



nurse staffing in 2019.



Foreword

Challenges in nurse recruitment are at an all-time high as the need for healthcare in the U.S. grows. In 2019, proper nurse staffing is threatened by the national nursing shortage. The shortage can be attributed to an influx in patients, an aging population, lack of educational bandwidth to train new nurses, and the career burnout younger generations of practitioners are experiencing.

Hospitals have implemented strategies to attract and retain talent, including sign-on bonuses, tuition reimbursements, and increased compensation; however, this can lead to rising expenses.

Nurse executives are exploring innovative solutions to attract and retain top talent while prioritizing patient safety in their facilities.

In this survey, Avant Healthcare Professionals' 2019 Trends in Nurse Staffing Study, we analyze the status of U.S. nurse job vacancies, the cost comparison of outsourcing labor and the strategies in which hospital executives address understaffing. This year's data will compare to data collected from 2018 to explore a shift in staffing trends.

This survey was sent to a list of hospital executives across the U.S. with the title of CEO, CNO and HR executive. We received 171 total responses from a variety of settings including critical access hospitals, state facilities and large systems.

The responses we received supply insight into current U.S. nurse staffing trends and how hospitals plan to staff during a national nursing shortage.

The information may be used to help healthcare executives better understand their options when considering staffing strategies in 2019.







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Executive summary

In 2019, registered nurse job vacancies remain consistently high throughout the U.S., with most hospitals depending on new graduate nurses to fill the openings. While there is an upward trend of facilities using new grads, roughly 57% of newly-licensed nurses are leaving their practice setting within the first two years.¹

The study also indicated that when compared to 2018, there is a higher percentage of organizations that have factored in the number of nurse retirements in 2019. The impact of nurse retirements can cause low staffing levels, lack of clinical expertise and institutional knowledge, and unsafe conditions for nurses and patients.

In 2019, hospitals are focused on recruiting from nursing schools, using external advertising and internal recruitment efforts to fill job vacancies.

Respondents to this survey indicated a strong need for medical-surgical, emergency room, operating room, and intensive care unit nurses.

When compared to 2018's staffing study, using travel nurses as a staffing strategy has increased. To fill the more experienced nurse roles in 2019, hospitals are looking at international nurses as a solution. Unlike travel nurses, international nurses tend to have a lower cost of labor and stabilize internal staff turnover and burnout.

This study indicates the importance of having a multi-faceted approach to staffing and providing quality patient care.

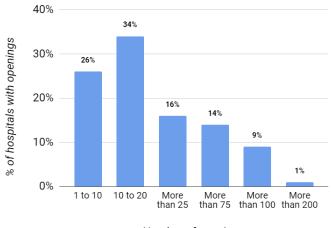




Addressing nurse staffing needs

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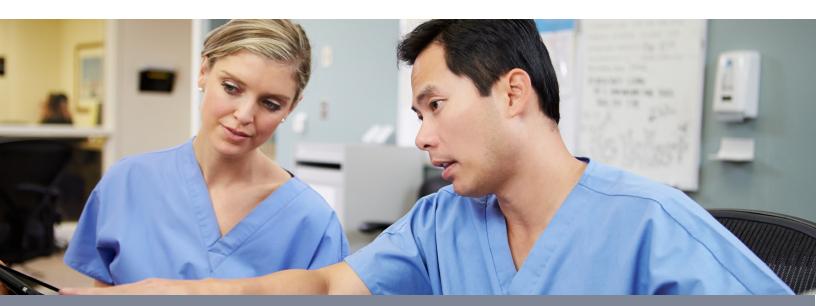
According to Avant Healthcare Professionals' 2019 Trends in Nurse Staffing Survey, 50% of hospitals have between 10 and 74 job openings to fill. 24% of respondents from larger facilities indicated the need for over 75 openings. 26% of hospitals are looking to fill between 1 and 10 positions.



Key Metrics
26% < 10
50% 10 to 74
24% > 75

Number of openings

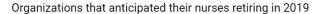
An increase of 5% of U.S. facilities have more than 100 registered nurse job openings in 2019 compared to 2018.

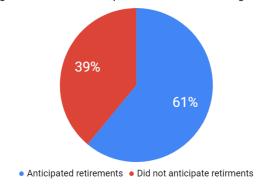




Job openings might be higher than reported since 39% of respondents have not factored in the number of nurses who will retire in 2019.

A substantial segment of the nursing workforce is nearing retirement age. The experience gap created by these retirements cause challenges in patient satisfaction and can increase the potential of staff burnout.





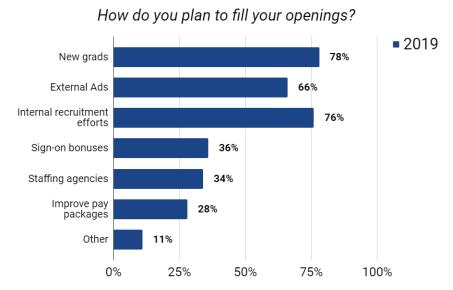




78% of respondents will rely on new nurse graduates to fill job openings.

While the number of nurse graduates entering the profession has increased since 2018, *American Nurse Today* recently conducted a survey of newly-graduated nurses' readiness to practice in a hospital setting, and only 10% of nurse executives believed that new graduate nurses were fully prepared to practice safely and effectively¹. According to the same survey, roughly 30% of new grad nurses are leaving in the first year of practice and almost as much as 57% in the second.

It can take a newly-licensed nurse years of experience in their practice setting to work safely and independently. Geography is also an issue as hospitals in more rural communities have difficulties recruiting new grads to their facilities.



Hospitals will also utilize internal recruitment efforts through referrals, external advertising on job boards, staffing agency partnerships and sign-on bonuses to attract nurses in 2019.



"We need more emphasis on nursing educators so that we can train more nurses."

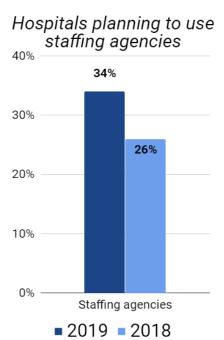
- CNO from Moses Lake, WA



Leveraging staffing partnerships to bridge experience gap



Healthcare executives are more confident in utilizing staffing agencies in 2019.



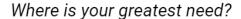
More healthcare executives are looking to establish partnerships with staffing agencies to outsource recruitment efforts. Survey results showed that there was an 8% increase in hospitals who will rely on staffing agencies to recruit nurses in 2019 as compared to the 2018 data.

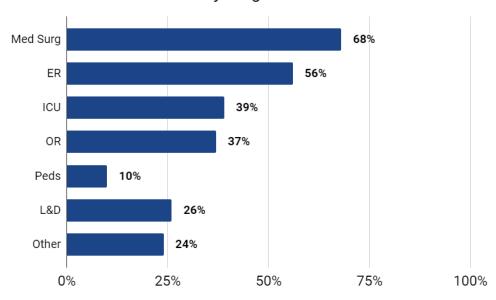
In 2019, healthcare executives indicated that they are open to including international nurse recruitment as a staffing solution over the use of travel nurses.



Nurses by demand

The highest demand nurse specialties across the U.S. are medical-surgical, emergency room, intensive care unit, and operating room. Half of the respondents indicated a need for other nurse specialties such as behavioral health, labor and delivery, and long-term care.









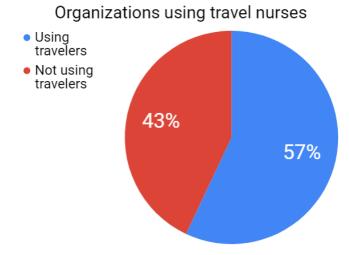
Seeking cost-effective solutions

Hospitals exectives have indicated looking to utilize more cost-effective staffing strategies in 2019.

According to Avant's 2018 Trends in Nurse Staffing Survey, 6% of hospital executives indicated they were using more than 25 travel nurses to fill job openings. In 2019, the use of travel nurses by hospitals has increased by 7% with 13% of hospitals using more than 25 travel nurses this year to fill job openings. Respondents who do use travel nurses indicated that they spend more than \$70 per hour on a travel nurse.

While the use of travel nurses have increased in 2019, some hospital executives indicate that they're looking to move away from travel nurses, seeking individuals looking for temp to perm.

Nurse leaders are exploring more cost-effective staffing strategies such as international nurse staffing. Hourly bill rates for an international nurse are significantly less than the hourly bill rate of travel nurses nationally.



"We are a CAH and travel nurses are very expensive and impact our budget dramatically."

- CNO from Corning, KS





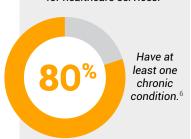
Causes of U.S. nurse shortage

The nursing shortage is a strong driver in hospitals using contract labor nurses.

BABY BOOMERS

75
MILLION

An aging population of 75 million "Baby Boomers" continues to drive demand for healthcare services.



ACA COVERAGE

20
MILLION

An estimated 20 million people now have health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act.



OPIOID EPIDEMIC

1.3
MILLION

In just one year, over a million people were hospitalized or treated in an ER due to opioid related issues.

That's 3,500 people each day!



70,000

NURSES RETIRING ANNUALLY

By 2030, almost a million nurses will retire and leave the workforce taking with them the years of knowledge and experience they have accumulated. 64,000

TURNED AWAY FROM NURSING PROGRAMS²

U.S. nursing schools turned away over 64,000 qualified applicants from nursing programs in 2016 due largely in part to an insufficient number of faculty and clinical preceptors.

17,000

NURSING INSTRUCTORS NEEDED®

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Employment Projections for 2012-2022, over 3,400 nurse instructors will be needed each year through 2022. That's over 17,000 in just the next five years (2018-2022).



About the survey

A total of 171 hospital executives and senior leaders across the United States participated in this survey. These participants included CNOs, CEOs and HR executives from a variety of health systems, including critical access hospitals, state facilities and larger health systems. The majority of respondents have up to 100 beds or more in their facility.

More than 438,000 new registered nurse job openings are projected to be added to the workforce by 2026, surging from 2.7 million jobs to 3.2 million, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is also projected that there will be a need for 203,700 new RNs each year through 2026 to fill new positions and replace vacancies left by retiring nurses.²

The biggest drivers of the nursing shortage are the increase in patients, the imbalance of registered nurse distribution geographically, the high turnover of new grads and nurse retirements. Over 50% of the facilities Avant Healthcare Professionals' staff are in rural communities across the U.S.

The southeast and the south-central part of the U.S. will be impacted most by the nurse shortage. U.S. hospitals affected most by the nurse shortage will require a comprehensive approach to staffing. Avant Healthcare Professionals 2019 Trends in Nurse Staffing Study is intended to provide hospital executives key information on the nurse staffing shortage through the perspective of their peers.

About Avant Healthcare Professionals

Avant Healthcare Professionals is the premier staffing specialist for internationally educated registered nurses, physical therapists and occupational therapists. Avant helps clients improve the continuity of their care, fill hard-to-find specialties, and increase patient satisfaction, revenue and HCAHPS scores. Avant is a Joint Commission accredited staffing agency and founding member of the American Association of International Healthcare Recruitment (AAIHR).



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