



Vital Signs 2012

A NATIONAL
NURSING ATTITUDES
& OUTLOOK REPORT

Jackson
HEALTHCARE®
We give healthcare life

Jackson
Nurse
Professionals

Introduction

Despite the coming of what many consider a national nursing shortage, nurses appear to be experiencing a rather stable moment in an industry wrought with tension and change.

While physicians feel [squeezed](#) from multiple fronts, many nurses are in demand, have a variety of practice options and enjoy work/life balance.

The nursing field is a lifestyle choice, in addition to a professional one. It allows each professional the ability to do work that matters and maintain a schedule that offers a life beyond the demands of the job.

There is a wealth of research available on nursing trends and challenges. The [American Association of Colleges of Nursing](#) maintains one of the most comprehensive. However, as an organization placing nurses in healthcare facilities throughout the nation, Jackson Healthcare seeks to measure nurse attitudes annually and trend changes over the coming years.

This report is our contribution to the national dialogue on the state of nursing in the U.S. We look forward to your feedback.

Respectfully,



Richard L. Jackson
Chairman & CEO

Research Background

This survey was conducted online from October through November, 2012. Invitations for the survey were emailed to nurses who have been placed by Jackson Healthcare staffing companies and those who have not.

Respondents were self-selected with 969 respondents completing the survey. The error range for this survey at the 95th percent confidence level is 3.1 percent.

Topics surveyed and included in this report:

- Employment demographics, including compensation ([p 7](#))
- Career and retirement plans ([p 11](#))
- Overall job satisfaction and drivers of satisfaction ([p 5](#))
- Preferred work environment ([p 9](#))
- Threats to job satisfaction ([p 6](#))
- Preferences for advanced practitioners ([p 9](#))

The questionnaire used for this survey can be downloaded [here](#).

A Snapshot of Survey Findings

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Nurses are satisfied with their current work environment and plan to stay in their jobs for the next five years.

2

Most nurses value work/life balance and prefer working in a hospital or outpatient location

3

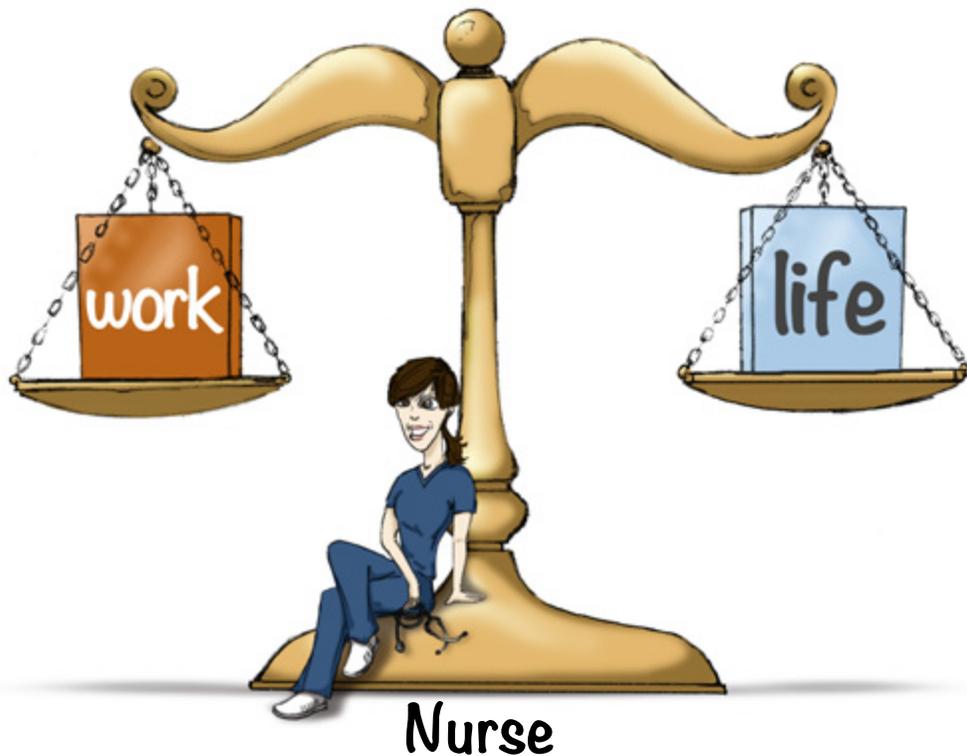
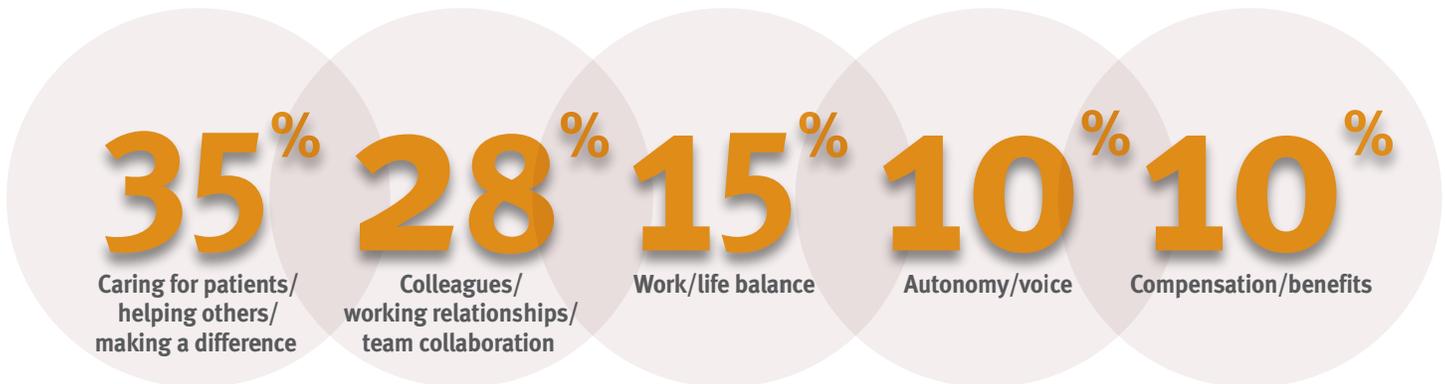
Increasing workload and the looming nursing shortage pose the greatest risks to future nurse satisfaction and stability

Nurse Job Satisfaction & Workload.

Nurses, overall, are satisfied with their jobs. Seventy-six percent of survey respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with their current work environment. Only five percent report being very dissatisfied.

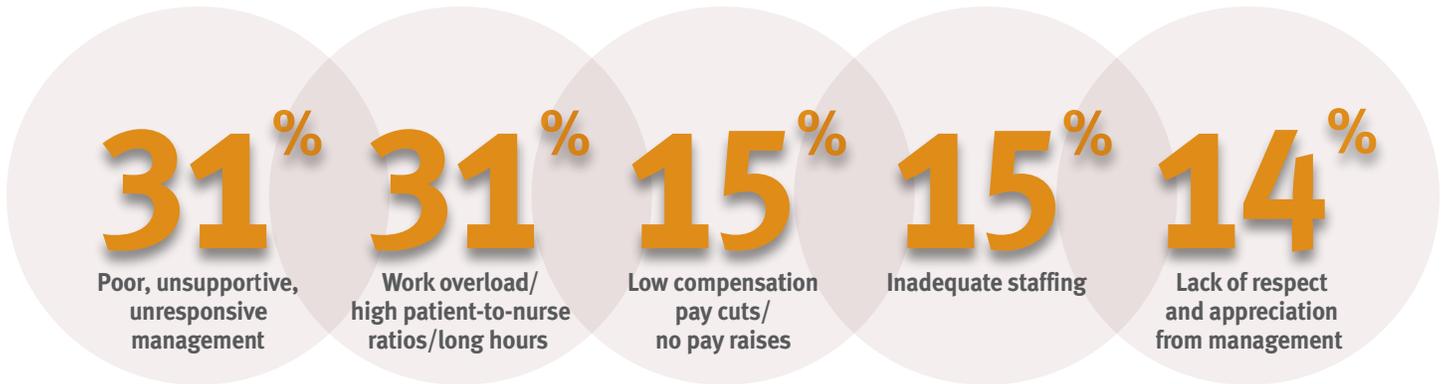
The variety of opportunities, plus the work/life balance their profession offers, appears to be driving a period of overall nurse stability.

The top five drivers of nurse satisfaction are:

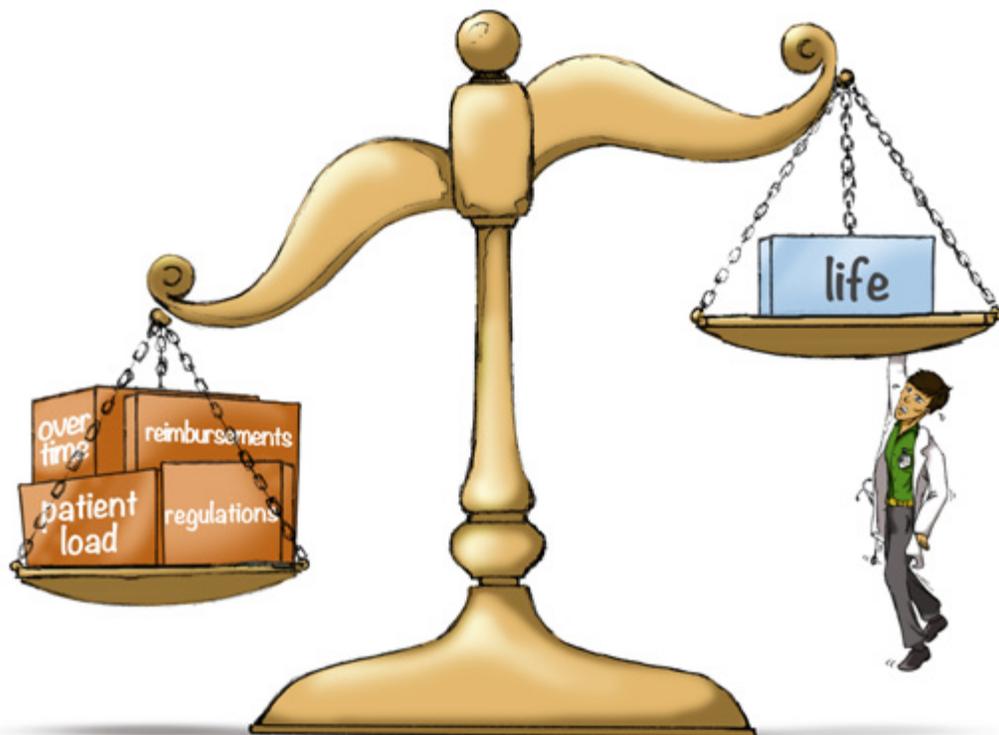


In general, younger nurses—those in the 25 to 34 age range—are more likely to be dissatisfied than nurses 65 and older. And male nurses are more likely to be dissatisfied than female nurses.

The top five drivers of nurse dissatisfaction are:



Whereas the combined effects of a weak economy and new health care law have already adversely impacted physician satisfaction, nurses appear less impacted with more stability at the moment.



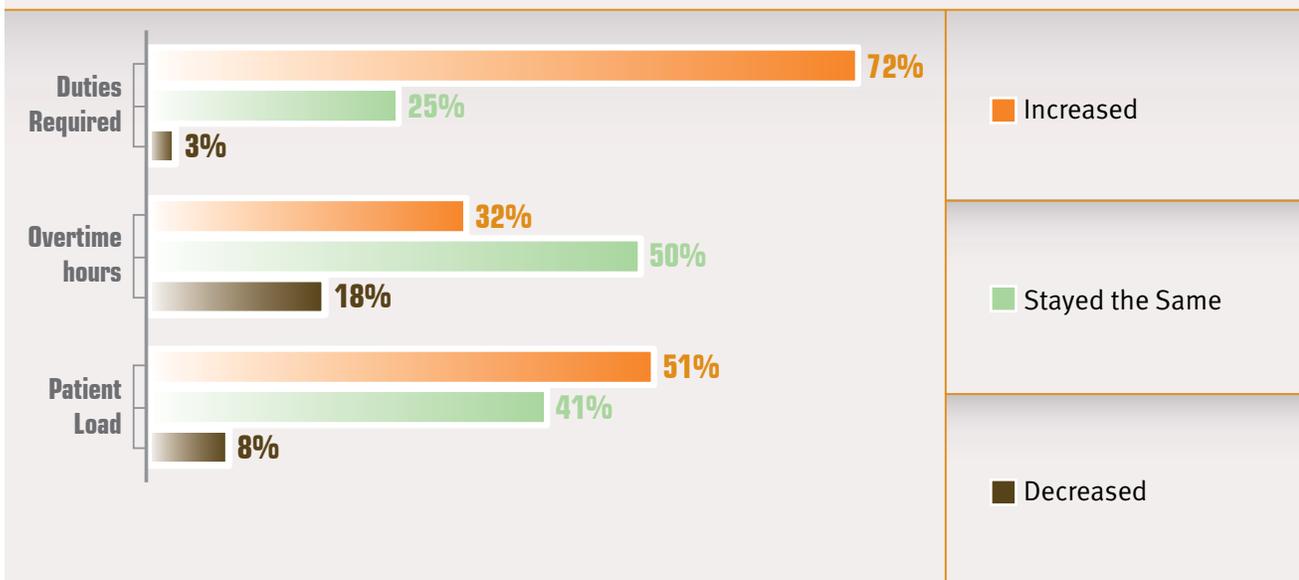
Physician

Compensation

Thirty-eight percent of nurse respondents earn between \$50,000 and \$74,999 in annual compensation. Twenty-seven percent earn between \$75,000 and \$99,999. And 12 percent earn more than \$100,000 annually.

Nursing home and school nurses are more likely than hospital nurses to earn less than \$50,000 per year. Twenty-four percent of respondents report earning less than \$50,000 annually.

Trends: Duties Increasing; Overtime Stagnant/Decreasing



Workload

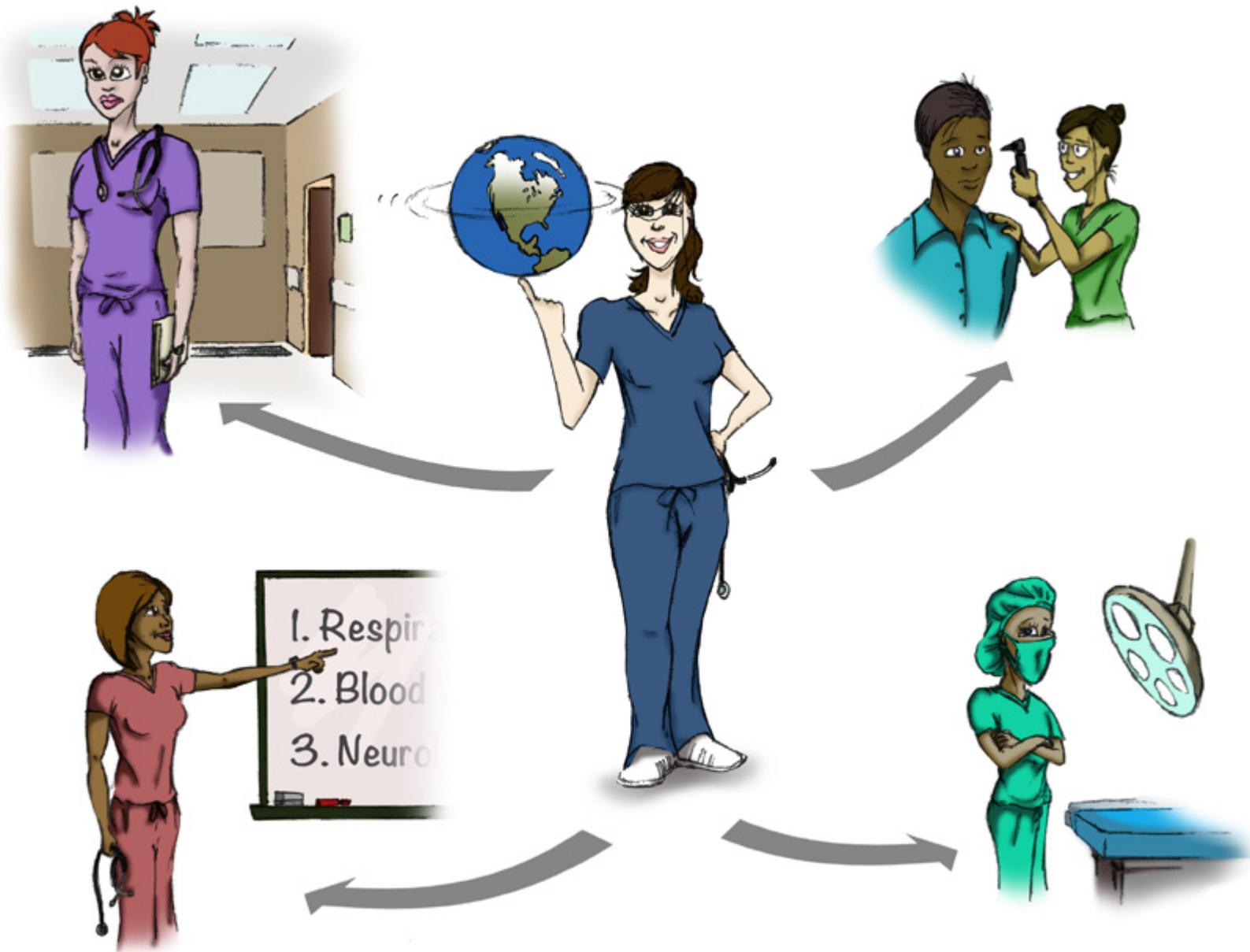
When it comes to workload, the majority of nurses report that overtime hours have either stayed the same or decreased in the last twelve months. That said, two-and-a-half times more nurses report that their required duties have increased, while 51 percent have increased their patient load.

During the past year, the number of Registered Nurses with which respondents worked predominantly stayed the same (47 percent). Thirty-two percent report a decrease in that number, while only 15 percent say the number of RNs on their team have increased.

Interestingly, only eight percent experienced an increase in the number of LPNs with which they work. Forty-seven percent report that number has either stayed the same or decreased.

Nurse Preferences

The top three qualities nurses seek in a nursing assignment include work/life balance (56 percent), compensation (52 percent) and friendly atmosphere (45 percent).



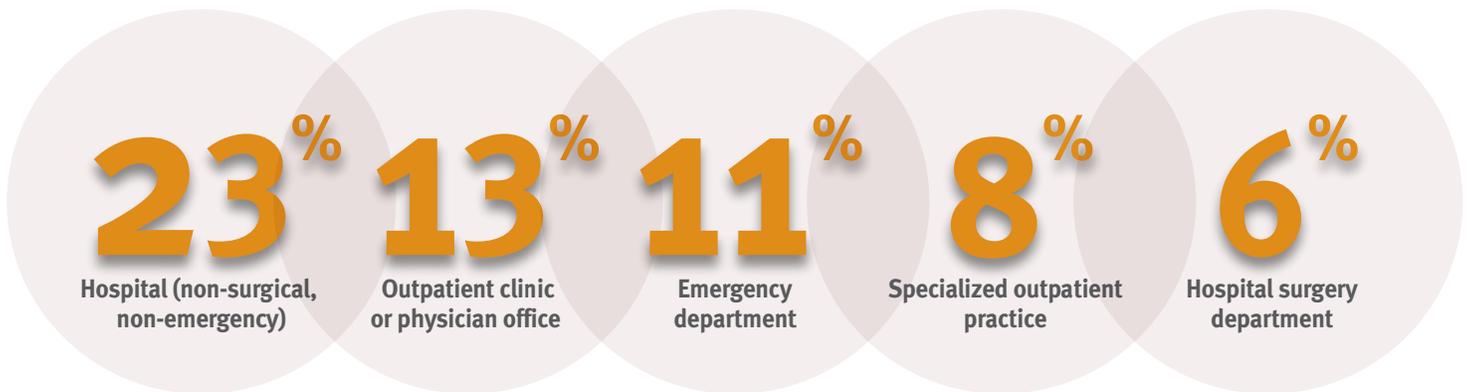
Advanced Practitioners

Fifty-eight percent of nurses report working on teams with advanced practice professionals. Of those, 92 percent work with nurse practitioners and 67 percent work with physician assistants.

The majority of nurses prefer working with physicians (43 percent) and nurse practitioners (40 percent), rather than physician assistants (7 percent).

Work Environment

The top five work environments preferred by nurse respondents include:



Other work environment preferences include companies, universities, schools, surgery centers, home health, nursing homes and retail clinics.

Career Outlook & Future Risks

The vast majority of nurses surveyed (89 percent) will continue in nursing through 2013. Five percent plan to transition to part-time, five percent are considering retiring or leaving nursing and only one percent will definitely retire by the end of next year.

In the next three to five years, half (49 percent) plan to continue in their current role, while 13 percent seek a leadership position in nursing. Others plan to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing (11 percent), teach in the nursing field (10 percent) or advance to a nurse practitioner role (nine percent)



Projected Retirements

According to respondent feedback, the first significant wave of nurse retirements will occur in the next ten years, around 2022. This retirement-driven attrition will continue to impact the nurse workforce through 2032.

According to numerous published resources, multiple factors converging that point to a national nursing shortage over the next decade:

- The average age of the Registered Nurse is [increasing](#) toward 50, with a significant percentage retiring by 2020
- A surge in patient demand is expected as newly insured patients under the 2010 federal health care law combine with aging Baby Boomers seeking medical care
- Nursing school faculty and facilities are currently unable to expand to produce an adequate supply of new RNs to meet the expected surge in patient demand

Future Risks for Nursing

Seventy-two percent of nurses believe risks loom for the nursing profession. The top risks, according to respondents, include workload increases (30 percent), nursing shortage and turnover (18 percent) and increased liabilities and litigation (18 percent).

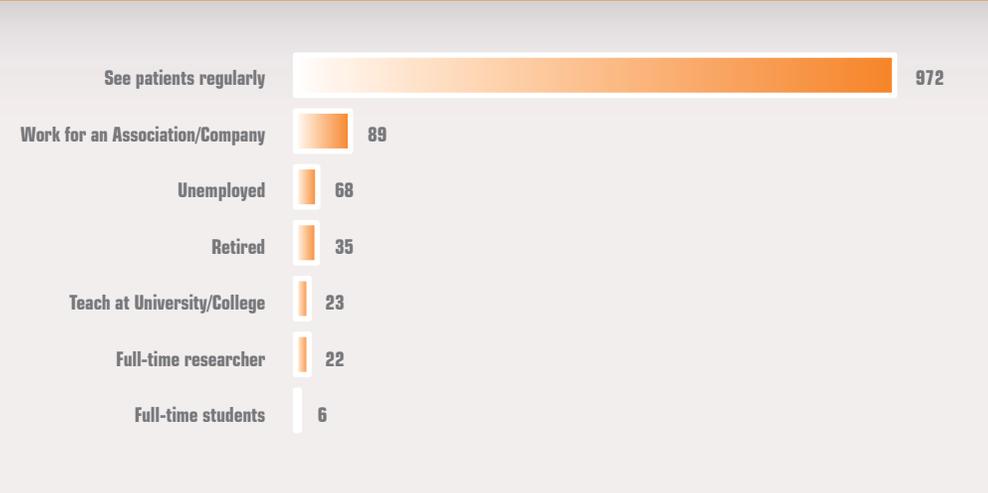


Although nurses appear satisfied and settled, according to our 2012 survey, we anticipate a shift in satisfaction in the coming years as these economic forces play out. Especially as workloads and nurse-to-patient ratios stretch to meet growing patient demand and additional regulatory requirements.

Survey Demographics

Practice Status

n = 1,215



Employment: See Patients Regularly

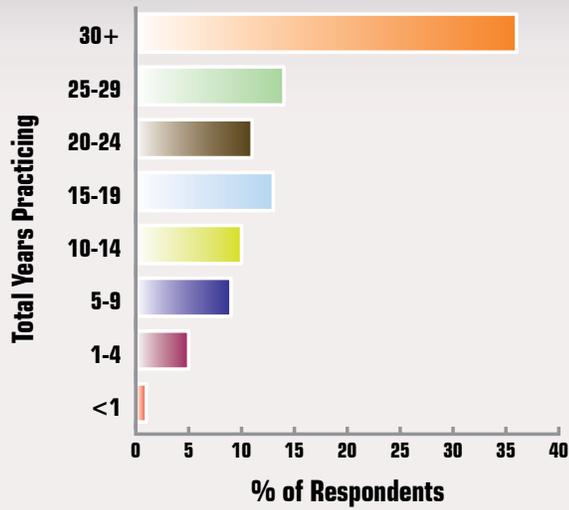
n = 963

Which of the following best describes your employment?

Hospital employee (W-2)	55%
Outpatient clinic employee (W-2)	10%
Other	7%
Independent contractor or travel nurse	7%
Government facility employee (W-2) (i.e. government-owned hospital, clinic, department)	5%
Preschool, elementary or secondary school employee (W-2)	4%
Employee of a home health care provider (W-2)	4%
Nursing home employee (W-2)	3%
Employee of a university or college (W-2)	3%
On-staff nurse at a company, organization or association (W-2)	2%

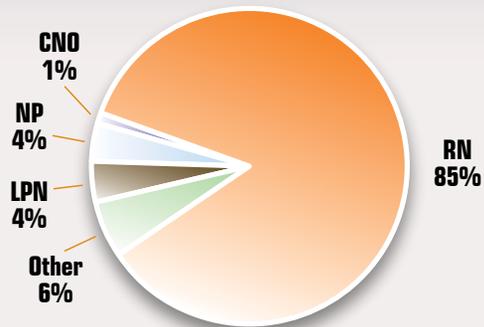
Length of Time in Practice

n = 975



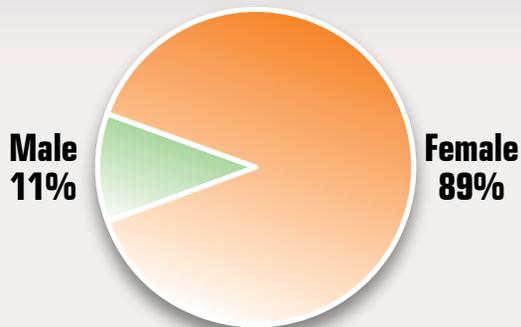
Title/Role

n = 982



Age and Gender

n = 969



Under 25	1%
25-34	7%
35-44	16%
45-54	32%
55-64	37%
65+	8%

More Jackson Healthcare Research

Here are other national research reports released in 2012:

A Tough Time for Physicians

[2012 Medical Practice & Attitude Report](#)

Nurses & Non-patient Care

[2011 Summary of Findings](#)

Want to get future survey reports?

If you would you like to receive future reports by Jackson Healthcare, please click below and fill out the form. Your information will remain private and not be sold, shared or otherwise mistreated.

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