

ABSTRACT

Purpose: To inform states about various health workforce data collection and analysis efforts used by organizations around the country.

Methods: In 2015, the Health Workforce Technical Assistance Center (HWTAC) launched a national survey to collect information on health workforce data collection efforts in three areas: supply, demand, and education pipeline. Invitations to complete the online survey were sent to groups believed to be engaged in health workforce data collection. Information collected from the survey is compiled into an interactive, map-based online inventory: the State Health Workforce Data Collection Inventory.

Results: Forty-nine organizations in 36 states have reported collecting health workforce data. All responding organizations reported collecting supply data. Fewer organizations reported collecting health workforce demand data and education pipeline data.

Conclusions: States recognize the value of collecting health workforce data for future planning of health programs and policies. The State Health Workforce Data Collection Inventory is a unique tool designed to monitor the growth of these data collection efforts across the country, while also helping to facilitate communication and collaboration between states.

CONTACT

Health Workforce Technical Assistance Center
 518-402-0250
info@healthworkforceTA.org
www.healthworkforceTA.org

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing interest among states in developing health workforce data collection and monitoring systems. This interest is driven in part by health care reform initiatives that are reshaping health care service delivery and health workforce demand at both state and national levels. States are recognizing the need to:

- Better understand the supply and distribution of health professionals
- Assess the adequacy of the primary care workforce
- Understand the relationship between access to care and health workforce availability

However, information on which states are collecting data and what types of data they are collecting is not readily available.

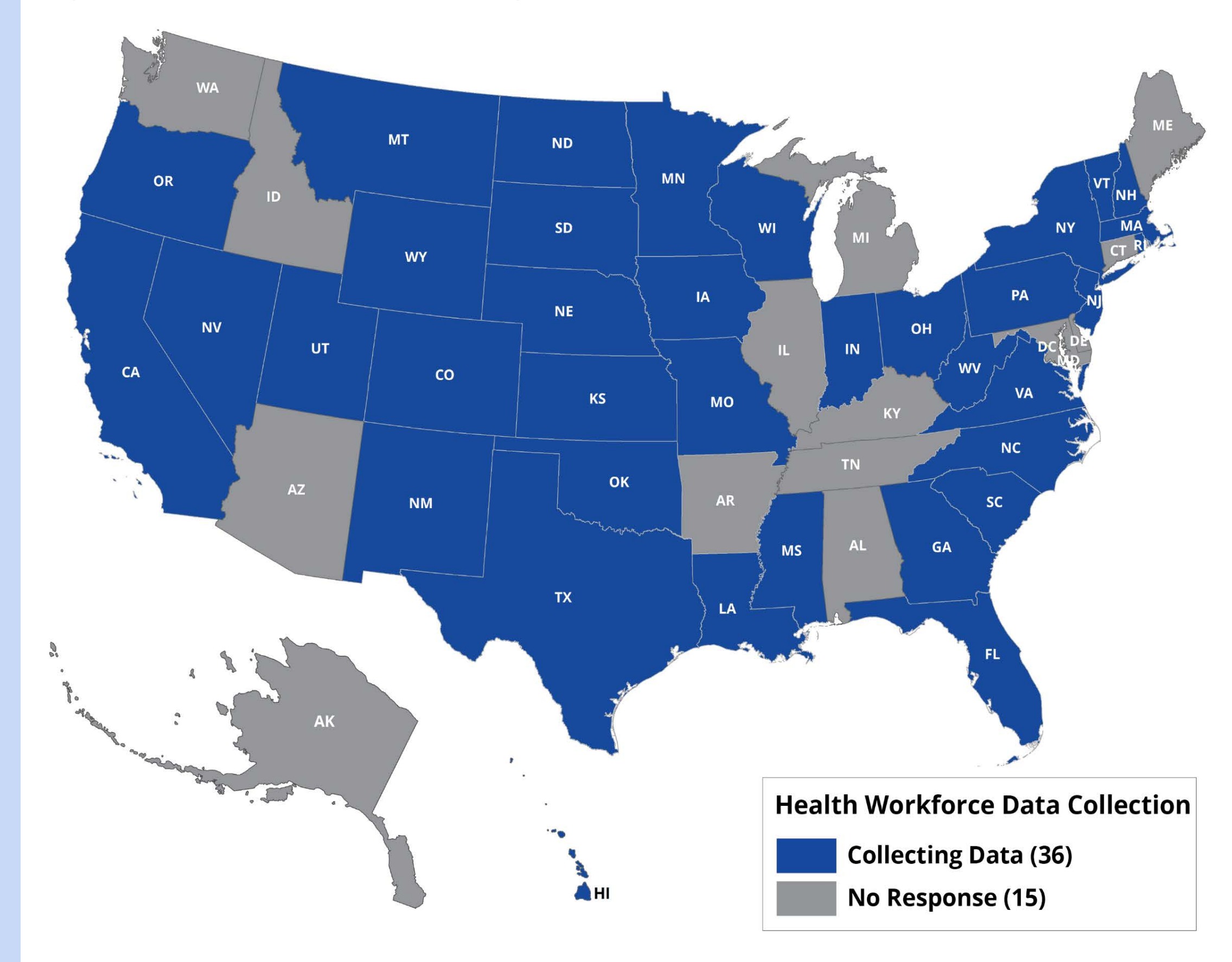
METHODS

An online survey was developed to collect information on statewide health workforce data collection efforts in three areas: supply, demand, and education pipeline.

Invitations to complete the survey were sent to groups believed to be collecting health workforce data, including primary care offices and state nursing workforce centers.

The information collected from the survey is compiled online as an interactive, map-based inventory. The inventory includes contact information and examples of surveys, so organizations can learn from each other about best practices in data collection. The survey is ongoing and can be accessed on the HWTAC website.

Figure 1. States Collecting Health Workforce Data

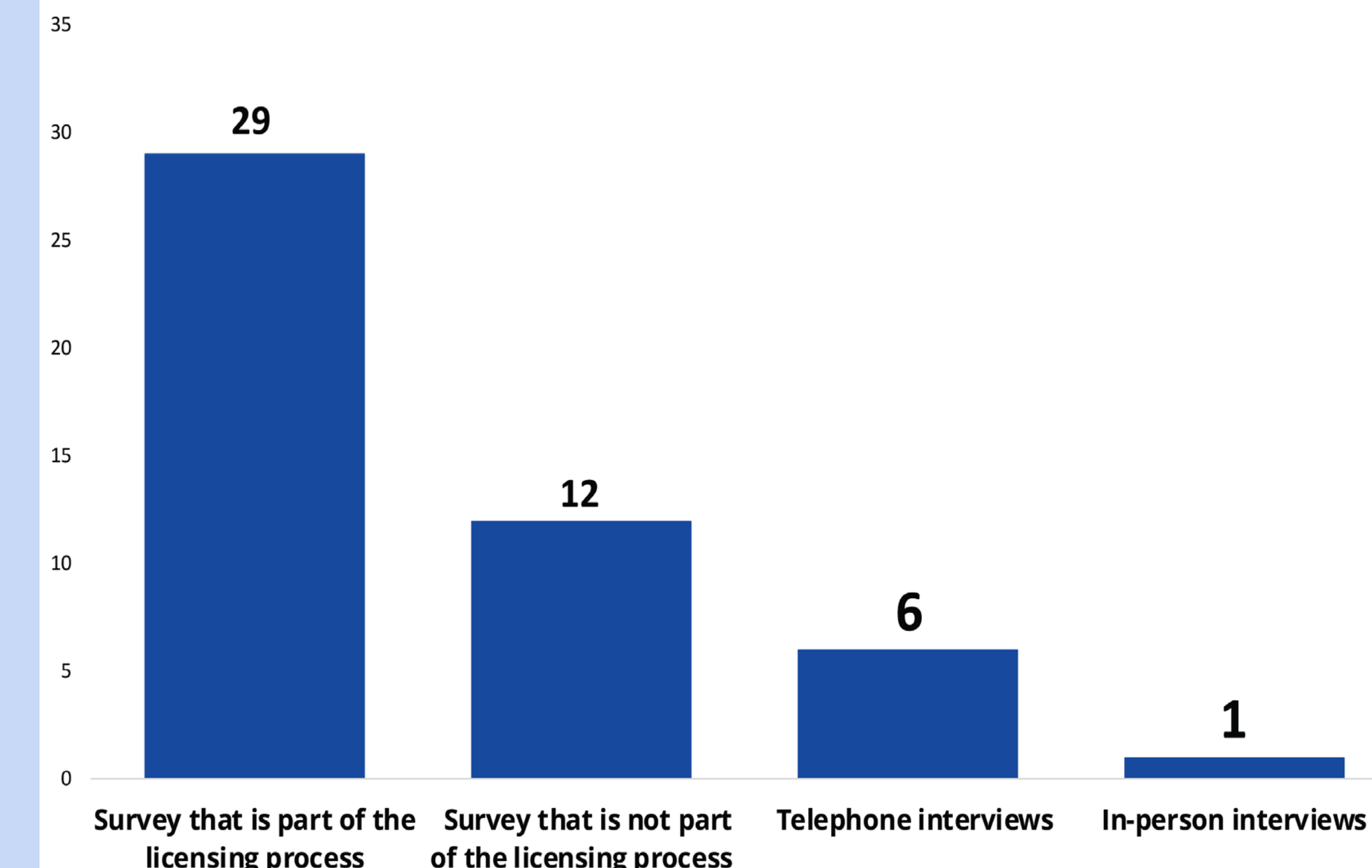


RESULTS

Forty-nine organizations in 36 states report collecting health workforce supply data.

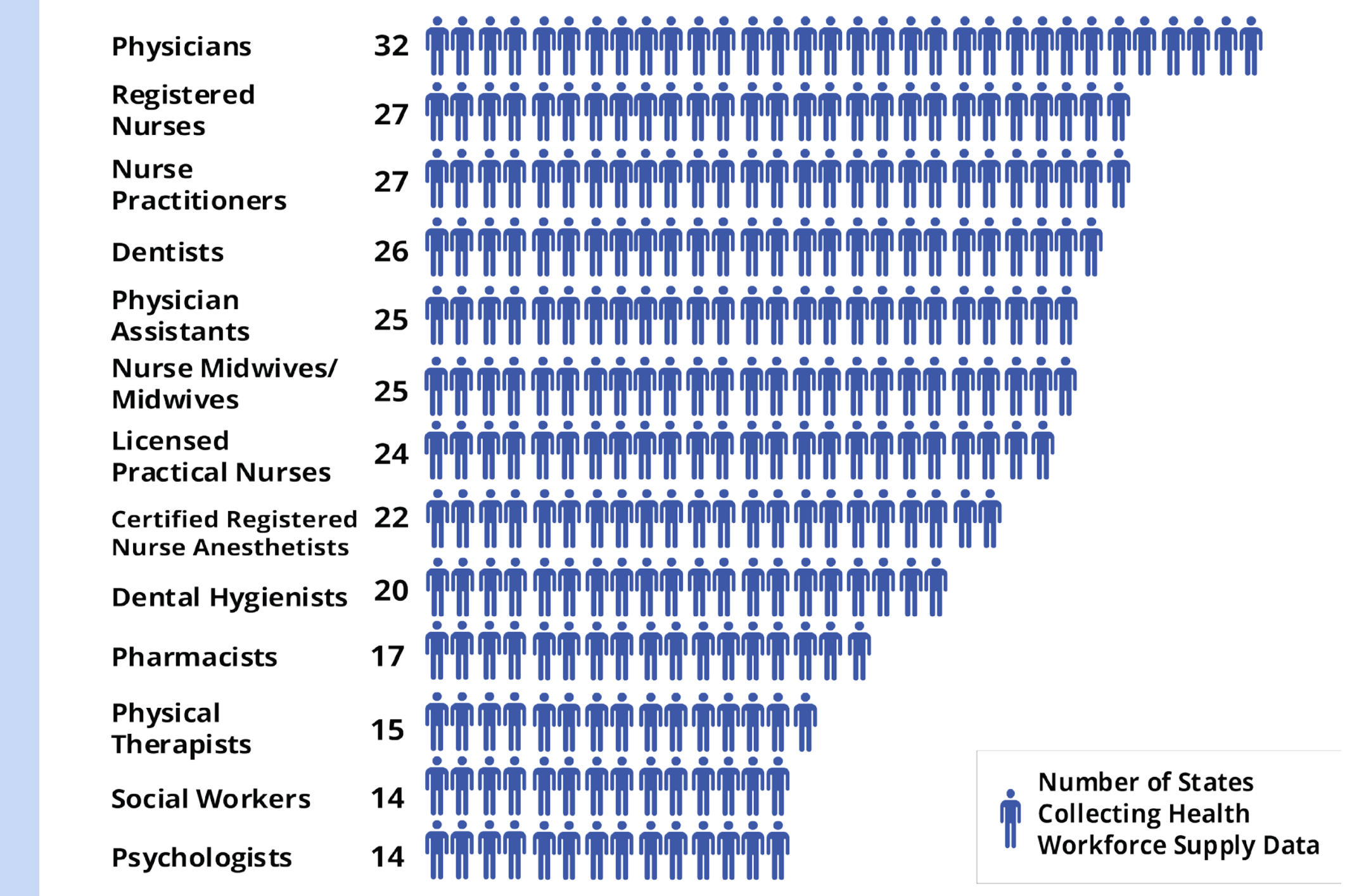
Most states collect supply data on a regular basis through a survey that is part of the licensing or relicensing process.

Figure 2. Health Workforce Supply Data Collection



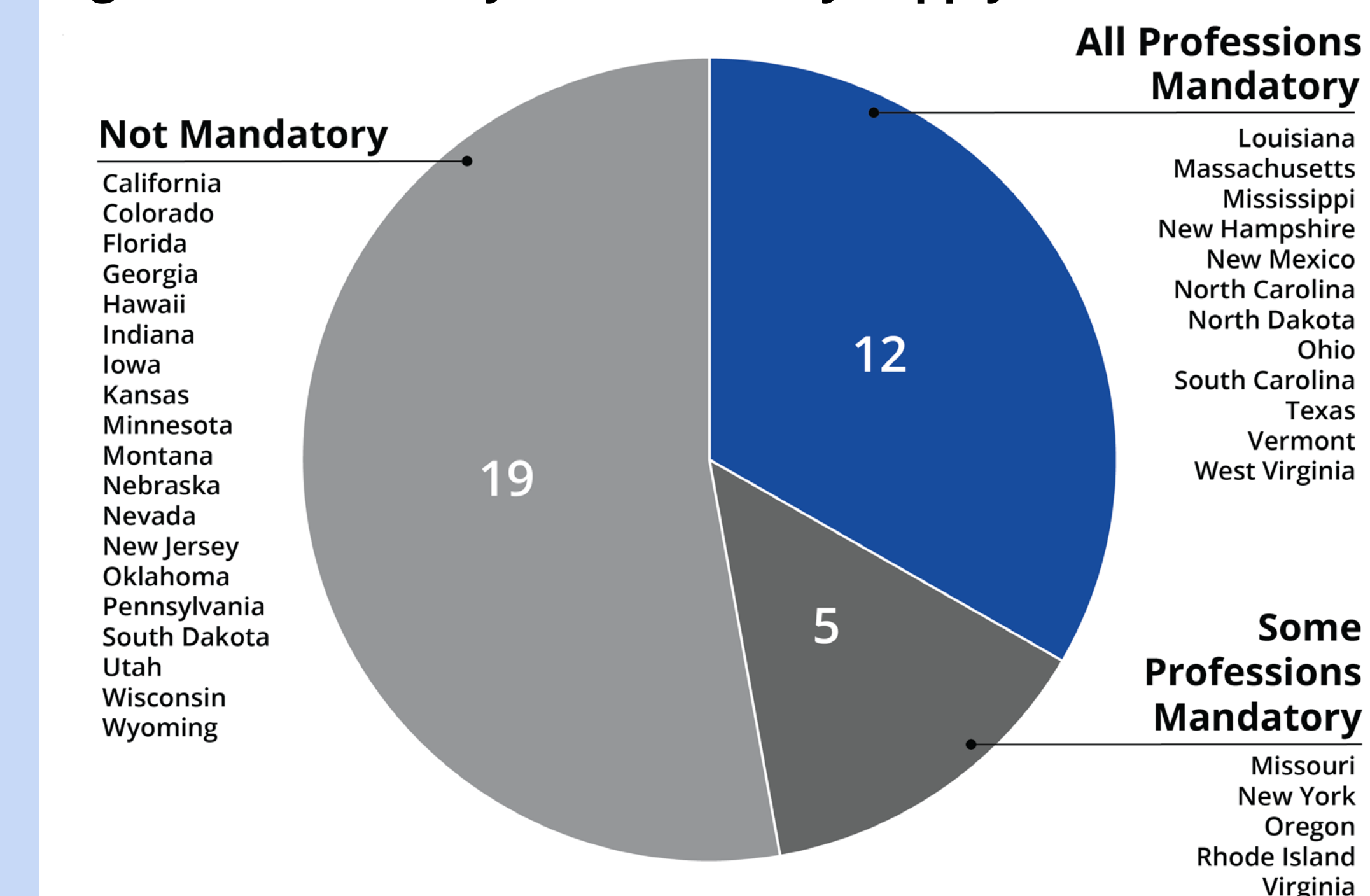
Health workforce supply data collection is most likely to target physicians, nursing professions, and dentists.

Figure 3. Supply Data Collection by Profession



Health workforce supply data collection is mandatory in 17 states.

Figure 4. Mandatory and Voluntary Supply Data Collection



RESULTS (Cont.)

Twenty organizations in 18 states indicated collecting health workforce demand data.

Health workforce demand data are most likely to be collected for hospitals and nursing homes.

Twenty-four organizations in 21 states indicated collecting health workforce education pipeline data.

In most states (18 states), education pipeline data are collected from educational programs. Five states collect educational pipeline data from individuals in training.

DISCUSSION

The State Health Workforce Data Collection Inventory is an ongoing project that is continually updated as more responses are received.

The majority of organizations that are collecting data are:

- State agencies and universities
- Nursing centers
- Area health education centers (AHECs)

Of the 14 states where no responses have been received, it is anticipated that some organizations are collecting data and others are planning to launch data collection efforts.

IMPLICATIONS

In order for health reform initiatives to succeed, there is an urgent need to better understand the supply and distribution of a state's health workforce. Lack of relevant and timely data on the health workforce is a significant barrier to the development of programs and policies aimed at improving the health care delivery system.

States recognize the value of collecting health workforce data for future planning of these programs and policies. New data collection efforts are launched frequently, and the State Health Workforce Data Collection Inventory is a unique tool designed to monitor the growth of those efforts across the country.

WEBSITE

The Data Collection Inventory is available at:

www.healthworkforceta.org/resources/state-health-workforce-data-collection-inventory/