

Program Characteristics in Professional Nursing Programs

2014

This update presents data for the 114 pre-licensure registered nursing (RN) programs that reported data for the 2014 reporting year, including:

- 1 Diploma program,
- 68 Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs, including 58 generic ADN programs and 10 Licensed Vocational Nurse to Associate Degree in Nursing (LVN to ADN) programs,
- 44 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs, and
- 1 Master of Science in Nursing Alternate Entry (MSN AE) program.

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2014 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2014. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2013-2014 (September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

Geographic Location of Professional Nursing Programs

Figure 1 presents the locations of the 114 professional nursing programs in Texas by metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties. Table 1 summarizes the location of programs by type and geographic designation.

- 11 professional nursing programs (9.6%) were located in the border region of Texas.

Figure 1. Geographic Location of RN Programs by Type

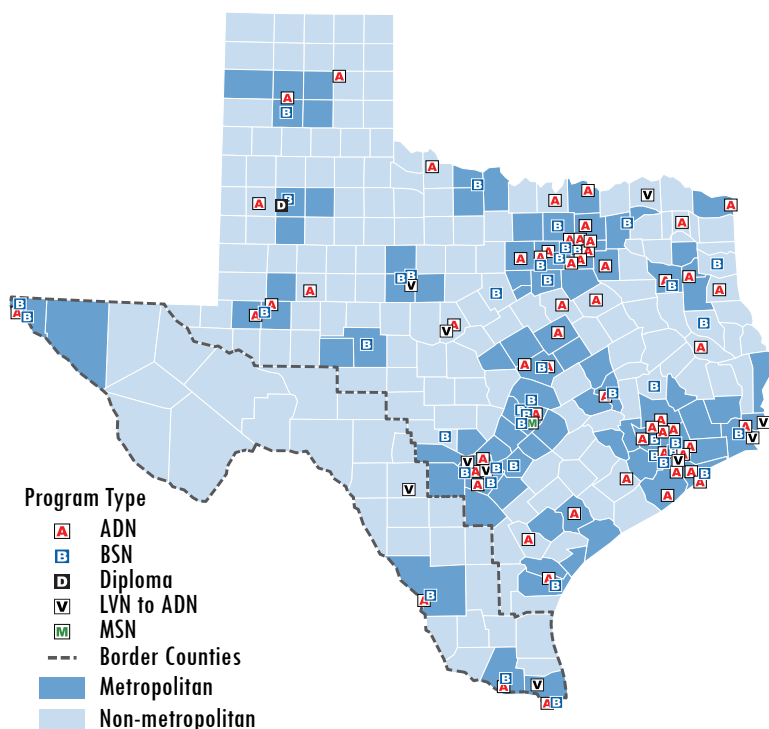


Table 1. Geographic Designation of Main Campuses

Program Affiliation	Geographic Designation				Total
	Metro Border	Metro Non-Border	Non-Metro Border	Non-Metro Non-Border	
Diploma	0	1	0	0	1
ADN	4	41	0	13	58
LVN to ADN	1	6	1	2	10
BSN	5	34	0	5	44
MSN AE	0	1	0	0	1
Total	10	83	1	20	114

- 21 programs (18.4%) were located in non-metropolitan counties.
- 20 programs (17.5%) were located in non-metropolitan, non-border counties Texas.
- Only 1 program (0.9%) was located in a non-metropolitan, border county.
- 83 programs (72.8%) were located in the metropolitan, non-border counties of Texas.

Changes in the Number of Professional Nursing Programs

Table 2 displays the changes over time in the number of professional nursing programs.

- During the academic year 2013-2014, 3 new programs opened and 2 programs closed.

Table 2. Changes in the Number of Professional Nursing Programs, 2007-2014

	New Programs	Closed Programs	Total Programs
2007	3	1	86
2008	6	0	92
2009	2	1	93
2010	5	2	96
2011	9	0	105
2012	2	1	106
2013	9	2	113
2014	3	2	114

Table 3 shows the number of professional nursing programs, by program type, over the past nine years.

- The number of Diploma and MSN Alternate Entry programs has remained relatively steady from 2006 to 2014.
- LVN to ADN stand-alone programs increased from 2006 to 2008, then decreased to 8 programs

from 2008 to 2011. From 2011 to 2013, LVN to ADN stand-alone programs increased. In 2014 the number remained the same.

- ADN programs increased from 2006 to 2011, decreased slightly from 2011 to 2012, increased in 2013, and stayed the same in 2014.
- The number of BSN programs increased by 76% from 2006 to 2014. From 2013 to 2014, 1 new BSN program opened.

Table 3. Number of Professional Nursing Programs by Program Type, 2006-2014

	Diploma	LVN to ADN (Stand-Alone)	ADN	BSN	MSN AE
2006	2	5	51	25	1
2007	2	7	50	26	1
2008	2	10	50	29	1
2009	2	9	52	29	1
2010	1	8	54	32	1
2011	1	8	58	37	1
2012	1	9	57	38	1
2013	1	10	58	43	1
2014	1	10	58	44	1

Governing Institutions

Of the 114 professional nursing programs operating in Texas during the AY 2013-2014, 82 operated within public colleges and universities, 19 within private colleges and universities, 6 within career schools and colleges, 6 within health science centers, and 1 within a hospital. These were mutually exclusive categories.

- 88 programs (77.2%) were governed by public institutions.
- 26 programs (22.8%) were governed by private institutions. Of these, 18 were governed by private, non-profit institutions and 8 programs were governed by private, for-profit institutions.

Length of Curriculum in Professional Nursing Programs

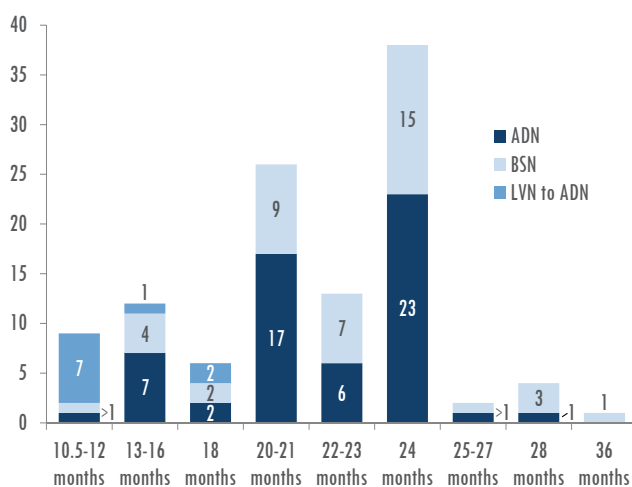
In the 2014 NEPIS, programs were asked to report the length of their nursing curriculum in months, not including nursing prerequisites.

- The Diploma program was 22 months in length and the MSN AE program was 12 months.
- ADN programs ranged from 12 to 28 months in length. The mean and median length for ADN programs was 21.5 and 22 months, respectively.
- LVN to ADN programs ranged from 10.5 to 18 months in length. The mean and median lengths for LVN to ADN programs were 13.4 months and 12 months, respectively.
- BSN programs ranged from 12 to 36 months in length. The mean and median length for BSN programs was 22.3 months and 23 months, respectively.

Figure 2 shows the number of programs that reported each length of time for curricula.

- 23 ADN programs and 15 BSN programs reported a nursing curriculum length of 24 months.

Figure 2. Frequency of Nursing Curriculum Length by Program Type



- 17 ADN and 9 BSN programs reported a 20 or 21 month curriculum.
- 1 BSN, 1 MSN alternate entry, 1 ADN, and 5 LVN to ADN programs reported a 12 month curriculum.

Program Tracks in Professional Nursing Programs

Program tracks are alternate pathways for students to meet the nursing program's objectives or outcomes. 100 of the 114 RN programs (87.7%) offered tracks in addition to their basic program. 9 ADN and 6 BSN programs did not offer any additional program tracks outside of their generic programs.

- 58 programs (50.9%), including 10 stand-alone LVN to ADN programs, offered an LVN to ADN track.
- 30 programs (26.3%) offered an RN to BSN track.
- 18 programs (15.8%) offered a paramedic to ADN track.

- 16 programs (14%) offered a bachelor's to BSN track.
- 15 programs (13.2%) offered an accelerated/compressed curriculum.

Programs were also asked about tracks that give active duty, former, or retired military personnel nursing credit for allied health care training or experience.

- 5 programs currently offered such a track, while 11 were planning to implement one.
- Programs cited challenges to implementing military tracks, such as the difficulty of evaluating military transcripts, insufficient funding, and lack of faculty.

Advanced Placement in Professional Nursing Programs

Some professional nursing programs offer advanced placement for students.¹ Students with prior VN or RN nursing education, paramedics, students with a background in allied health, LVNs, or students that hold a baccalaureate or master's degree in a discipline other than nursing may be eligible for advanced placement.

- As shown in Table 4, 57.9% of programs offered advanced placement to LVNs and 43% of programs offered advanced placement to students with some prior VN or RN education.

¹Advanced Placement is defined as a mechanism by which students with relevant prior education and/or experience may be offered course credit by meeting certain other requirements.

Table 4. Number of Programs that Grant Different Types of Students Advanced Placement by Program Type

Program Type	Type of Advanced Placement					
	Students with prior VN or RN nursing education	Paramedic	Allied health	LVN	Baccalaureate/master's in discipline other than nursing	Military healthcare personnel
Diploma	0	0	0	1	0	0
ADN	28	17	4	48	0	5
LVN to ADN	1	0	0	7	0	0
BSN	20	0	0	10	3	1
MSN AE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	49	17	4	66	3	6

- 14.9% of programs offered advanced placement to paramedics, 3.5% of programs offered advanced placement to allied health professionals, 2.6% offered advanced placement to those with baccalaureate/master's degrees in other disciplines, and 5.3% offered advanced placement to military healthcare personnel.
- 21.1% of programs do not grant advanced placement.

There were several mechanisms used by programs to grant advanced placement to students. Such mechanisms included direct transfer of credit or granting credit with a

transition course, the completion of designated courses, passing written exam(s), or tech prep courses.² Table 5 indicates the types of mechanisms used to grant advanced placement by program type.

- Direct transfer of credit was the most widely used mechanism to grant advanced placement to pre-licensure nursing students across all program types, followed by granting credit with a transition course.
- 59.6% of programs used direct transfer of credit and 42.1% of programs granted credit with a transition course.

Table 5. Number of Programs Using Different Mechanisms to Grant Advanced Placement by Program Type

Program Type	Type of Advanced Placement				
	Direct transfer of credit	Grant credit with transition course	Grant credit with completion of designated courses	Grant credit with passing written exam(s)	Tech prep courses
Diploma	1	0	1	1	0
ADN	40	38	15	14	5
LVN to ADN	4	3	1	1	0
BSN	23	7	11	12	0
MSN AE	0	0	0	0	0
Total	68	48	28	28	5

²Tech prep courses are courses taken as part of a tech prep program. Section 2, Chapter 61, Subchapter T of the Texas Education Code defines tech prep programs as programs of study that combine secondary and post-secondary study through the integration of academic instruction with vocational and technical instruction. For more information on Tech Prep programs please see the above stated section of the Texas Education Code.

Online Availability of Professional Nursing Programs³

Programs were asked whether they offered nursing courses via online technology. Of the 114 professional nursing programs:

- 8 programs (7%) offered the entire didactic program curriculum online. Of these, 2 were ADN programs, 2 were LVN to ADN programs, and 4 were BSN programs.
- 35 programs (30.7%) offered select courses online. Of these, 18 were ADN, 1 was LVN to ADN, and 16 were BSN programs.

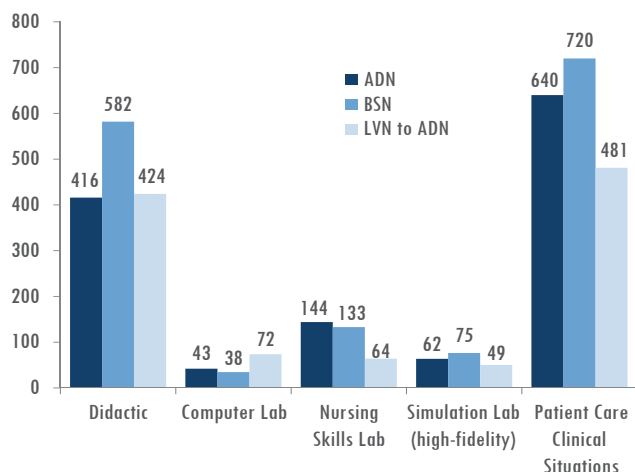
- 73 programs (64%) offered web-enhanced sections of courses online. Of these, 1 was a Diploma program, 35 were ADN, 3 were LVN to ADN, and 34 were BSN programs.
- 27 programs (23.7%) had no online course availability. These included 17 ADN, 5 LVN to ADN, 5 BSN, and 1 MSN Alternate Entry programs.

³Please note that programs may offer select courses entirely online and select courses as hybrids. Also note that all programs, whether or not they offered any portion of their program online, offered hands-on, face-to-face clinical experiences. Didactic curriculum is defined as including actual hours of classroom instruction in nursing and non-nursing Board-required courses/content.

Program Hours in Professional Nursing Programs

In the 2014 NEPIS, programs were asked to provide information regarding the number of contact hours required in each of the following areas in their program of study: didactic, computer lab, skills lab, simulation lab, and patient care clinical situations. Figure 3 below graphs the median value for each of the program activities for ADN, LVN to ADN, and BSN programs. Please note that there was only one Diploma program and one MSN Alternate Entry program so the median value was equal to the actual value reported by each program. For that reason, they are not graphed in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Median Contact Hours Reported by Program Type



As evidenced by Figure 3, there was variation in the hours required by professional nursing programs both between and within program types. Some reasons for the variation may include: inherent differences between the

program types (e.g. LVN to ADN programs are generally more abbreviated programs of study than ADN or BSN programs), differences between the operational definitions used in the NEPIS and how programs define these activities, or variations in the accuracy of self-reporting these hours by professional nursing programs. Further study of the variation in program hours has been performed by a Texas Board of Nursing Task Force, the Texas Nurses Association Subcommittee on Education, and the Texas Team Subcommittee on Education.

Didactic Contact Hours

In this report, didactic includes actual hours of classroom instruction in nursing and non-nursing Board-required courses/content. The didactic hours reported by professional nursing programs ranged from 52 to 2,080 hours.

Computer Lab

Computer lab is defined as interactive tutorials and learning modules that are part of a curriculum that is separate from didactic. 84 programs (73.7%) reported computer lab hours for their program of study. The computer lab hours reported ranged from 2 to 192 hours. The median number of computer lab hours reported by all programs has decreased steadily from 61 in 2010 to 45.5 in 2014.

Nursing Skills Lab (low- and moderate-fidelity simulations and task training)

In this report, nursing skills lab is defined as low- and medium- fidelity simulations and task training. All programs reported skills lab hours as part of their nursing

curriculum. The skills labs hours reported by professional nursing programs ranged from 3 to 752 hours. The median number of nursing skills lab hours reported by all programs has fluctuated but not changed substantially since 2010.

High-Fidelity Simulation Lab

Simulation lab refers to high-fidelity situations which are defined as structured learning experiences with computerized mannequins that are anatomically precise and reproduce physiologic responses. The environment mimics the clinical setting. All but 11 programs (90.4%) reported simulation lab hours for their programs of study. The simulation labs hours reported ranged from 4 to 360 hours. The median number of simulation lab hours reported by all programs has increased from 56 in 2010 to 68.5 in 2014.

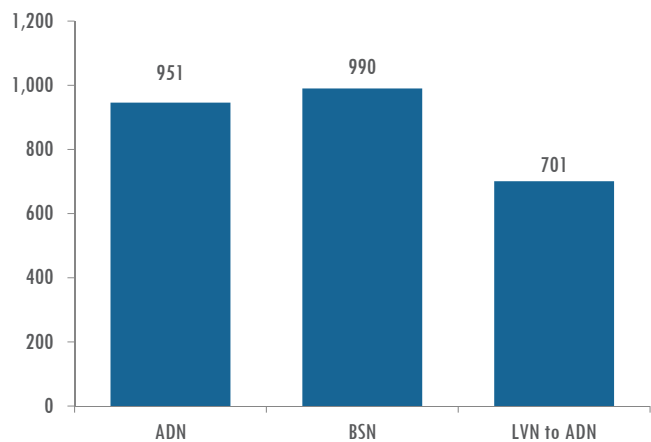
Patient Care Clinical Situations

In this report, patient care clinical situations were defined as hands-on clinical practice with actual patients in a clinical setting including all faculty-supervised activities in the clinical setting such as direct care, observational experiences, and clinical conferences. The patient care clinical situations hours reported ranged from 192 to 1,440 hours. The median number of patient care clinical situations hours reported by all programs has decreased from 700 in 2010 to 672 in 2014.

Total Clinical Contact Hours

Figure 4 displays the median total clinical contact hours reported, by program type. Total clinical contact hours includes patient care clinical situations, nursing skills lab, simulation lab, and computer lab hours.

Figure 4. Median Total Clinical Contact Hours Reported by Program Type



- Diploma and MSN Alternate Entry represent 1 program each, so they were not included in Figure 4. The diploma program reported total clinical contact hours of 1,384 and the MSN Alternate Entry program reported 970 total clinical contact hours.
- BSN programs reported the highest median total clinical contact hours (990). The mean clinical contact hours for BSN programs was 1,011.5. BSN program clinical contact hours ranged from 721 to 1,400.
- ADN programs reported a median of 951 and a mean of 963.2 total clinical contact hours. ADN programs reported a range of total clinical contact hours from 416 to 1,584.
- LVN to ADN programs had a median of 701 and a mean of 688 clinical contact hours. Hours varied among LVN to ADN programs from 384 to 1,008.

Table 6 displays the percentage of hands-on clinical practice time programs reported students spent in a variety of settings.

- The majority of hands-on clinical practice hours were spent in the acute care setting, with programs reporting an average of 74.8% of clinical practice hours spent in the acute care setting.
- The next most used setting was community settings, with an average of 12.5% of clinical practice hours.
- “Other” settings included rehabilitation (8 programs), and psych/mental health (7 programs).

Table 6. Percentage of Hands-On Clinical Time Spent by Setting

Clinical Setting	Mean % of Time Spent	Median % of Time Spent
Acute Care	74.8%	80.0%
Long Term Care	7.1%	4.0%
Community Settings	12.5%	11.0%
Other	5.7%	1.0%

Interprofessional Collaboration in Professional Nursing Programs

Based on the recommendation of the Institute of Medicine's Future of Nursing report,⁴ the 2014 NEPIS includes a question on the amount of interprofessional collaboration pre-licensure RN students experience.

Programs were asked to report the number of required nursing courses that offered clinical or simulation experiences for both entry-level RN students and one or more types of other graduate-level health professional students, such as physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, or other health professional students.

- 58 programs reported zero required nursing courses that offered interprofessional collaboration experiences.
- The remaining programs reported anywhere from one course (8 programs) to 12 courses (1 program).

⁴The Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. (2010). *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Retrieved from: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx>