

Texas Board of Nursing
Report on Trends in Prelicensure Nursing Education Programs in Texas

Introduction

This report was developed to respond to Board members' requests for information and trends related to Texas nursing education programs. A spiral manual with data and other information will be presented to each Board member as reference material for future consideration of nursing programs. Explanation of the sources and limitations of the data are noted in the discussion below.

List of Attachments included in the Reference Manual:

Attachment 1	Enrollment, Graduation, and Persistence Rates for Nursing Programs 2007-2010
Attachment 2	NCLEX Examination Pass Rates for Five Years - Vocational (VN) Programs
Attachment 3	NCLEX Examination Pass Rates for Five Years - Professional (RN) Programs
Attachment 4	Trends in Nursing Program Approvals Since September 1, 2006
Attachment 5	Nursing Programs Listed by Type of Institution
Attachment 6	An Evaluation of Nursing Programs Who Currently Have Sanctions
Attachment 7	Accreditation Status of Texas Nursing Programs
Attachment 8	Comparison of Tuition Rates Among Nursing Programs

Attachments - Analysis, Discussion, and Implications for the Board of Nursing (BON):

Attachment 1: Enrollment, Graduation, and Persistence Rates for Nursing Programs

Enrollment and graduation figures were derived from the BON Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) data reported to the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies.

Persistence data for professional programs was provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Their calculations for "persistence rates" allow for "150 percent time" for completion of the program. Individual students are tracked from the time they enter the nursing program and the formula allows for students to graduate within the normal completion time plus fifty percent of the expected completion time. THECB collects this information from some but not all private colleges and universities, so some data are missing.

Board Report 3.2.14. for the July 22-23, 2010 meeting provided the 2009 statewide graduation data for professional nursing programs. The data indicated that the overall 2009 persistence rate was 71.1 percent, a 2.8 percent increase over the 2008 persistence rate. The data in this Board report are included in the table in this attachment.

Persistence rates for vocational programs are not systematically or uniformly collected, and do not appear to be reliable. The two sources of data presented here are THECB and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), but both do not use the same methodology to calculate persistence rates. Consequently, it is difficult to draw strong conclusions from the data. Persistence rates for students entering vocational programs located in public colleges or universities in 2007 were recently received from THECB. These are unverified data since there has not been feedback from the nursing programs to validate the rates. The formulas for calculating these data may not be consistent with the formulas used for the professional programs.

Persistence data for the career schools and colleges was received from the TWC and it is limited because they do not include data for all of the programs.

As Attachment 1 reflects, enrollments and graduations have generally increased over time in both professional and vocational programs. This may also be seen in the tables for NCLEX pass rates (Attachments 2 and 3).

Attachments 2 and 3: NCLEX Examination Pass Rates for Five Years:

NCLEX examination pass rates for programs with graduates who have taken the NCLEX examination are available on the BON web page under the [Nursing Education](#) link. Tables are provided indicating NCLEX examination pass rates for each program for five years.

The State of Texas composite NCLEX examination scores for both VN and RN programs exceed the national average.

Texas Vocational Nursing Programs - NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rates

Year	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
First time candidates who passed/ total candidates	4991/5628	4840/5488	4461/5032	4362/4886	4043/4440
Average Pass Rate for Texas VN Programs	88.68%	88.19%	88.65%	89.28%	91.06%
National Average Pass Rate	87.06%	85.73%	85.62%	87.25%	87.87%

Texas Professional Nursing Programs - NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rates

Year	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
First time candidates who passed/ total candidates	7959/8912	7413/8146	6819/7521	6314/7001	5468/6022
Average Pass Rate for Texas RN Programs	89.31%	91.00%	90.67%	90.19%	90.80%
National Average Pass Rate	87.56%	88.20%	86.67%	87.36%	86.53%

There is an increase in the numbers of first time test-takers for both VN and RN programs across the years, indicating a growth in the number of licensed nurses in the state.

Attachment 4: Trends in Nursing Program Approvals Since September 1, 2006

This table is an extension of Board Agenda Item 3.2.1. but focuses on the type of institution where the nursing programs are located (rather than the name of the program) approved since September 1, 2006.

The terms used for type of program are consistent with THECB's designations:

- public (state) colleges and universities
- independent (private) colleges and universities
- career schools and colleges (for profit and not for profit)

The types of new nursing education programs are changing from traditional models:

- Between September 1, 2006 and January 27, 2011, 30 new programs (See Agenda Item 3.2.1.) were approved:
 - 16 in career schools and colleges, representing >53% of the new programs
 - 10 VN; 5 ADN; 1 BSN
 - 10 in public colleges and universities, representing >33% of the new programs
 - 1 VN; 5 ADN; 4 BSN
 - 4 in independent colleges and universities, representing >13% of the new programs
 - 0 VN; 4 BSN
- 20 proposals are currently in review by board staff:
 - 15 in career schools and colleges, or 75% of active proposals currently under review
 - 9 VN; 4 ADN; 2 BSN
 - 4 in public colleges and universities, or 20% of active proposals currently under review
 - 0 VN; 1 ADN; 3 BSN
 - 1 in independent colleges and universities, or 5% of active proposals currently under review
 - 0 VN; 0 ADN; 1 BSN
- Board staff have received 14 identified inquiries to submit a proposal for a new program:
 - 9 in career schools and colleges, or >54% of inquiries for new programs
 - 4 VN; 4 ADN; 1 BSN
 - 4 in public colleges and universities, or 36% of inquiries for new programs
 - 0 VN; 0 ADN; 4 BSN
 - 1 BSN in independent colleges and universities, or >7% of inquiries for new programs

Additional phone inquiries have recently been received and callers have been invited to the next informal information session.

A trend is also evident that more career schools and colleges are seeking approval to establish degree-granting programs for RN programs.

Success Rates of Programs Approved Since 2006 on the NCLEX Examination:

- 17 of the 30 new programs approved between September 1, 2006 and January 27, 2011 have graduated students who have taken the NCLEX examination:
- The other 13 of the 30 new programs have not graduated students and no NCLEX examination pass rate is available.
- 8 of the 17 programs with NCLEX pass rates fall below the required 80%. Details about these 8 programs are presented in the following table:

Type of Program	Number of Programs with NCLEX Pass Rates	Location of Programs with NCLEX Pass Rates	Programs with NCLEX Pass Rate Below 80%	Programs with NCLEX Pass Rate Above 80%	Location of Programs with NCLEX Pass Rate Below 80%
VN	8	7 -Career School 1 -Public Institution	5	3	5 -Career Schools
ADN	6	2 -Career School 4 -Public Insitution	2	4	2 -Public Institution 2 - Career School
BSN	3	2 -Public institution 1 -Independent	1	2	1 -Public Institution
	17		8	9	

Attachment 5: Nursing Programs Listed by Type of Institution

Approved VN and RN programs are listed by type of institution with percentages of type of institution in relation to the total number of programs, either vocational or professional. Programs are listed under these headings: Career Schools and Colleges, Public Colleges and Universities, and Independent Colleges and Universities. Programs that do not fit into these categories are identified as Diploma, Military, and Hospital-Based.

Governing Institutions for Vocational Nursing Programs - April 2011

Type of Institution	Number of Programs	Percentage of Total VN Programs
Career School and Colleges	19	>19%
Public Colleges and Universities	73	>74%
Independent Colleges and Universities	1	1%
Hospital-Based	4	>4%
Military	1	1%
Total VN Programs	98	

Governing Institution for Professional Nursing Programs - April 2011

Type of Institution	Number of Programs	Percentage of Total RN Programs
Diploma	1	<1%
Associate Degree Programs		
• Career Schools and Colleges	5	5%
• Public Colleges and Universities	59	58%
• Independent Colleges and Universities	1	<1%
Baccalaureate Degree Programs		
• Career Schools and Colleges	1	1%
• Public Colleges and Universities	22	22%
• Independent Colleges and Universities	12	12%
Alternate Entry MSN	1	<1%
Total RN Programs	102	

Attachment 6: An Evaluation of Nursing Programs Who Currently Have Sanctions

This attachment provides information about programs that currently have sanctions (pending Board actions at the April 2011 meeting) related to low NCLEX examination pass rates and noncompliance with Board rules. The number of programs with sanctions (either full approval with warning or conditional approval) has grown over the past few years though the percentage of programs with sanctions has increased only 1% for professional programs and 3% for vocational nursing programs. This may seem an insignificant change, but the increased number of programs on full approval with warning or conditional approval means that board staff will spend more dedicated time and expertise to assist programs experiencing difficulties. Assistance from board staff may be far-reaching and positively impact the programs and many nursing students.

A table further explains the status of each program on warning or on conditional. In addition, there is information about the status of all programs based on the NCLEX pass rates and type of institution.

The following information compares **2010 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates** across types of programs:

- 19 of the vocational nursing programs are located in career schools and colleges.
- 9 of these 19 vocational programs in career schools and colleges have pass rates below 80%.
- 3 of these 19 programs are new and are not included among programs with NCLEX examination pass rates.
- For the 16 career school programs who have had 2010 NCLEX test results, 56% (9 programs below 80%/16 programs with NCLEX scores) have pass rates below 80%.
- On the other hand, only 7 (or 10%) of the 73 VN programs located in public colleges or universities have pass rates below 80%.
- 25 VN programs, all of which are located in public institutions, had 100% pass rates on the 2010 NCLEX.
- 66 VN programs out of the total of 98 received commendations for achieving a pass rate of 90% or higher on the 2010 NCLEX examination.

- 10 VN programs had pass rates below 80% for this year and will write self-study reports.
- Another 4 programs had pass rates below 80% for a second consecutive year and will be moved to full approval with warning (representing 4% of all VN programs).
- 2 of the programs moving to warning are in public community colleges and 2 are in career schools and colleges.

An analysis of the **2010 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates** reveals that:

- 5 RN programs had 100% pass rates.
- 8 programs had a pass rate below 80% for 2010 and will write self-study reports.
- 3 programs will be moved to full with warning because of a second consecutive year of low pass rates.
- 2 programs will be moved to conditional approval due to a third consecutive year of low pass rates.

Changes in approval status are based on low pass rates and noncompliance issues.

Attachment 7: Accreditation Status of Texas Nursing Programs

Information about accreditation status of nursing programs is provided in this report. It was obtained from the Compliance Audit of Nursing Education Programs (CANEP), from information in proposals, or from accreditation organization web pages.

- All public colleges or universities which house a VN or RN program hold regional accreditation.
- 19 programs (VN and RN) in career schools and colleges have national accreditation only (fifteen VN and four RN).
- 8 nursing programs (VN and RN) hold no accreditation whatsoever.
- Programs located in hospitals usually hold other approvals (CMS, DADS, DSHS).
- 5 VN programs and 77 RN programs hold national nursing accreditation.
- Several of the new RN programs indicate that they plan to seek national nursing accreditation.
- 18 ADN programs and 5 BSN programs do not hold national nursing accreditation.

Attachment 8: Comparison of Tuition Rates Among Nursing Programs

The information about tuition rates in career schools and colleges was received from TWC. Information comparing tuition among public colleges and universities was obtained from the THECB web page. A limitation of the information about tuition in public colleges and universities is that it represents the tuition for all disciplines and is not specific to nursing. Nursing programs often add additional fees for labs, assessment kits, and standardized testing packages. In many public colleges and universities, nursing students are commuters rather than dorm students and specific fees for requirements in the nursing department are not shown in this information.

Implications for the Board of Nursing:

1. With growth in the number of students enrolled in nursing programs, it will be important to carefully monitor NCLEX examination pass rates and compliance with Board rules to ensure that programs are preparing safe and competent nurses.
2. The Education Consultants will reassess priorities in workload to assure that adequate time is devoted to nursing programs experiencing NCLEX pass rates below 80%, as well as other issues challenging the successes of their programs. Some workload may shift from proposal review to program consultation and assistance.
3. As the educational environment continues to change and the volume of proposals continues to increase, the Education Consultants will focus on maintaining the high standards in nursing education as supported by the rules in proposal review. Proposals will not go forward that do not include:
 - evidence for the need of the program,
 - identification of a qualified director and faculty,
 - and established clinical placements for the students.