

FEBRUARY 2021 FACT SHEET

North Dakota Nursing Facility Vacancy Rates

Examining the FTE vacancy rate within nursing facilities is important to determine which positions may require focused recruitment and retention efforts. The following information will provide insight on what positions have high rates of vacant FTEs while also highlighting the number of vacant FTEs. The difference between rural and urban areas will also be examined to see if there are any discrepancies between the two area types.

Statewide Vacancy Rates

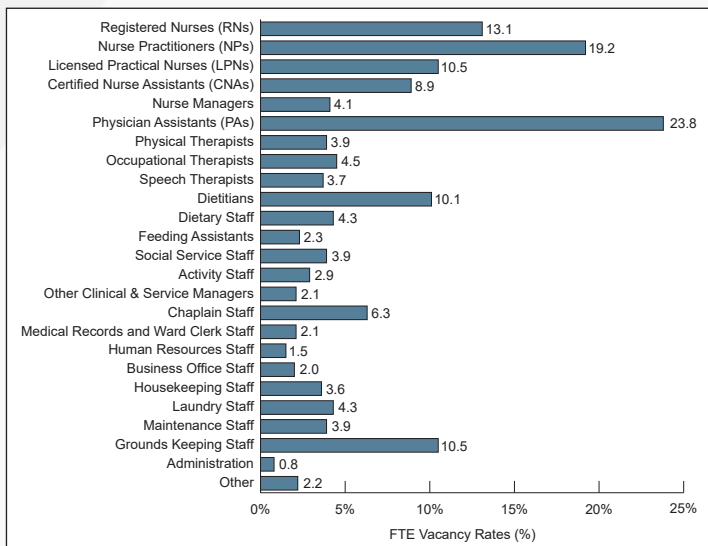
North Dakota's 2016 statewide vacancy rates for nursing-facility employee types are presented in Figure 1. The top 3 highest vacancy rates by employee types were:

- Physician Assistants (23.8%)
- Nurse Practitioners (19.2%)
- Registered Nurses (13.1%)

The top 3 lowest vacancy rates by employee type were:

- Administration (0.8%)
- Human Resources Staff (1.5%)
- Business Office Staff (2.0%)

Figure 1. Aggregate Statewide Nursing Facility Workforce FTE Vacancy Rates, 2016



Some of the employee-types appear to have high vacancy rates, such as physician assistants (23.8%), grounds keeping staff (10.5%), and dietitians (10.1%), but these positions were based on a low number (count) of FTEs; 4.0, 1.5, and 6.0 respectively.

Urban and Rural Vacancy Rates

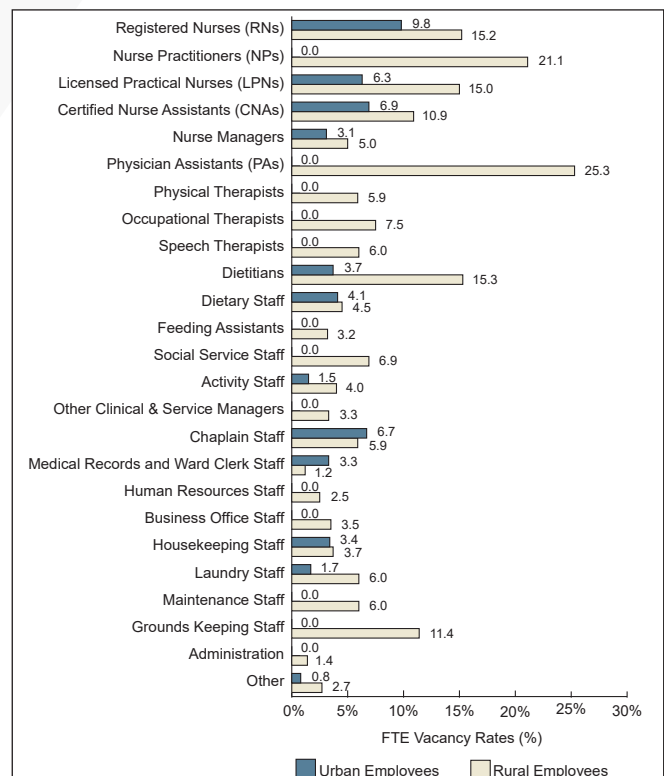
North Dakota's 2016 rural and urban vacancy rates for nursing-facility employee types are presented in Figure 2. The top 3 highest vacancy rates for rural areas were:

- Physician Assistants (25.3%)
- Nurse Practitioners (21.1%)
- Dietitians (15.3%)

The top 3 highest vacancy rates for urban areas were:

- Registered Nurses (9.8%)
- Certified Nurse Assistants (6.9%)
- Chaplain Staff (6.7%)

Figure 2. Urban and Rural Nursing Facility Workforce FTE Vacancy Rates, 2016



Among clinical providers, there were no reported urban vacancies for physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, or physician assistants. Excluding physician assistants, the rural vacancy rates for these positions were also quite low, ranging from 5.9% to 7.5%. The rural vacancy rate for physician assistants was high at 25.3%; however, this was based on a small number of FTEs (12.8 internal and contract FTEs and 4.0 vacant FTEs).

Other nursing facility staff that were directly involved in patient care included dietitians, dietary staff, feeding assistants, and activity staff. In all cases, the rural vacancy rates were higher than the urban ones, although there was not a sizeable difference between urban and rural areas among dietary staff. The largest discrepancy was among dietitians, whose rural vacancy rate of 15.3% was over four times larger than the urban rate of 3.7%.

Conclusion

Vacancy rates within nursing facilities showed that physician assistants were among the highest rates reported. Although this was the case, this was also based on a low amount of vacant FTEs which may be deceiving. When separating the vacancy rates between rural and urban areas, data shows that rural areas are in most need of almost every employee type compared to urban areas. Further measures should be taken in order to fill this gap between rural and urban nursing facilities.

Data

Center for Rural Health. (2016). North Dakota Nursing Facility Workforce Survey (Data File)