



## **2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **SUBMITTED BY**

**THOMAS VEESER, WCN BOARD PRESIDENT  
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## IC. President and Executive Director Annual Report

### 2020 Annual Report

Submitted by:  
Thomas Veeseer, WCN Board President  
Barbara Nichols, WCN Executive Director

Our 2020 annual goals build upon the 5 focus areas of WCN's work:

1. Monitor workforce trends by conducting surveys.
2. Assess nursing education accessibility.
3. Enhance and promote career mobility for nurses from underrepresented groups.
4. Increase leadership development programs for nurses.
5. Monitor and establish partnerships that advance WCN's work.

We are pleased to report the goals were either met or exceeded.

#### **1. Monitor workforce trends by conducting surveys.**

The registered nurse (RN) and the licensed practical nurse (LPN) surveys identify workforce trends, as well as the nurse population ratio, in different areas of the state. These data provide the opportunity to respond proactively to healthcare challenges facing Wisconsin citizens.

The Wisconsin LPN Workforce Survey Report was completed by 9,568 LPNs. The LPNs renewing their licenses included those both actively engaged in the workforce and those who reported being unemployed or retired.

##### Key Findings:

- The nursing workforce remains predominately White and female. There was a slight increase in male LPNs between 2017 (5.3%) and 2019 (5.4%) surveys.
- The mean age of LPNs is 49.5 years, basically unchanged from 2017.
- Although there was a slight increase in workforce participation of some racial/ethnic minorities, LPNs identifying as Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish ethnicity continued to be underrepresented relative to their percentage of the Wisconsin population.
- 699 (8.2%) LPNs reported the ability to communicate in a second language, a slight decrease from previous surveys.

The WCN Data and Research Committee reviewed the LPN survey questions and made recommendations to DWD for changes to the 2021 LPN Survey.

The 2020 RN survey analysis is in process, and the report will be completed during the first quarter of 2021 additionally.

## **2. Assess education accessibility.**

Assessing nursing educational accessibility includes collection and analysis of data on the status of nursing education programs in the state and the recruitment and retention of faculty and students.

The WCN survey of nursing programs (1) monitors and validates trends in the applicant pool for programs in nursing; (2) assesses the effectiveness of nursing education among schools; (3) validates increased access to nursing education and enhanced career mobility, especially for underrepresented groups; and (4) facilitates partnerships between the nursing community and other healthcare providers, licensing authorities, business and industry, consumers, legislators, and educators to achieve policy consensus.

WCN has conducted six surveys on the status of nursing education programs in the state, with the last one completed in 2020. In collaboration with the Administrators of Nursing Education of Wisconsin (ANEW) and partnership with researchers at UWEC, the eighth survey is in process, with a final report anticipated by early in 2021.

## **3. Enhance and promote career mobility for nurses in underrepresented groups.**

WCN's surveys and reports continue to monitor and assess workforce diversity trends. WCN has encouraged policymakers and healthcare institutions to increase the number of diverse nurses to meet the forecasted demands.

We have worked with the American Association for Men in Nursing (AAMN) statewide chapters on recruitment and retention of members and collaborated nationally with AAMN to consider utilizing the Wisconsin Diversity Assessment Tool (WI-DAT) within proposed national AAMN diversity standards.

We assisted in the revision of criteria for Diversity, Inclusion, and Sustainability in Nursing Education Leadership Award. We provided consultation with Marquette College of Nursing, Viterbo College of Nursing, and UW Madison School of Nursing on their federal grants dealing with diversity initiatives.

We consistently weave diversity into all of our conferences, with sessions at the 2020 annual conference addressing health equity, social determinants, and approaches for retaining a diverse workforce.

The Action Coalition reviewed the RWJF/CCNA/AARP campaign priorities regarding diversity in education, leadership, data collection, and federal laws pertinent to diversity work.

The center received two grants to create a priority training program for Registered Nurses dealing with vulnerable populations experiencing COVID-19.

**4. Increase leadership programs for nurses.**

WCN continues to partner with the Nurses on Board Coalition (NOBC) to promote nurses on boards. We have recommended several Wisconsin nurses for various positions. We continue promotion of the Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders (WONL) Wisconsin leadership offerings. Alignment of statewide nursing education programs was sustained by working with ANEW.

**5. Monitor and establish partnerships that advance WCN's work.**

Our ongoing partnership with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) continues for the Wisconsin RN and LPN surveys, including dissemination of results of forecast models to appropriate stakeholders. An update to the WI RN Nurse Supply & Demand Forecast 2014-2040 is in process.

In addition to these five focus areas, WCN focused on developing a sustainable model for funding and improvement in our main means of communication, our website. We are pleased to report that the September 2020 Virtual conference was not only successful from a content perspective but also raised substantial funds through sponsorships.

In 2019 DWD awarded a sole source contract to WCN for 2 years to June 20, 2021. We are in the last year of this two-year contract. We are deeply appreciative of our partnership with DWD but recognize that a single source of revenue is not sustainable for the organization.

In summary, WCN continues to focus on data/research reports and policy analysis, not only in nursing, but in interdisciplinary databases that emphasize clinical and technological innovations for the healthcare workforce. We are recognized at both state and national levels for our approaches to collaborative partnerships that assure an adequate, competent, and diverse nursing workforce for the people of Wisconsin.