

## Availability of Registered Nurses in North Dakota

Registered nurses (RNs) play a significant role in interprofessional health care teams by providing important medical care to patients. RNs work throughout North Dakota at hospitals, clinics, and assisted living and nursing facilities. There were 13,768 RNs licensed in North Dakota as of December 2019. To practice as an RN, an individual must graduate from an approved nursing education program, pass the National Council Licensing Examination for Registered Nurses (RN NCLEX), and apply for state licensure. After licensure, RNs can pursue a master’s degree or a doctorate degree if it is required for their area of practice.

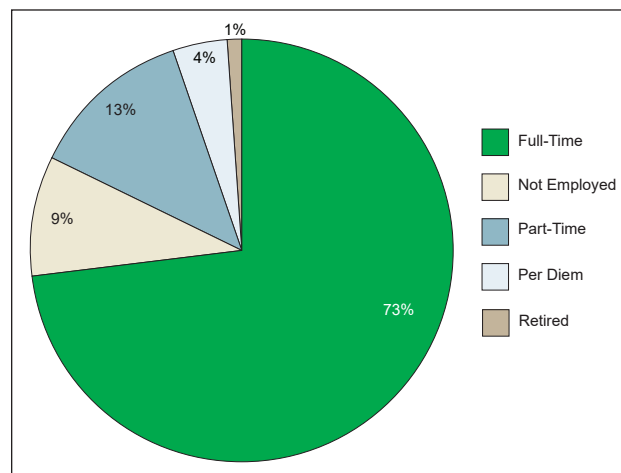
### Education among North Dakota’s Registered Nurses

- North Dakota has 14 North Dakota Board of Nursing (NDBON)-approved RN education programs. All graduates are eligible to take the RN NCLEX.
- Over half of North Dakota’s RNs earned their degrees in North Dakota (56%) and Minnesota (21%).
- Total enrollment overall has varied in the baccalaureate and associate degree programs the past 5 years. The total number of graduates has steadily increased.

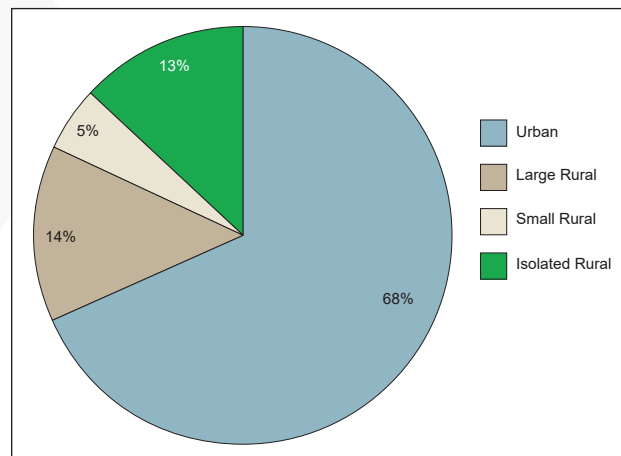
### Registered Nurse Employment Settings in North Dakota

- Most RNs (n = 4,777) reported working in an “other” area as their main area of practice. The second most common area for RNs was in the medical/surgical field (n = 1,591).
- The majority of the state’s RNs (85%, n = 11,816) were licensed to only practice in North Dakota. Approximately 5% (n = 631) RNs were licensed to work in five or more states.
- Inpatient facilities (hospitals and nursing homes) were the largest of employer of RNs in the state (n = 6,551).
- Most RNs worked in hospital settings (36%, n = 5,496), while 7% (n = 1,055) of RNs worked in nursing homes or extended care facilities.
- Most of the state’s RNs reported that they were working full-time (73%) (Figure 1). There were 13% of the state’s RNs who worked part-time, and 9% who were not employed.

**Figure 1. Employment Status of North Dakota Registered Nurses**



**Figure 2. Rural-Urban Status of North Dakota Registered Nurses**



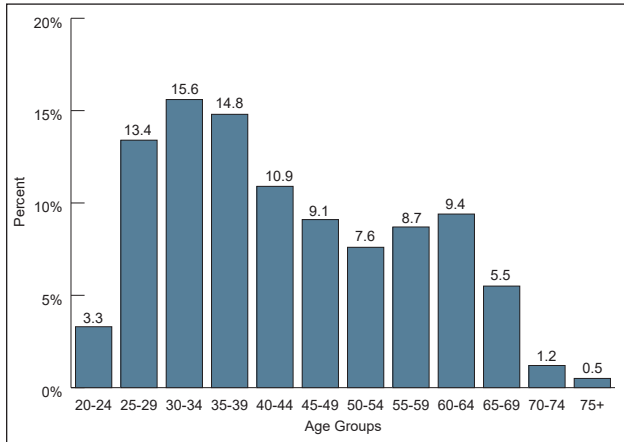
- The majority of RNs (68%) are working at a facility that is considered urban based on the assigned RUCA code. The remainder work in one of the rural areas (32%) (Figure 2).

### Other Demographics of North Dakota Registered Nurses

- The age of North Dakota’s RNs varies, with the majority of RNs in the age range of 30 - 34 years old (15.6%). This is a decrease from the last biennial report, where the majority of RNs were between the ages of 32 and 37 years old.

- The state's RNs are aging with 16.6% of RNs reporting their age at 60 years and older.
- The average age for North Dakota RNs was 43.3 years old.

**Figure 3. Age Ranges of North Dakota Registered Nurses**



### Conclusions

- Efforts to alleviate the nursing shortages in rural and urban settings should focus on the state's education programs.
- High school students and community members should be encouraged to pursue RN education. North Dakota should also offer incentives to graduating RNs to keep them practicing within the state.
- As the state's RNs are aging, more studies are needed to explore reasons why RNs work during their retirement years, as well as finding ways to help meet the needs of older RNs to maintain employment and decrease vacant nursing positions.

### Data

North Dakota Board of Nursing (2020). Licensure file.  
Retrieved from [ndbon.org/](http://ndbon.org/)

2018-2019 North Dakota Board of Nursing Education Annual Report. Retrieved from [ndbon.org/Publications/EdAnnualRpt.asp](http://ndbon.org/Publications/EdAnnualRpt.asp)