



Nursing Crisis

In 2022 there were approximately 4.5 million registered nurses and 700,000 licensed nurse practitioners working in the US (Carson Neuman University). This makes nursing the single largest category of healthcare professionals. There is no way to minimize the impact of any large-scale shortages of nurses on the US healthcare system. Yet, that is what is happening at a frightening level.

According to a report released by the National Council of State Boards Nursing in April 2023, 100,000 registered nurses left the workforce in the last two years. A further 600,000 plan to leave in the next four years. PBS claims that by 2025 the US shortfall in 'bedside nurses' will have reached 450,000.

According to the Nurse Journal, the nursing shortage is primarily due to:

- An increase in the demand for care of the aging population
- Many senior nurses approaching retirement age
- A high nurse turnover rate
- A lack of educators and faculty in the nursing field

As it stands there is a crisis, however, this will pale into insignificance by 2030 if nothing is done to recruit more nurses now. The reason? The baby boomer generation, the largest generation in US history.

According to the US Census Bureau by 2030, upwards of 73 million baby boomers will reach retirement age, and they will have a longer life span post retirement than previous generations. Consequently, they'll need healthcare services at levels never before seen in the US due to a variety of age related conditions causing an increase in need. For example, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that over half of Americans over age 65 suffer from two or more chronic conditions.

A further complication will be the fact that according to a report authored by Peter I Buerhaus Ph.D from the University of Pennsylvania, ~1 million nurses will also retire who are part of the baby boom generation. In addition, more than half of the current RNs are over 50 years old. All this will put an inconceivable strain on the system.

Just to maintain the status quo, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that 194,000 nurses need to be recruited annually. There is no indication that even that figure is being achieved. According to a Nursing Journal article, nursing schools are turning away more than 90,000 qualified applicants annually due to 'lack of faculty, education space and resources'.



There is undoubtedly a nationwide lack of nurses. However, some States are facing a much larger shortage than others. The United States Department of Health and Human Services says that by the end of the decade the states in most need will be:

1. California
2. Texas
3. New Jersey
4. South Carolina
5. Alaska
6. Georgia
7. South Dakota

CPR believes that nurses are so significant to the health and wellbeing of so many millions of Americans that urgent action needs to be taken immediately if we are to ward off a healthcare disaster. We support the American Nurses Association's call to the U.S. Congress to declare the nursing shortage a national crisis.

We believe Congress should:

- Create a standing body to monitor the nursing crisis, workforce recruitment and devise policy solutions.
- Fully fund the National Health Care Workforce Commission.
- Improve and increase educational facilities, faculties, and educators in the nursing field.
- Make funds available for specific states where nurse shortages are declining faster than the national average, and:
- Fund a national drive to recruit more nurses.

Join CPR today, get active in your community and let's start saving lives and healing together!