

Defining Facilities with a Critical Shortage of Registered Nurses

**Presentation to
THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
NURSE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE**

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Overview of Presentation

- ❑ Nursing Workforce Issues, Concerns and Response Options
- ❑ Federal scholarship and loan repayment programs for RNs
- ❑ Research Study: Identifying the components of a methodology to identify critical shortages of RNs
- ❑ Progress to Date



The Center for Health Workforce Studies at the University at Albany

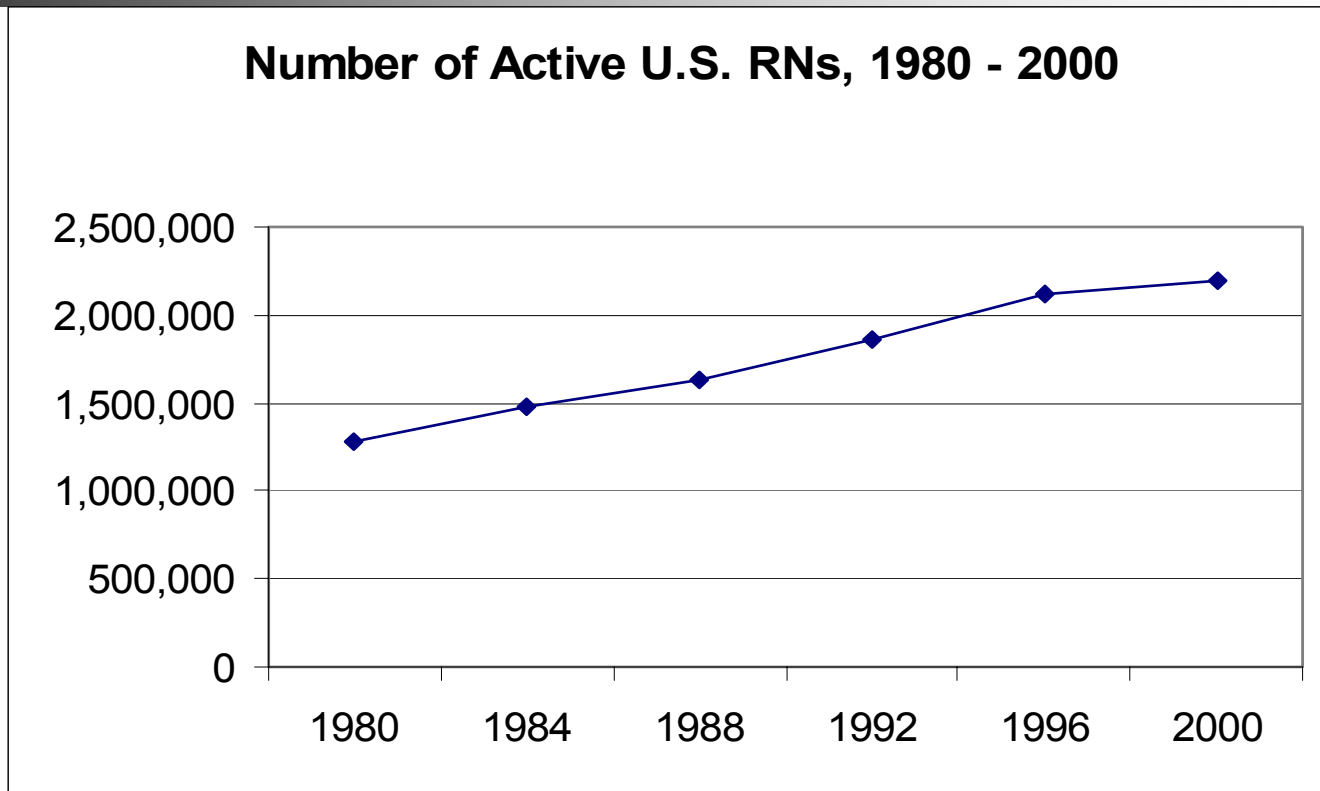
- Conducts studies of the supply, demand, use and education of the health workforce
- Committed to collecting and analyzing data to understand workforce dynamics and trends
- Goal to inform public policies, the health and education sectors and the public
- One of six regional centers with a cooperative agreement with HRSA/Bureau of Health Professions



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

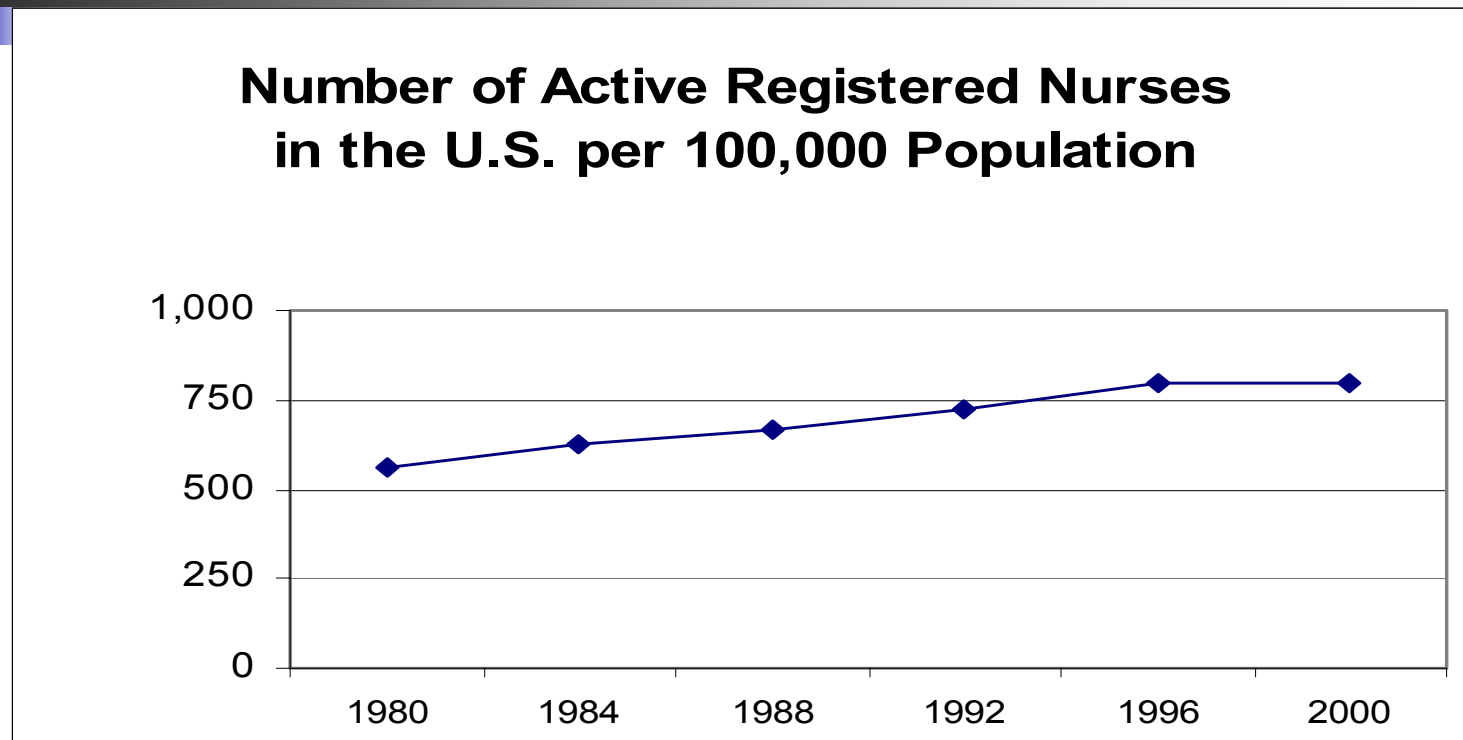
- General shortages of registered nurses (RNs) have been reported across the country
 - Attributed, in part, to:
 - Declining enrollments in RN education programs
 - Increasing numbers of RNs leaving clinical jobs

Between 1980 and 2000, the Number of Active RNs in the US Grew By More Than 72%



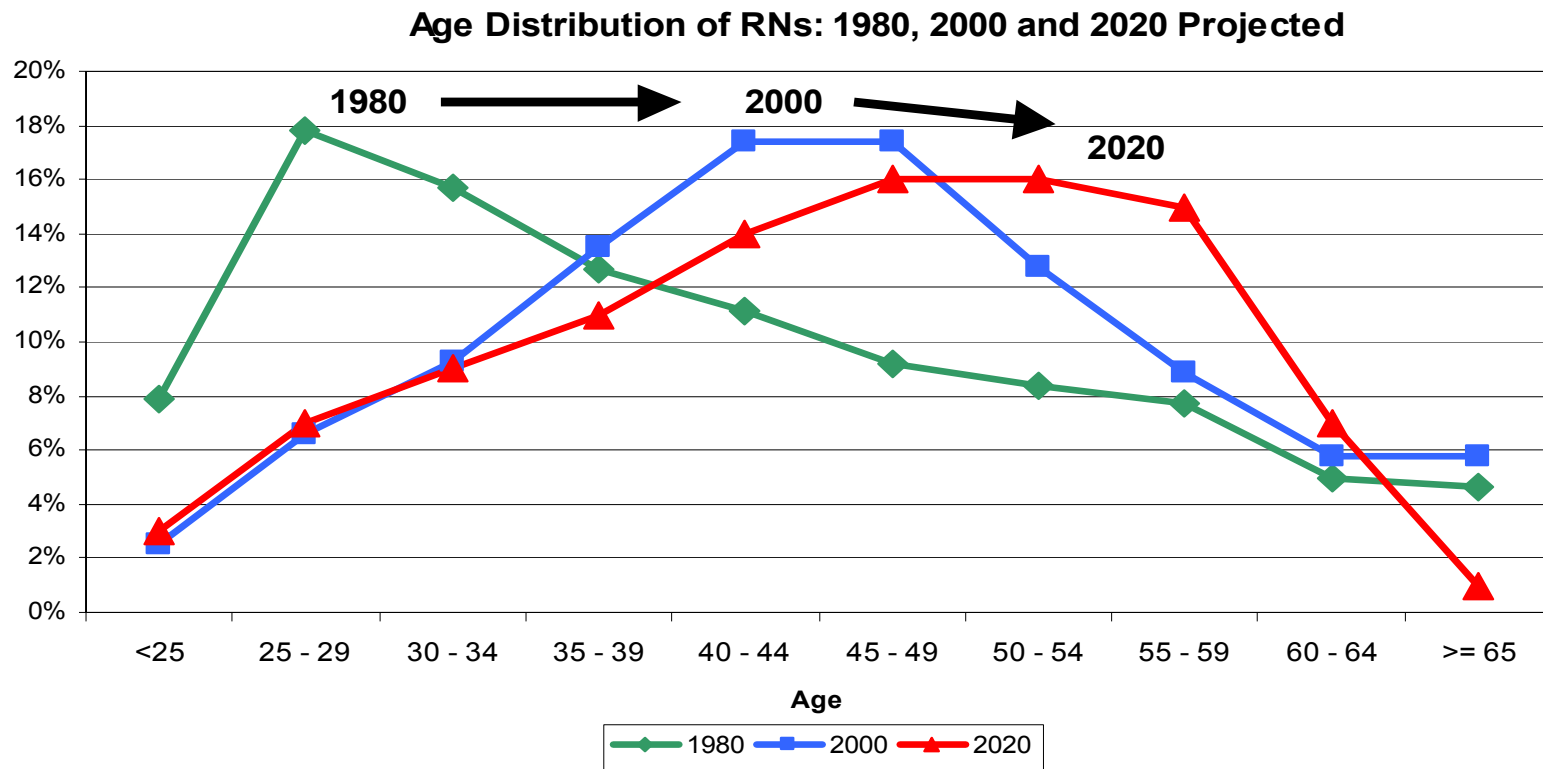
Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Findings from the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses 2000

The Supply of RNs Grew More Slowly Than the Overall Population Over This Time Period



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Findings from the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses 2000

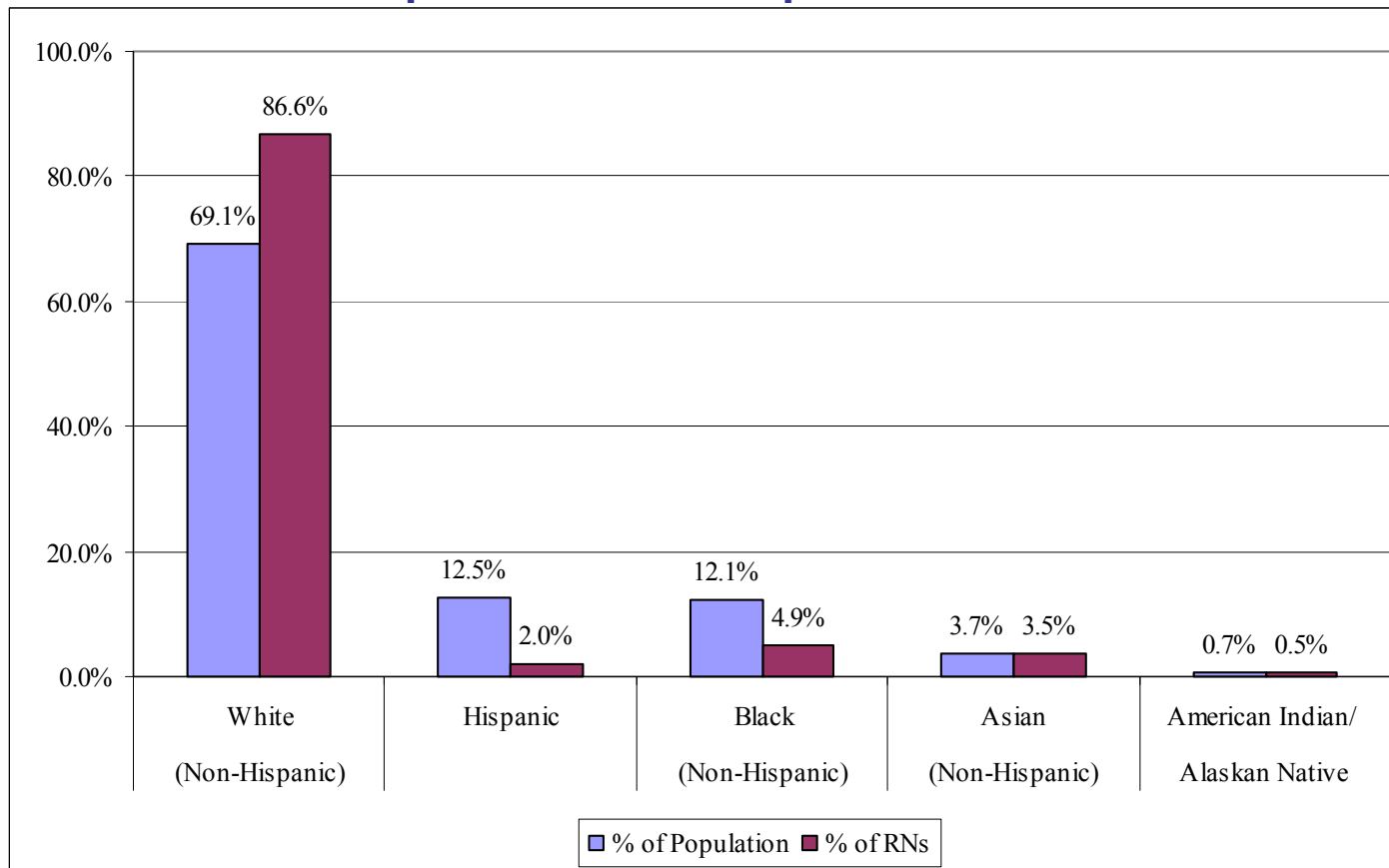
The Profession of Nursing Is Rapidly Aging



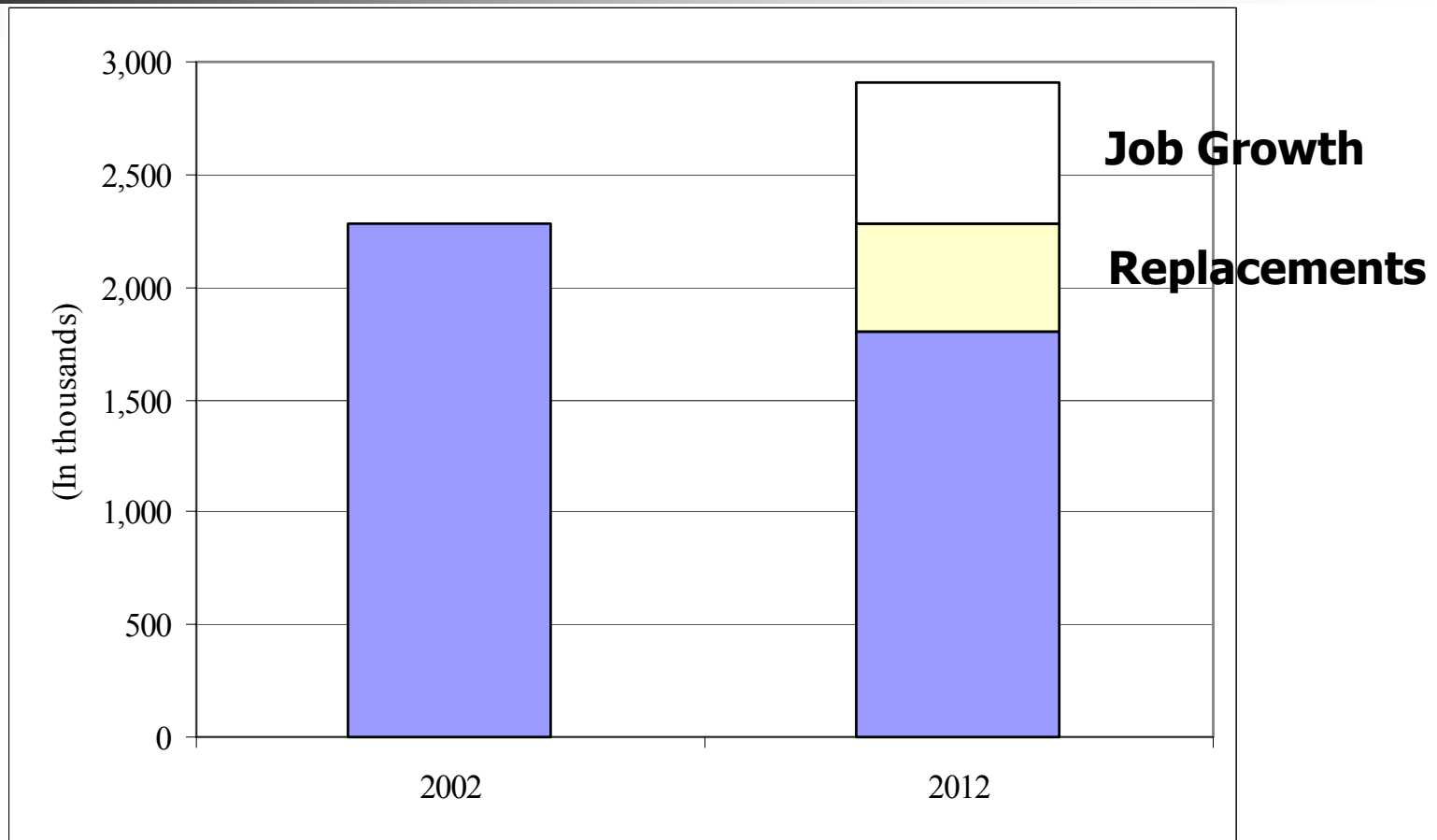
Source: Bureau of Health Professions, RN Sample Survey and Supply Projections.

The RN Workforce Lacks Diversity

Racial Composition of US Population and RNs, 2000

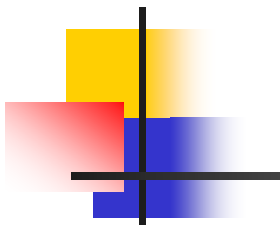


BLS Projects Over 1 Million RN Job Openings Between 2002 and 2012

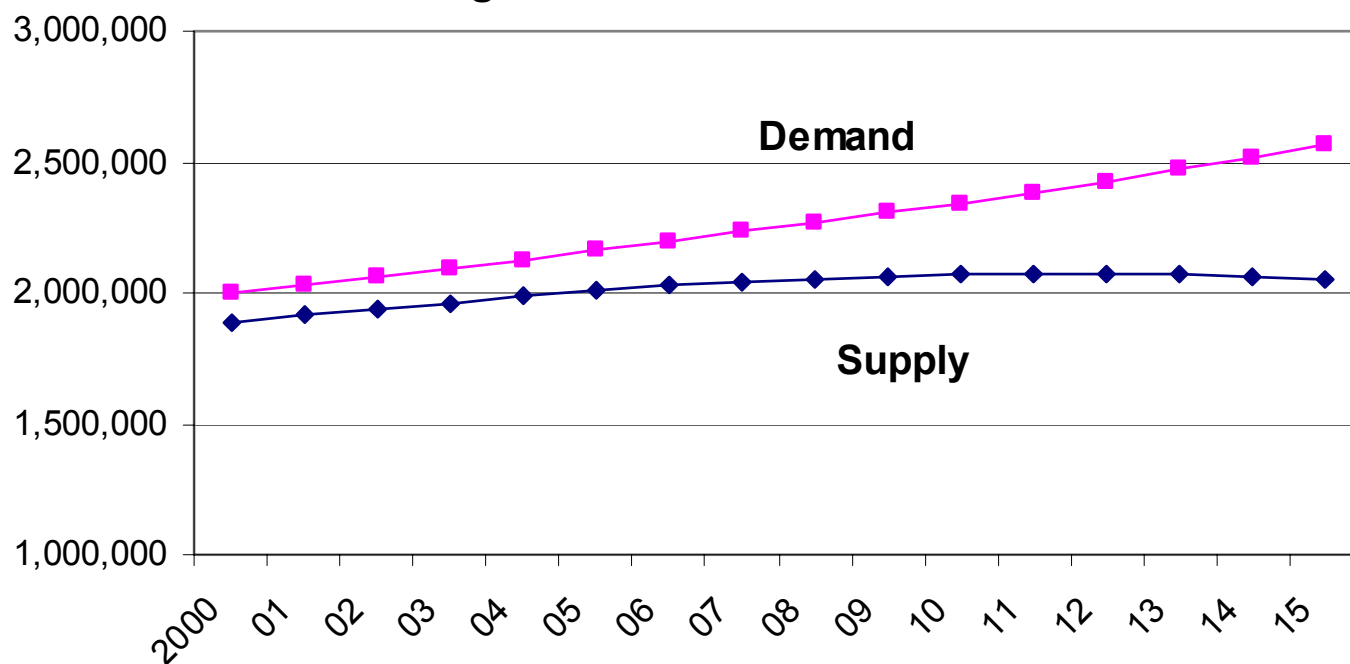


Source: BLS, Monthly Labor Review, February 2004.

Growing Demand for RNs Will Worsen Shortages Over the Next Fifteen Years



National Supply and Demand Projections for FTE Registered Nurses: 2000 to 2015



Source: HRSA, National Center for Health Workforce Analysis, RN Supply and Demand



Options for Responding to Registered Nursing Shortages

- **Increase the pipeline** (educational programs, health and education sector partnerships, training initiatives, career ladders, marketing careers, etc.)
- **Improve retention** (wages, benefits, working conditions, increased education and training, etc.)
- **Reduce demand** (increase efficiency, new technology, shift delivery site)
- **Government Interventions** (Regulations, minimum staffing ratios, commissions, task forces)
- **Better data and information** (Regular reports/studies: supply, demand, use and distribution)



The Federal Response to Address RN Shortages

- Nurse Reinvestment Act, which supports a broad array of RN recruitment and retention programs, including
 - Reauthorization of the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP)
 - Establishment of the Nursing Scholarship Program
- National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses



Nursing Scholarship Program

- A competitive federal program
- Awards scholarships to individuals for attending schools of nursing
- In return, the students agree to provide a minimum of 2 years of full-time clinical service at a health care facility with a critical shortage of nurses



Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP)

- Offers registered nurses assistance to repay educational loans in return for service in critical shortage facilities
- The purpose of the program is to assist in the recruitment and retention of professional nurses dedicated to providing health care to underserved populations.



Eligible Placement Sites for Federally Obligated Nursing Loan Repayers and Scholars

- Ambulatory surgical centers;
- Federally Designated migrant, community public housing or homeless health centers;
- Federally qualified health centers;
- Home health agencies;
- Hospice programs;
- Hospitals;
- Indian Health Service centers;
- Native Hawaiian health centers;
- Nursing homes;
- Rural health clinics;
- Skilled nursing facilities; and
- State or local health department clinics.



Ineligible facilities

- Freestanding clinics other than those listed above
- Renal dialysis centers
- Private practice offices
- Assisted living facilities



NELRP Funding Preferences

- First preference:
 - DSH hospitals
 - Nursing homes
 - State or local public health departments
 - Federally designated CHCs, migrant health centers or rural health centers



NELRP Funding Preferences

- Second Preference
 - Federally designated Health Care for the Homeless health center
 - Indian Health Service health center or Native Hawaiian health center
 - Non-Federal non-DSH hospitals



NELRP Funding Preferences

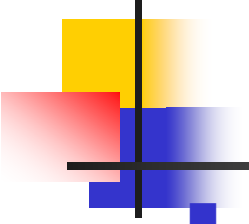
- Third preference
 - Federally qualified health center look-alikes
 - Ambulatory surgical centers
 - Home health agencies
 - Hospices
 - Skilled nursing facilities
 - Federal hospitals



The Need to Develop a Nursing Shortage Methodology

- The Center received funding from HRSA to conduct a two-year research study on the components of a comprehensive, national methodology for identifying facilities and agencies with critical shortages of RNs
- Work of the study is informed by four expert panels:
 - **Hospital panel**
 - **Nursing home panel**
 - **Home care and hospice panel**
 - **Ambulatory panel**

Panel Membership Was Diverse

- 
- Many registered nurses
 - Administrators
 - Clinicians
 - Researchers
 - Rural and urban health care providers
 - Associations, representing providers and the nursing profession
 - Researchers
 - State policymakers
 - Federal agency representatives



First Panel Meeting: Objectives

- To provide panel members with background information about nurse staffing ratios, nursing shortage indicators and shortage methodologies
- To agree on the principles to guide the development of a methodology for identifying facilities and agencies with critical shortages of RNs
- To identify both facility and community indicators of nursing shortages and to identify potential data sources for a more in-depth analysis of these indicators



First Panel Meeting: Outcomes

- Guiding Principles were identified:
 - Must recognize differences between facility types, community types, and unit types
 - Must account for contextual factors
 - Must account for facility/agency organizational and management culture
 - Must be evidence-based
 - Criteria must be based on their relationship to measurable outcomes
 - Must be driven by data that is consistent, well-defined, replicable, and accessible



First Panel Meeting: Outcomes

Facility level indicators of nursing shortages were identified and must be considered in the context of facility type, size and sponsorship

- RN turnover rates
- RN vacancy rates
- hard-to-fill RN positions
- staffing ratios (e.g., RNs per 100 beds, support staff per RN)
- adverse patient outcomes per 1000 admissions
- case mix/acuity
- worker satisfaction
- turnover in leadership
- closed admissions/ER diversions



First Panel Meeting: Outcomes

Community level indicators of nursing shortages were identified:

- **Demographic Perspective**

- rural/urban/suburban/frontier
- age distribution of population
- race/ethnicity of population
- percent of population on Medicare or Medicaid
- percent of population in poverty



First Panel Meeting: Outcomes

Community level indicators of nursing shortages were identified:

- **Nursing Perspective**

- RNs per 100 hospital beds
- local nursing wages
- number of nursing schools and graduates
- number of new graduates passing the NCLEX



NEXT STEPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NURSING SHORTAGE METHODOLOGY

- **Finalize the list of community level and facility level indicators of nursing shortage for pilot testing**
- **Identify potential data sets that include information on both RN supply and demand that can be framed within the context of a community**
- **Use identified data sets to pilot test RN shortage indicators**
- **Convene the four panels in the fall to review findings of the pilot test**



Issues for the Future....

- Ideal vs. actual methodology
- Designation process/updates
- Geographic distribution
- Allocation by setting