

Kentucky's Nursing Workforce CRISIS



Kentucky hospitals and healthcare systems are facing unprecedented critical workforce shortages, exponential growth in labor costs, and an ongoing need to use travel nurses to help staff their facilities. The pandemic has taken a toll on health care staff and nurses, in particular, are retiring and leaving bedside care just when our population is aging and hospitals are seeing sicker patients.

A current
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3,899
RNs and
LPNs

▶ CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING HOSPITALS

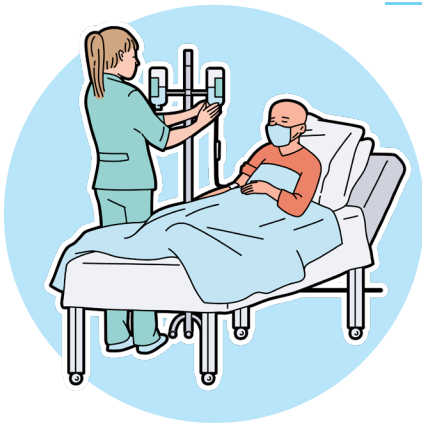
- A current shortfall of **3,899** registered nurses (RNs)
- **One in four RN positions** in medical/surgical units vacant (**23%**)
- By 2030, nearly **25% of all psychiatric nurses** and more than **19% of all OR nurses will have retired.**
- More than **16% Turnover Rate** for RNs
- Paramedics/EMTs - **19% vacancy with 26% turnover**

▶ FUTURE CHALLENGES

There is also a significant gap between the number of vacancies and the number of new nurses coming into the profession.

- **More than 4,400 new students enrolled** in RN programs during the academic year 2022-23.
- More than 3,300 new RN graduates in 2023.
- **Almost 3,000 nursing students PASSED** the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) in 2023.

Too few new students are entering the nursing programs.



▶ NURSES CARING FOR A SICKER POPULATION

Not only is there a severe shortage of nurses, but the nurses working in hospitals are caring for far more complex patients. Because so many delayed care during the pandemic, hospital patients are sicker and require longer times in the hospital. **Since 2017, the average length of stay has grown by nearly an entire additional day.** This puts a greater burden on caregivers in hospitals and takes a toll on the entire healthcare workforce.

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