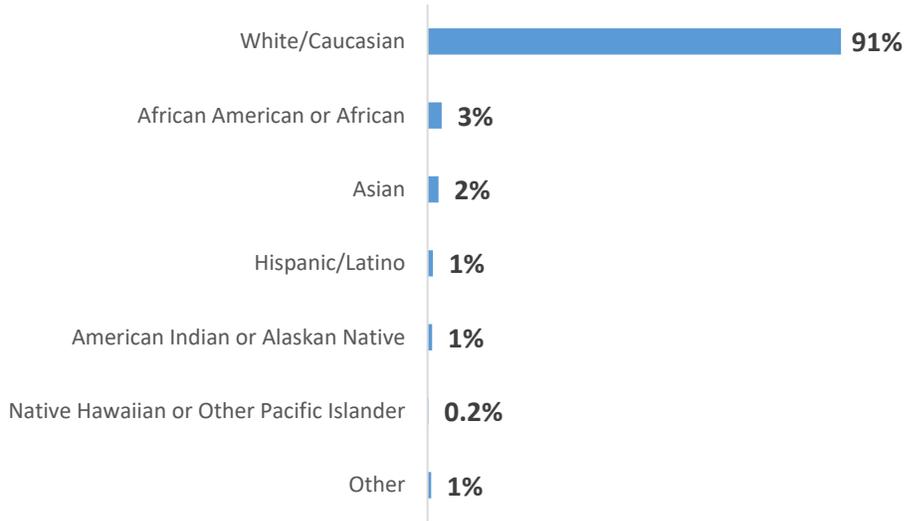
Age of Minnesota Registered Nurses



Source: Minnesota Board of Nursing, February 2017. Analysis done by MDH. Percentages based on 105,988 Minnesota licensed registered nurses who provided valid birth dates to the Board.

Race. A majority (91 percent) of RNs indicated they were white, which is similar to the racial composition in many of the other health care professions. The second most frequently reported race among RNs was African American/African at 3 percent.

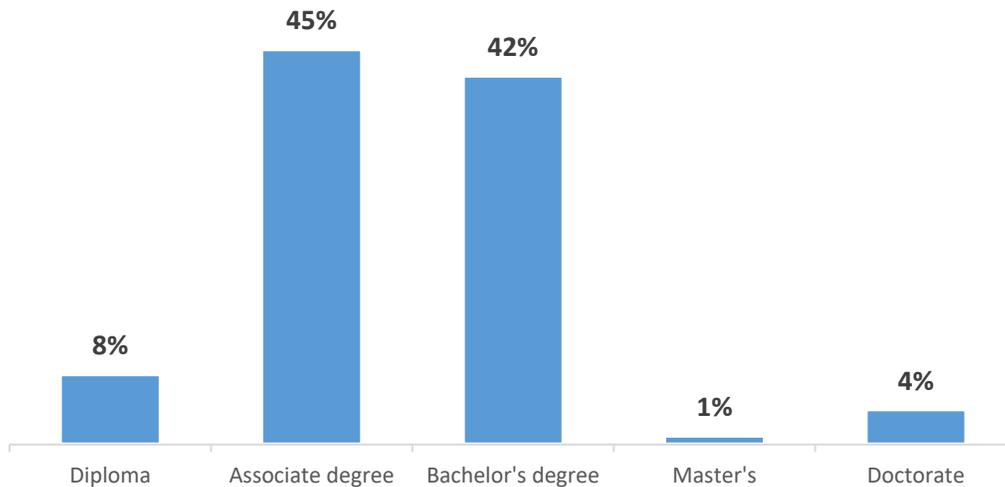
Race of Minnesota Registered Nurses



Source: MDH Registered Nurse Workforce Questionnaire, 2015-2016. Respondents could select as many races as applicable.

Education Level. An Associate or Bachelor’s degree is typically the first degree for many nurses in their careers. Today, more health care employers require a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing. The percentage of RNs with a Bachelor’s degree climbed from 56 percent in 2013-2014 to 68 percent in 2015-2016 (data not shown). This is the first time since surveying the RN workforce in Minnesota that the percentage of RNs with Bachelor’s degrees has outpaced RNs with Associate degrees. Survey respondents selected the degree that first qualified them for an RN license, followed by a question on subsequent degrees obtained. Among RNs who responded to the survey question about additional education, 38 percent said they went on to earn an additional nursing degree after their first licensure as an RN.

Initial Education Level of Minnesota Registered Nurses



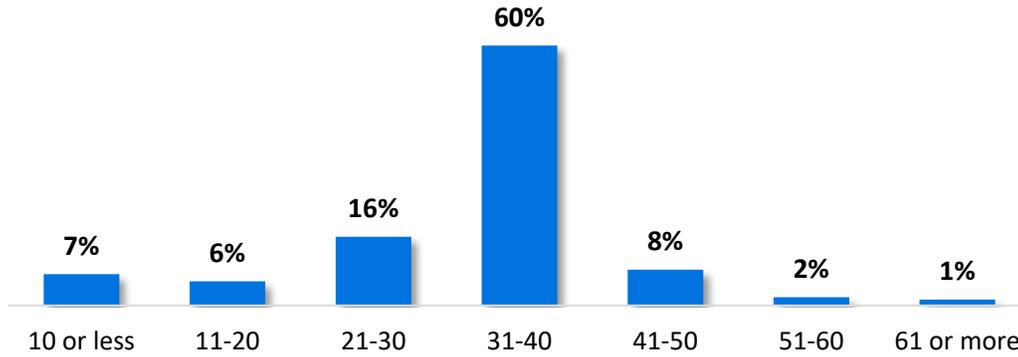
Source: MDH RN Workforce Questionnaire, 2015-2016. The chart shows RNs' first degree (62,445 responses).

Employment

Share of Registered Nurses Employed. An estimated **87 percent** of Minnesota licensed RNs reported on the MDH questionnaire that they were “working in a paid or unpaid position related to [their] license.” Of the 13 percent who reported *not* working in an RN-related capacity, 7 percent indicated they were *not seeking work* as an RN. Of those not seeking work, 2.4 percent were working in another field and 4.4 percent were unemployed. Only 2 percent were seeking work as an RN. The remaining 4 percent were either retired or not working for personal reasons.

Hours Worked. RNs reported the number of hours they worked in a typical week. The median number of hours was 36. Typically, full-time work for RNs consists of either a 36 or 40-hour work week. RNs with a 36-hour work week typically work 12-hour shifts for three days in hospital facilities where the conventional pattern of day, evening, or night shifts is uncommon.

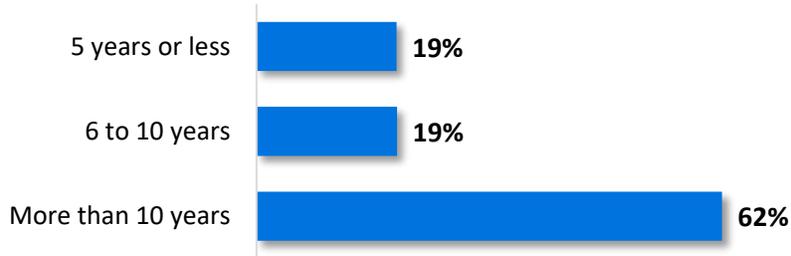
Hours Worked in a Typical Week



Source: MDH RN Workforce Questionnaire, 2015-2016. Chart based on 57,689 survey responses.

Future Plans. More than half of RNs said they planned to continue to practice for more than 10 years (62 percent). Only a small percentage of RNs indicated they planned to leave the field within five years. Of those planning to leave in the next five years, the vast majority (72 percent) indicated they planned to retire.

“How many more years do you plan to practice as a registered nurse in Minnesota?”



Source: MDH Registered Nurse Workforce Questionnaire, 2015-2016. Chart based on 52,285 responses.

Work Setting. The questionnaire asked RNs to identify their primary work settings. The largest share of RNs, 47 percent worked in a hospital, followed by 13 percent who worked in an ambulatory care setting, and 7 percent who worked in a nursing home or other type of long-term care setting. Hospitals selected as the most common type of work setting declined from 49 percent in 2013-2014 to 47 percent in 2015-2016. Some of the recurrent settings among the 10 percent of RNs who reported “other,” included emergency rooms, medical air transport, call centers, and clinical research facilities.

Registered Nurses' Work Setting

Setting	Share of RNs Working in this Setting
Hospital	47%
Ambulatory Care/Clinic	13%
Nursing Home/Long-term care/ Extended care/Assisted Living	7%
Home Health Agency	5%
Insurance Company	4%
Academic (Teaching/Research)	3%
Community/Public Health	3%
Ambulatory Surgical	3%
Hospice	2%
School (K-12)/College/University Health Clinic	2%
Private Industry	1%
Rehabilitation Facility	1%
Correctional Facility	1%
Federally Qualified Health Clinic	<1%
Other	10%

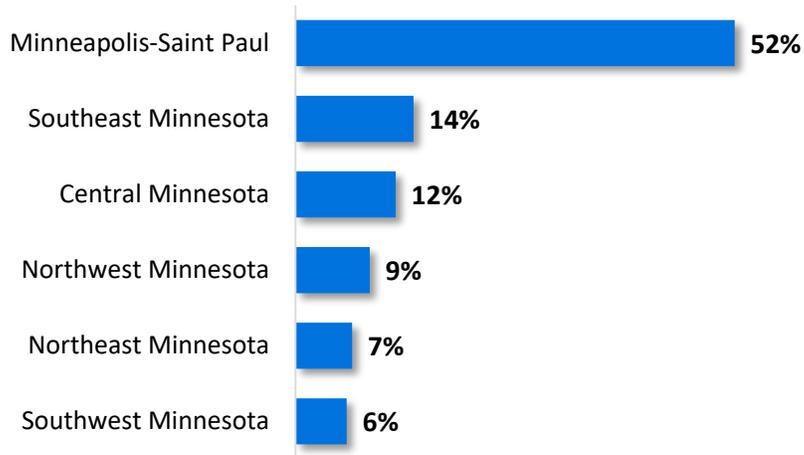
Source: MDH Registered Nurse Workforce Questionnaire, 2015-2016. The chart based on 51,839 survey responses.

Geographic Distribution

To get a sense of the accessibility of RN services around the state, the next two charts provide two different views of the geographic distribution of RNs. These analyses were based on geocoded mailing addresses supplied to the Board of Nursing at the time of license renewal.ⁱⁱⁱ

Distribution by Region. The first chart shows the distribution of RNs across the six planning areas around Minnesota. As shown, more than half of RNs (52 percent) were practicing in the Twin Cities metro area followed by 14 percent in the Southeast region where Mayo Clinic is located. A smaller share of RNs were practicing elsewhere in the state. For reference, the Twin Cities metro area houses approximately 55 percent of the state's population with all other regions housing between 7 and 13 percent of the population. This suggests that RNs—and therefore the accessibility of RN services—while concentrated in the Twin Cities metro and Southeast, are in slightly shorter supply in the Twin Cities region where 55 percent of population resides. It also suggests that Southeast Minnesota, with only 9 percent of the population, may experience an oversupply of RNs compared to other regions. The regional distribution remained unchanged during 2015-2016 as compared to 2013-2014.

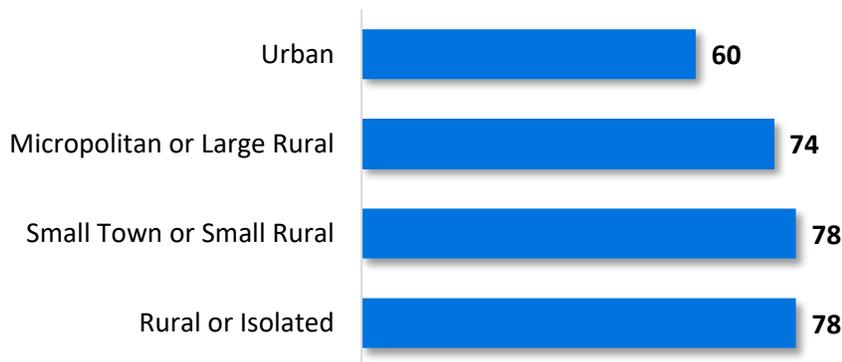
Registered Nurses by Minnesota Region



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) geocoding and analysis of February, 2017 Minnesota Board of Nursing mailing address data. Percentages based on 82,951 valid Minnesota addresses.

Distribution across urban and rural areas. The chart below provides another view of the geographic distribution of RNs, showing the size of the population for every one RN in urban, micropolitan, small town, and rural areas. In 2015-2016, there were fewer residents for every nurse in all four geographic areas indicating more coverage of nurses per person. As shown, a high concentration of RNs remains throughout Minnesota with at least one nurse for every one hundred people. Urban areas appear to have the greatest concentration of RNs with the most rural and isolated areas of the state having slightly less. Unlike other health professions, RNs appear evenly distributed throughout the state.

Minnesota Population-to-Registered Nurse Ratio



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) analysis of February, 2017 Minnesota Board of Nursing address data. Percentages based on 82,951 valid Minnesota mailing addresses.

Visit our website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/reports.html> to learn about the Minnesota healthcare workforce. County-level data for this profession is available at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/database/index.html>

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i The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Nursing, collected information on demographics, education, career and future plans of registered nurses via an online workforce questionnaire distributed from January 2015 to December 2016 with Minnesota’s RN licensure renewal. Unless noted, all data are based on information collected from that questionnaire. The response rate for the 2015-2016 RN questionnaire was 59 percent.

ii Of the total licensed professionals, 23,037 listed a mailing address outside of Minnesota, and based on survey responses, 13 percent of the total licensees were not practicing as a registered nurse. Thus, not all actively licensed registered nurses are part of the Minnesota nursing workforce.

iii Addresses are mailing addresses provided to the MN Board of Nursing. Additionally, approximately 22 percent of registered nurses reported an out-of-state mailing address to the Board; these professionals may or may not be providing services in Minnesota, but in any case, they could not be geocoded.