

TITLE: Shortage or Maldistribution: Shifting the Conversation About Oregon's Nursing Workforce

AUTHOR(S): Rick Allgeyer

PRESENTER(S): Rick Allgeyer

STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Workforce planners and researchers.

ABSTRACT: The prospect of a nursing shortage greatly concerns health officials and healthcare industry leaders. Nursing shortages significantly impact the delivery of healthcare as they can jeopardize patient safety and impedes the delivery of quality care. However, as projections of the supply and demand of registered nurses became widely available, researcher began to document marked variations in the nursing workforce both regionally and across employment settings. These findings show that the variation in the supply of nurses seem to be differentially affecting rural communities and non-hospital settings. This study presents the findings from several analyses examining the distribution of nurses geographically and by employment settings across Oregon. Evidence of high growth rates within the nursing workforce, more younger nurses are entering the workforce, and a large influx of nurses from other states indicate that a statewide shortage is very unlikely in the near future. Instead, results showing significantly higher vacancy and turnover rates in non-hospital settings (e.g., long-term care, home health, and hospice) and substantial variation in measures of nurse density suggest that the nursing workforce is maldistributed across Oregon. Understanding this maldistribution can point to specific interventions aimed to impact the factors behind the observed maldistribution.

OBJECTIVE(S): Differentiate between workforce shortages and maldistribution.

Explain the evidence for the maldistribution of nurses across Oregon.

Evaluate the converging lines of evidence that a statewide shortage is unlikely.
