



Minnesota's Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Workforce

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Office of Rural Health and Primary Care

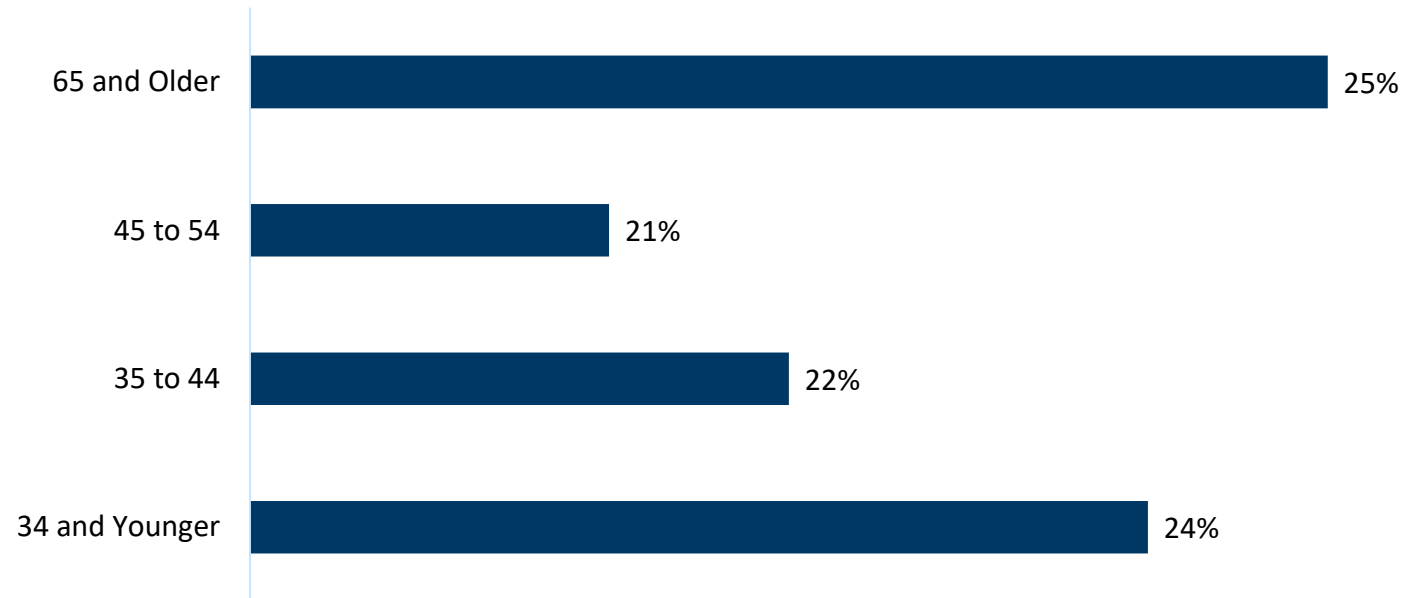
PROTECTING, MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

Summary of Findings

- As of January 2019, there were 21,393 actively licensed practical nurses in Minnesota, the majority of whom work outside the 7-county Twin Cities region ([slide 18](#)).
- Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) are mostly female (94 percent). Compared to RNs, LPNs are older with more than half the practitioners age 45 and older ([slide 4](#)) and a median age of 47 years. Most LPNs are planning to practice for at least another ten years ([slide 11](#)).
- A large majority of LPNs only speak English in their practice (92 percent) and are white (89 percent), which may impact the populations served ([slide 5](#) and [6](#)). A larger percentage of LPNs under the age of 45 identify themselves as being non-white compared to older LPNs ([slide 5](#)).
- The majority of LPNs work in a clinic/professional office/ambulatory care facility (42 percent) ([slide 12](#)).
- A majority of LPNs utilize electronic health records (EHRs) “all the time” (75 percent), while dedicated telemedicine equipment was used by less than 30 percent of LPNs ([slide 13](#)).
- There are differences in the geographic distribution of LPNs across the state ([slide 18](#)) compared to other health care practitioners. Most LPNs are working *outside* the 7-county Twin Cities region (60 percent), while only 40 percent are working in the 7-county Metro Area.

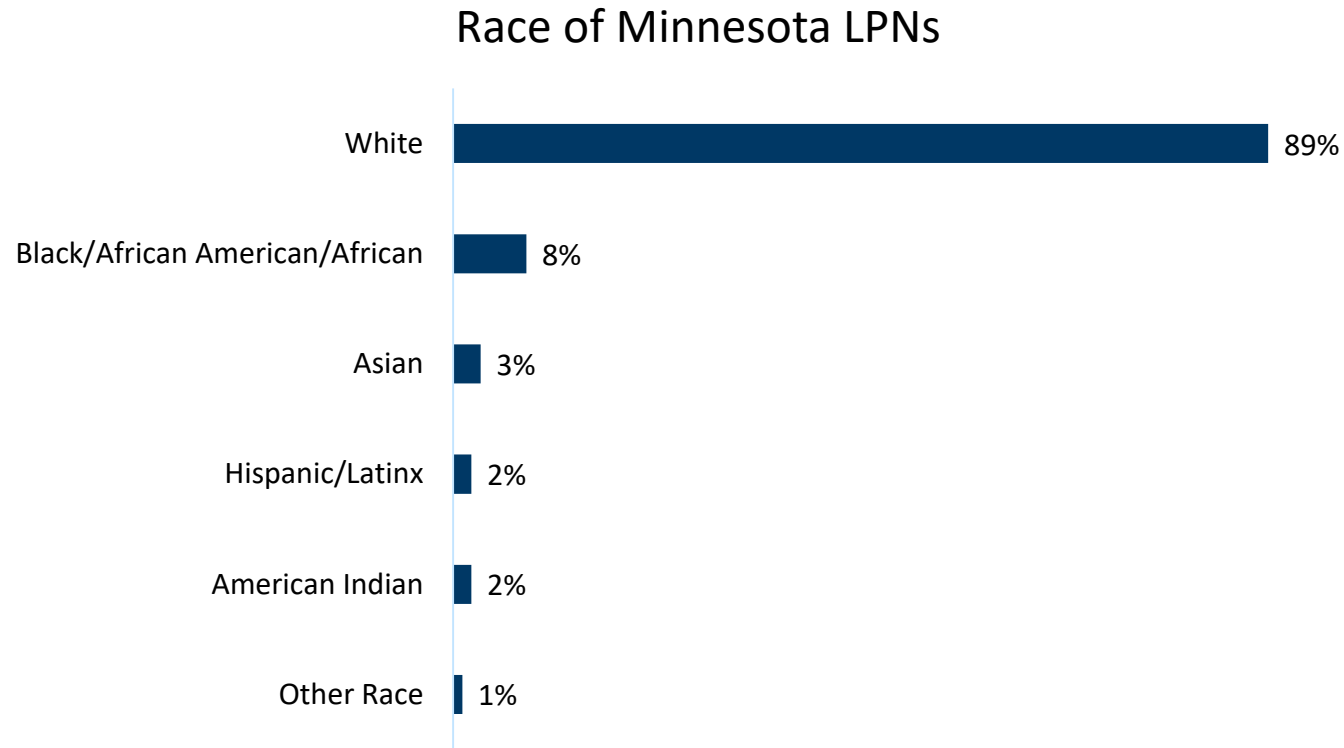
Demographics: Sex and Age

Age of Minnesota LPNs



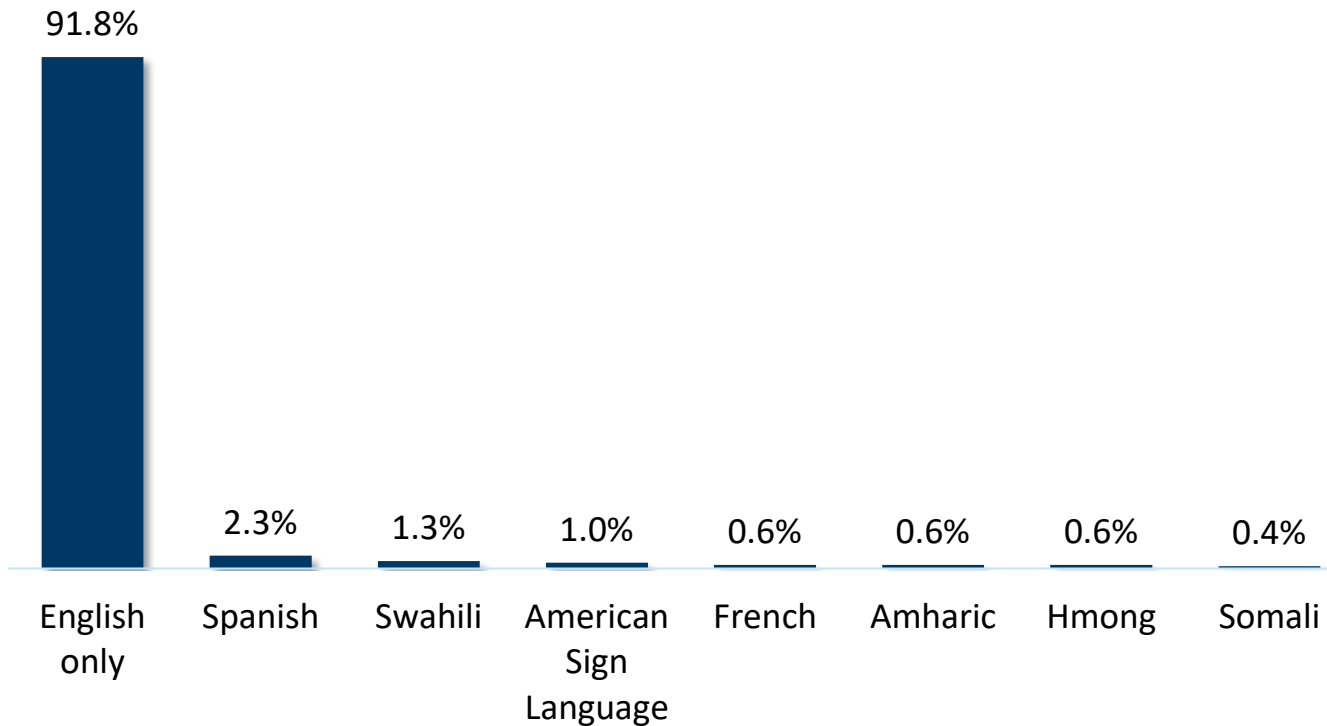
- Minnesota’s LPN workforce is fairly evenly distributed in terms of age, with roughly equal shares of LPNs in age groups under the age of 65. An estimated nine percent of actively licensed LPNs are age 65 and over, and based on MDH survey data 70 percent of those LPNs are still actively working. The median age of Minnesota LPNs is 47, higher than the median age of RNs which is 45, and one year older than in 2015-2016 indicating that older LPNs are a growing segment of the nursing workforce.
- (Not shown above): Just over 93 percent of LPNs are female, making this one of the most female-dominated health care professions in Minnesota.

Demographics: Race and Ethnicity



- The majority (89 percent) of LPNs indicated they were white, and the next largest share—eight percent—indicated that they identified as black, African American, or African. Although a predominately white profession, the LPN workforce is slightly more culturally and racially diverse than rest of the health care workforce.
- (Data not shown): Thirty percent of LPNs 44 years and younger were more likely to identify as non-white versus 27 percent of LPNs who were 45 years and older.

Languages Spoken in Practice

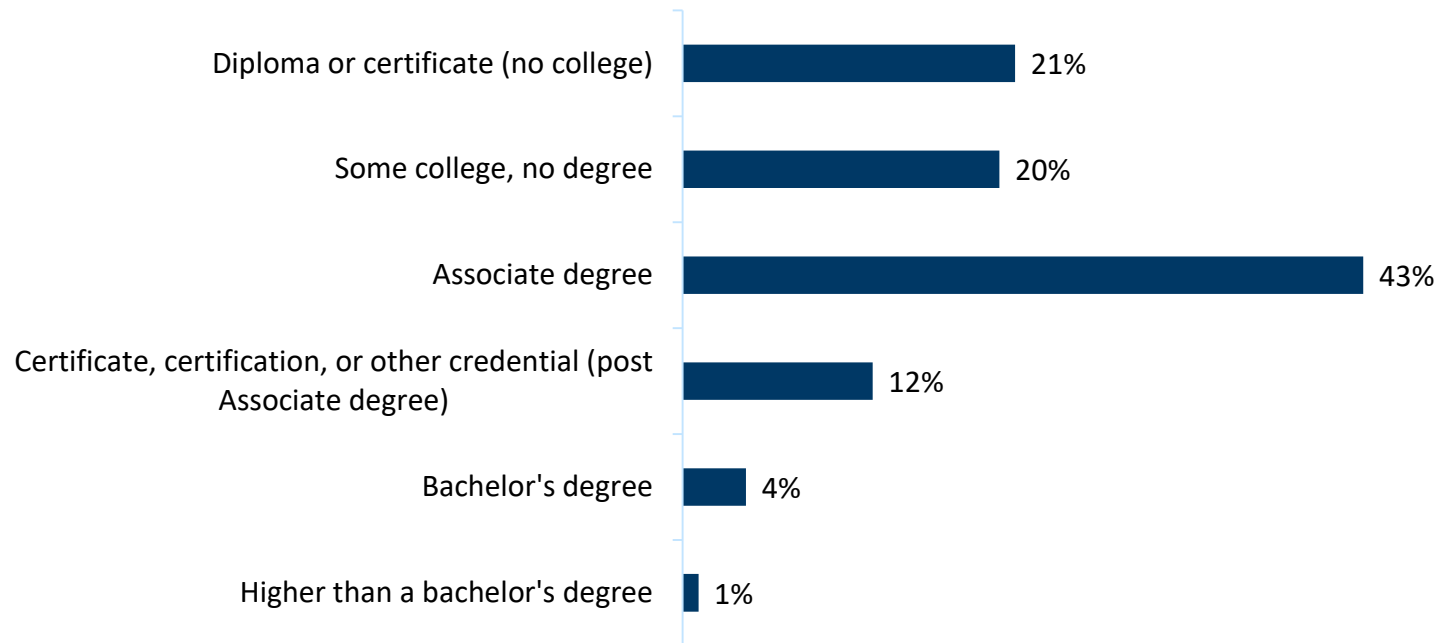


- The majority of LPNs—approximately 92 percent—spoke only English in their practices. The second most commonly spoken language was Spanish. Very small percentages of LPNs spoke other languages such as French, Vietnamese, Hmong or Somali with their patients.

Source: MDH Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce Questionnaire, 2017-2018. Respondents could select as many languages as applicable, but were instructed **not** to include languages spoken only through an interpreter. The chart is based on 10,346 valid survey responses.

Education: Educational Attainment

“What is the highest degree you have completed?”



- The majority (89 percent) of LPNs indicated they were white, and the next largest share—eight percent—indicated that they identified as black, African American, or African. Although a predominately white profession, the LPN workforce is slightly more culturally and racially diverse than rest of the health care workforce.
- (Data not shown): Thirty percent of LPNs 44 years and younger were more likely to identify as non-white versus 27 percent of LPNs who were 45 years and older.

Education: Minnesota Graduates by Institution

All Degrees Awarded from Minnesota Practical Nursing Programs, by Institution and Year*						
Region	Institution	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Central	Central Lakes College	79	54	24	24	35
	Pine Technical and Community College	60	41	48	33	37
	Rasmussen College – Saint Cloud	21	25	29	34	30
	Saint Cloud Technical and Community College	110	117	101	99	100
Northeast	Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	32	22	15	10	9
	Itasca Community College	47	25	25	21	26
	Lake Superior College	19	25	19	24	23
	Mesabi Range Community and Technical College	21	33	29	33	28
Northwest	Alexandria Technical College	50	51	52	48	47
	Minnesota State Community Technical College	82	117	50	56	58
	Northland Community and Technical College	102	123	166	122	125
	Northwest Technical College - Bemidji	40	8	17	12	16
	Rasmussen College – Moorhead	23	19	32	29	53
Southeast	Minnesota State College -Southeast Technical	57	23	17	42	42
	Rasmussen College – Mankato	38	37	36	26	28
	Riverland Community College	29	23	18	21	28
	Rochester Community and Technical College	31	49	30	34	26
	South Central College	11	20	11	11	2
Southwest	Minnesota West Community Technical College	90	45	50	37	48
	Ridgewater College	20	21	24	24	23
Twin Cities	Anoka Technical College	94	57	64	74	61
	Dakota County Technical College	44	48	43	61	60
	Hennepin Technical College	102	118	64	63	39
	Minneapolis Community and Technical College	41	0	0	0	0
	Rasmussen College – Brooklyn Park/Maple Grove	51	55	48	47	48
	Rasmussen College – Eagan	60	45	55	55	48
	Saint Paul College	50	59	113	106	61
Total		1,404	1,260	1,180	1,146	1,101

Minnesota produced **1,091 new graduates** in 2019 across all the LPN programs, a slight decline from 1,127 in 2018 and a smaller percentage difference from 2015 to 2016 (10 percent).

Education: Minnesota Graduates by Degree Type

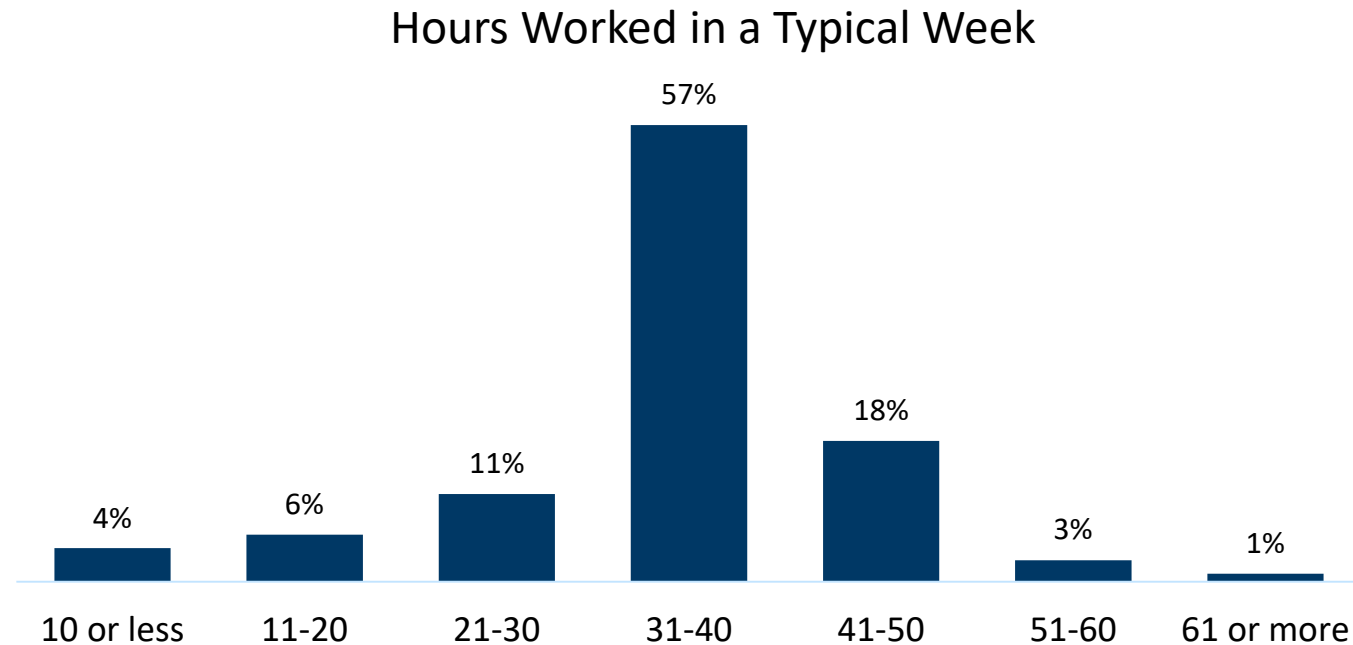
All Degree Awarded in Minnesota

Degree Type	2015	2016	2017
Certificate 1 to 2 academic years	1,134	1,074	1,082
Associate degree	389	214	134
Total	1,523	1,288	1,216

Graduates of LPN programs in Minnesota are more likely to have completed a non-degree certificate program than a two-year, associate program.

From 2015 through 2017, a declining number of Minnesota LPN graduates were entering the workforce as shown by the diminishing number of awards in both non-degree, certificate and associate degree programs in Minnesota.

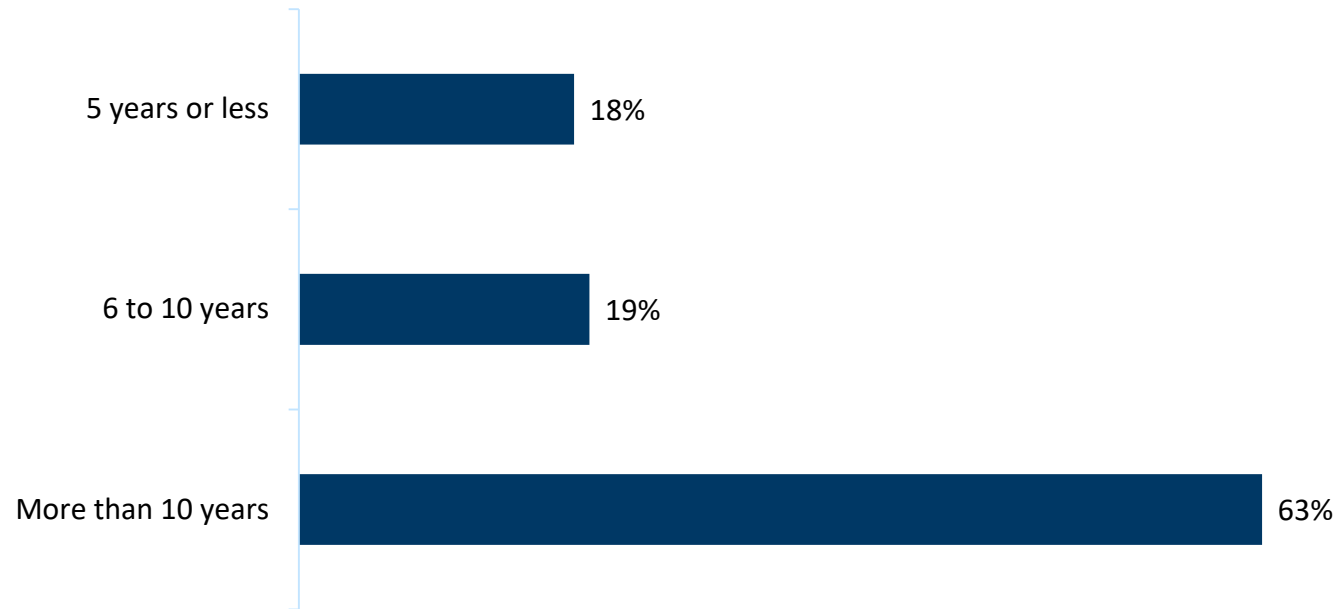
Employment: Employment and Hours Worked



- The median work week for Minnesota LPNs was 36 hours, with the large majority (70 percent) working between 31 and 40 hours per week.
- (Data not shown): An estimated 87 percent of Minnesota LPNs reported on the MDH questionnaire that they were “working in a paid or unpaid position related to [their] license.” Of those, just over half said they were seeking an LPN position, and another 30 percent said they were temporarily not working due to family, seasonal, or other reasons.

Employment: Future Plans

“How long do you plan to continue practicing as an LPN in Minnesota?”



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Education: Minnesota Graduates by Degree Type

LPNs' Primary Work Settings

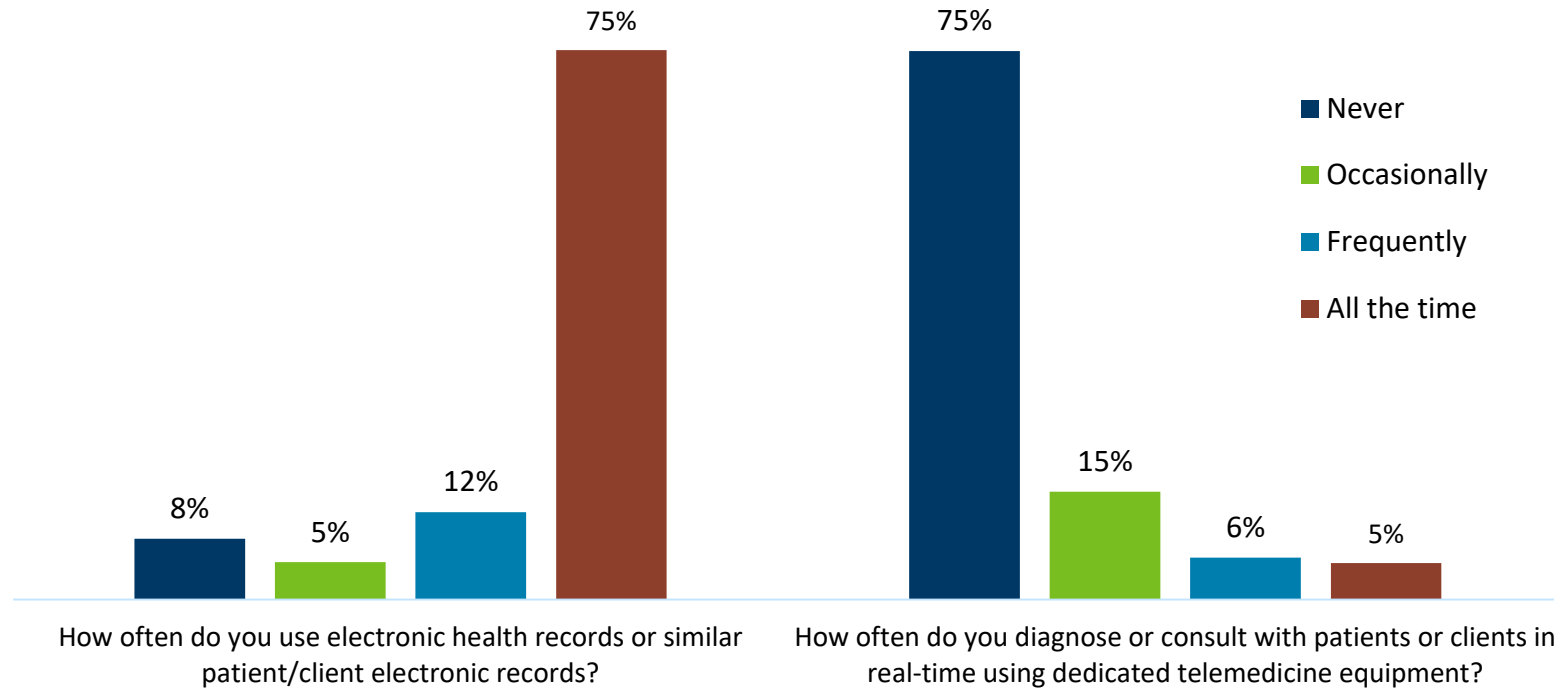
Setting	Share of LADCs Working in this Setting
Clinic/Professional Office/Health Center/Ambulatory Care	42%
Long-Term Care Facility	31%
Home Health Care	8%
Hospital	8%
School (Pre K – 12 th Grade)	3%
Other	8%

- The most commonly reported work setting among LPNs was an ambulatory care setting such as a clinic, professional office, or health center. A large share (nearly one in three) of LPNs also commonly work in long-term care facilities.
- Eight percent of LPNs reported working in “other” settings. The most commonly reported primary work settings reported as “other” included hospice care, group home/residential care, and rehab/treatment centers.

Source: MDH Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce Questionnaire, 2017-2018. The survey includes questions on both the “primary” and “secondary” settings in which providers work. For the purposes of the analysis in this section, we present data only on the setting LPNs reported as their “primary” setting. The chart above is based on 10,744 valid responses.

LPNs at Work: EHRs and Telemedicine

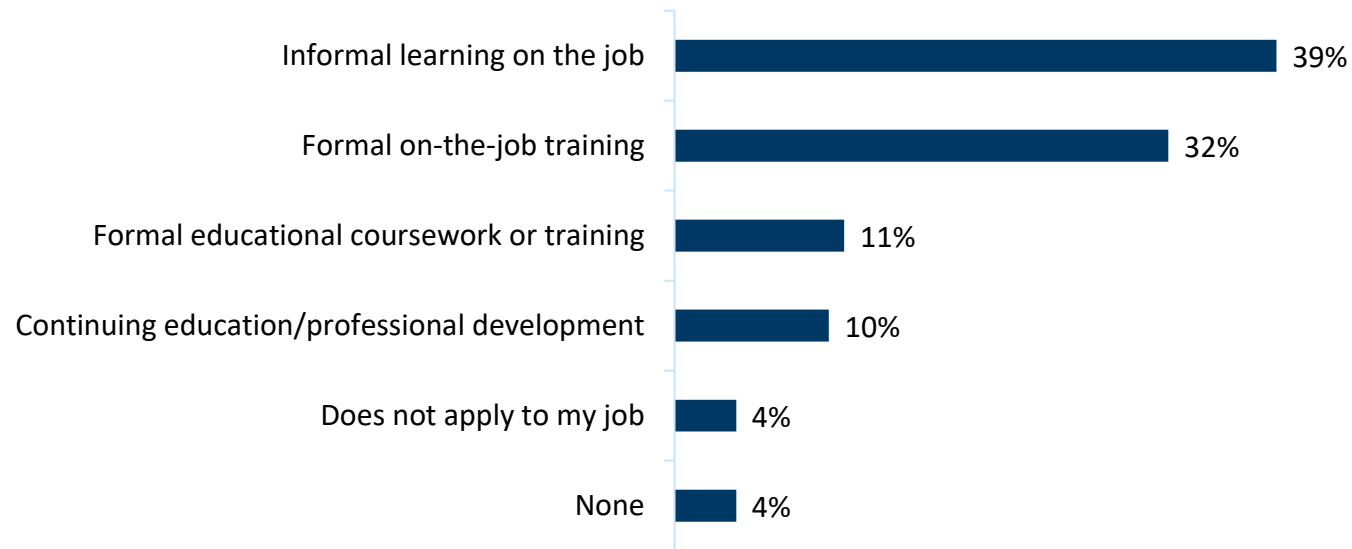
LPNs' Use of Electronic Health Records and Telemedicine Equipment



- The MDH workforce survey includes questions on the use of technology in health care settings. Here, we show responses to questions about how often LPNs use electronic health records (EHRs) and/or equipment dedicated to telemedicine. The results show that three-fourths of LPNs use electronic health records “all the time.”
- Three out four also report that they never diagnose or consult with patients using dedicated telemedicine equipment. This may be a function of their scope of practice, the settings in which they practice, and the populations they serve.

LPNs at Work: Teamwork

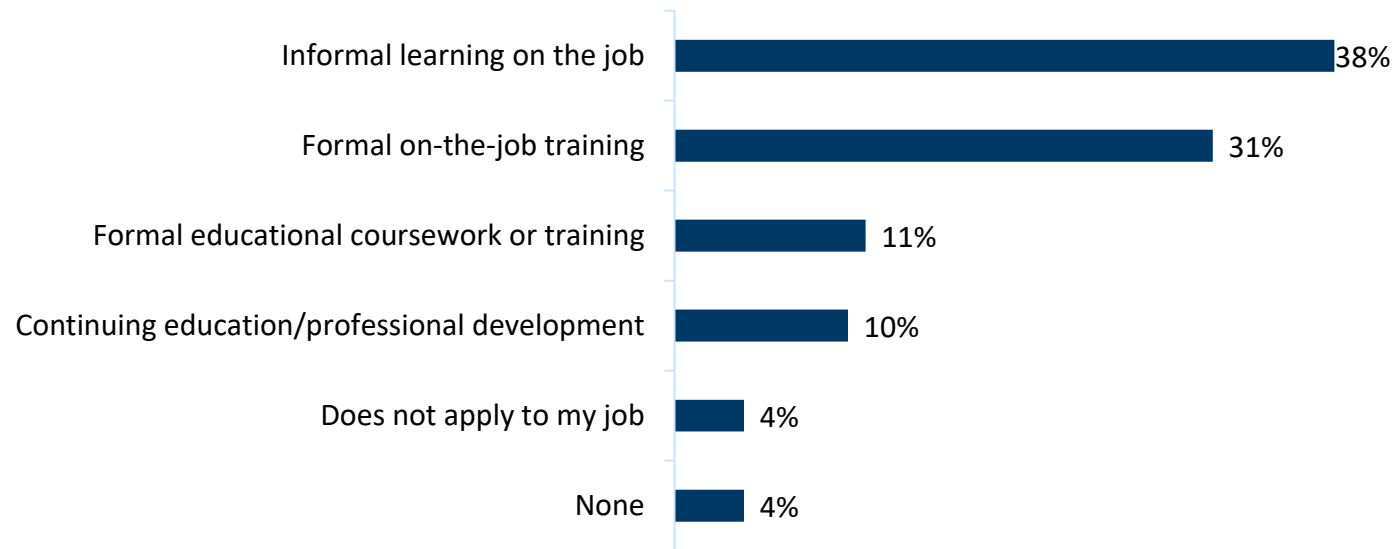
“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to work in a multidisciplinary team when providing care?”



- Health care providers increasingly work in multidisciplinary teams, prompting educators and health policymakers to ask how best to train providers to communicate and coordinate across professions. MDH included a question on its survey to shed light on these questions. As shown above, nearly 40 percent of LPNs reported that they were **best** prepared to work in multidisciplinary teams simply through informal learning on the job. Another 32 percent reported that formal on-the-job training provided the best preparation.

LPNs at Work: Cultural Competence

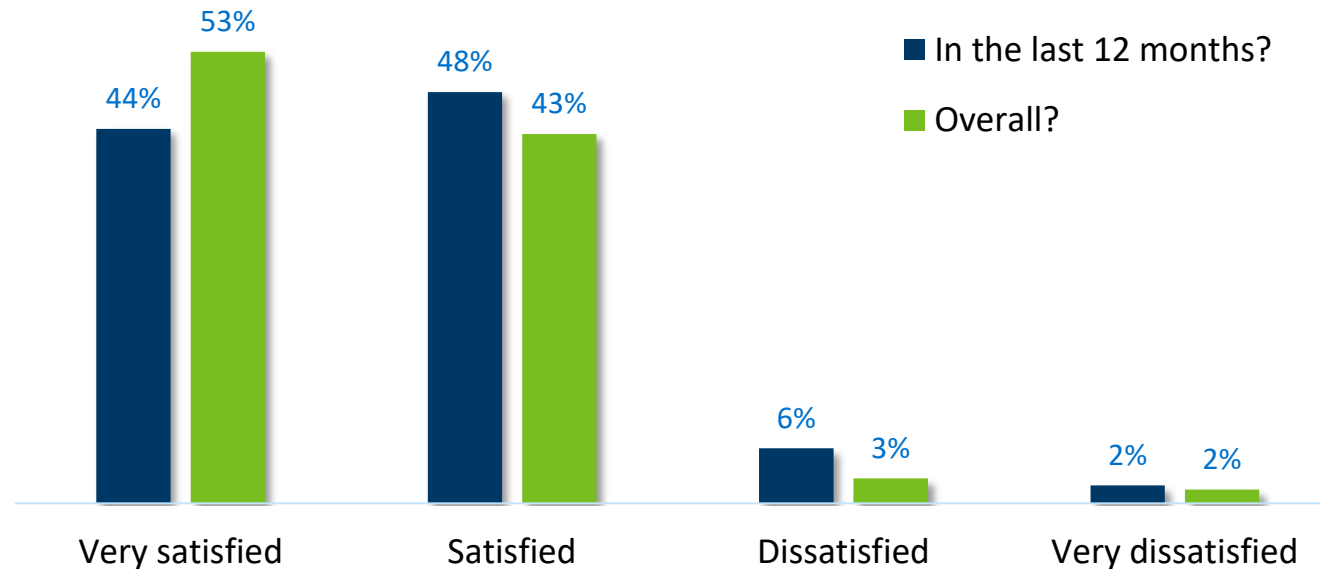
“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to provide culturally competent care?”



- Stakeholders are increasingly concerned about the extent to which providers deliver care that is culturally sensitive to all communities. The MDH survey includes a question to understand which experiences best prepare health care providers to provide culturally competent care. As shown above, 38 percent of LPNs reported they learned cultural competence **best** through informal, on-the-job learning.

LPNs at Work: Career Satisfaction

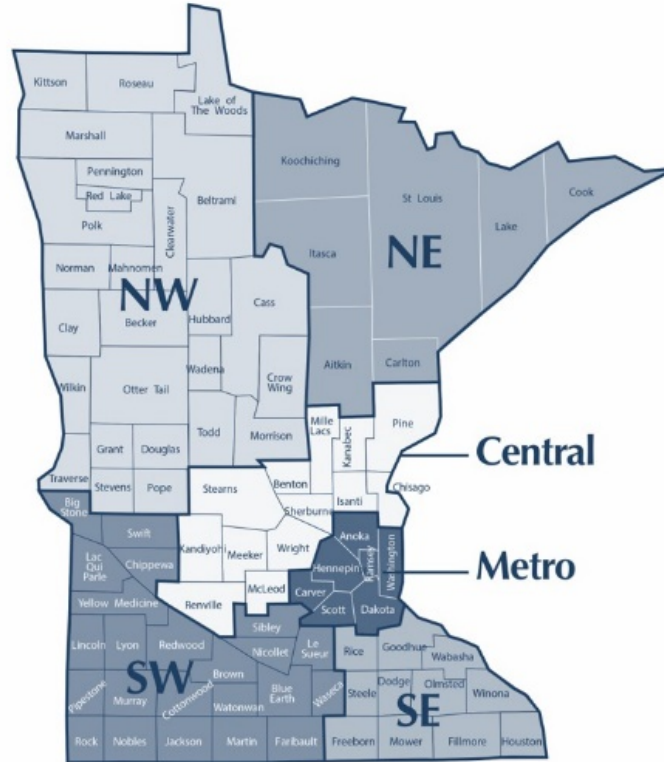
How satisfied have you been with your job...



- The 2017-2018 survey included questions on career satisfaction in the past 12 months and overall. As shown above, the majority of LPNs indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied,” both in the past 12 months and overall. LPNs were more likely to report being very satisfied with their career overall compared to the last 12 months—a trend typical among health care professionals for which work satisfaction data is available. This is consistent with national findings which suggest that the increase in administrative work—such as dealing with billing, insurance, and electronic medical records—has dampened work satisfaction among health care providers.

LPNs at Work: Career Satisfaction

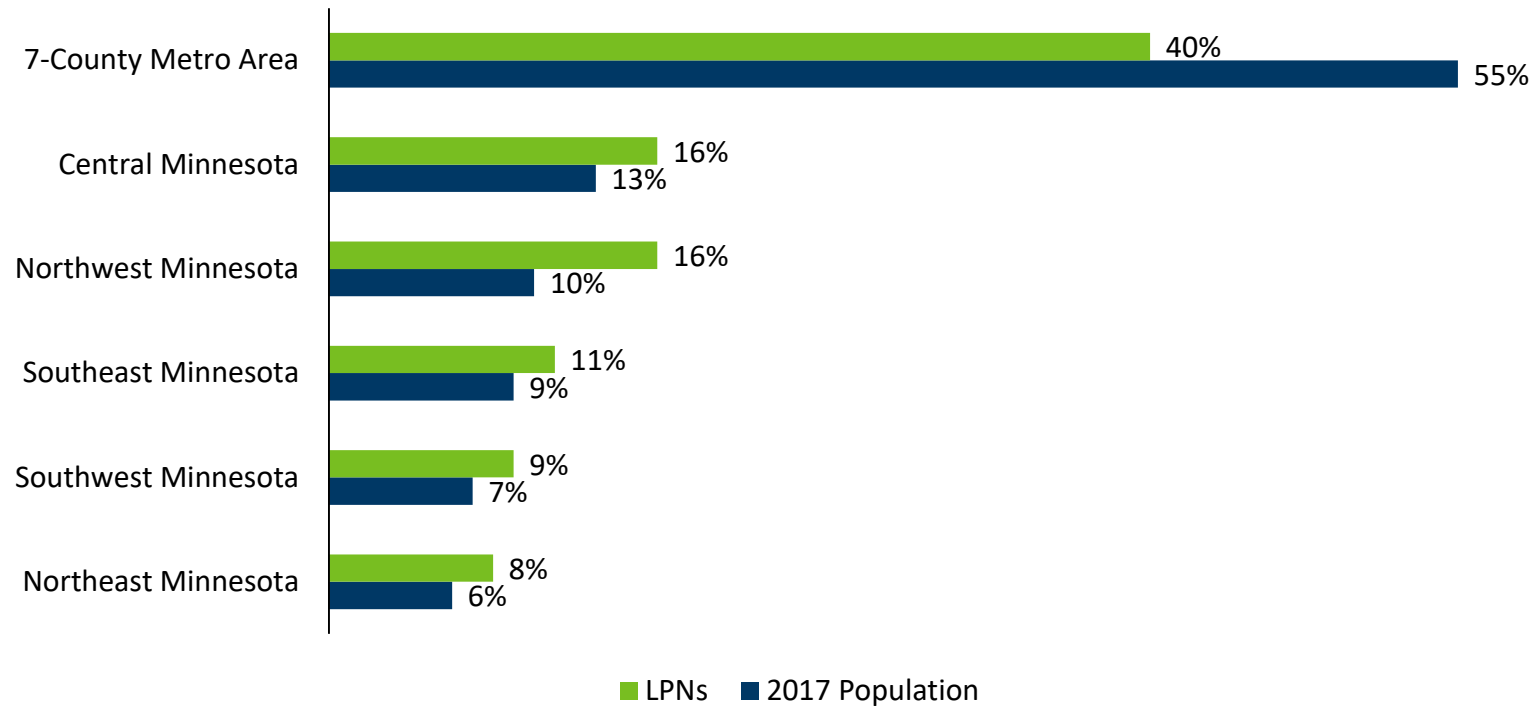
By state planning areas



For more information:

<https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/assets/lmi/areamap/plan.shtml>

MN Regional Distributions of LPNs



- A much smaller share of the LPN workforce is concentrated in the 7-County Metro area relative to the population residing in this region of the state. This pattern is uncommon from what is observed among other types health care providers where their geographic distribution is primarily concentrated in the 7-county metro region.
- The supply of LPNs in other regions of the state is more than adequate relative to the residential population living in these areas. The larger geographic concentration of LPNs in other regions of the state could indicate that there are more job opportunities for LPNs outside the 7-county metro area.

The Data in this report comes from two sources:

- The **Minnesota Board of Nursing (MBN)** provides data on the *entire population* of LPNs who have active licenses in the state of Minnesota. The MBN maintains this database primarily for administrative and legal purposes. MBN provides the data to the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (MDH-ORHPC). This report uses data current as of January, 2019. At that time, there were a total of **21,393** LPNs with *active* Minnesota licenses, approximately 58 percent of whom indicated that their primary business address was in Minnesota. (Note that the analyses exclude LPNs whose licenses were inactive/restricted or active/conditional.) Analysts at the Minnesota Department of Health-Office of Rural Health and Primary Care clean organize, clean, and geocode addresses that come from the board, which is how we can identify practice locations ([shown in Slide 18](#)).
- The **2017-2018 Minnesota Department of Health-Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (MDH-ORHPC) LPN survey** collects additional demographic and workforce data from LPNs. MDH-ORHPC administered the survey to all LPNs who renewed their Minnesota license in the calendar years of 2017-2018. The response rate for this survey cycle was approximately 72 percent.

See the ORHPC website for more details about the [methodology](http://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/method.html) (www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/method.html) of survey.

Visit our website at

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/index.html>

to learn more about the Minnesota health care workforce.

County-level data for this profession is available at

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/database/index.html>

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