

# **New Jersey Practical Nursing Education Programs – 2008**

## **Results of the 2008 Survey of New Jersey Nursing Education Programs**

### **Introduction**

New Jersey has both public Practical Nurse Education Programs and others in proprietary or for-profit schools. In October of 2008 an invitation was sent to each practical nursing education program then in operation (a total of 40) to participate in an on-line survey developed by the New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing and the New Jersey Board of Nursing. This survey was designed to measure the capacity of the Practical Nursing Schools, with such fields as interest in PN education, student enrollments and characteristics, graduations, and information about faculty resources. The questionnaire was composed and fielded using an Internet-based survey research site. Over several months, all of the practical nursing education (PNE) programs in New Jersey completed the on-line questionnaire. Answers were downloaded into Microsoft Excel file formats. Data were reviewed and cleaned using both Excel and SAS (v9.1.3) software. Analyses were conducted using both Excel and SAS software.

### **Program Structure and Accreditation**

All but one of the responding PNE programs in New Jersey offered a traditional daytime schedule of classes at the time of the survey. Twenty (50%) of the programs surveyed offered an evening option (three of them structured as an evening and weekend combination), and four (10%) offered weekend programs. None of the PNE programs responding to the survey offered an accelerated or an on-line program option in which all coursework can be completed via the Internet.

The Practical Nurse programs in public schools (n = 22) reported being accredited by the New Jersey Department of Education. The majority of these are housed in the vo-tech but require a GED or high school diploma to enter, with a few housed in county colleges, and one in a hospital school. Additionally, one program reported accreditation by the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC). See Appendix Table 1 for the reported accreditation status of each responding program.

### **Student Applications**

All of the PNE programs respondents were able to provide information about the number of applications received in 2008, how many of those applications were from qualified candidates (“qualified” being defined by each program), how many of those qualified candidates were admitted, and how many ultimately enrolled. Table 1 summarizes this information.

A total of 15,049 applications were received by the 40 PNE programs. Applications to individual programs ranged from a low of 37 to a high of 1,500. Although the total number of applications received is quite high, it should be noted that it is likely this figure contains duplicates. Students apply to more than one program in order to increase their odds of being accepted.

Of this large applicant pool, only a small portion (2%) was from students who had been previously enrolled and were seeking re-entry into the program. Although many people are interested in a nursing career, not all of them are academically prepared to take on the rigors of the nursing curriculum. Only 6,028 applicants (40%) met the qualifications of the program to which they applied. Of those qualified, 4,119 (68.3%) were accepted. Of those accepted into a program, a total of 3,690 (90%) actually enrolled in classes. This high enrollment rate suggests that there is not a lot of duplication in the applicant pool for PNE programs.

**Table 1. Applications, Admissions and Enrollment in Practical Nursing Programs**

<b>Academic Year 2007-08</b>	<b>Counts (n = 40)</b>
Total number of applications to the program	15,049
Number of applicants returning to the program after an absence	318
Number of qualified applicants *	6,028
Number of qualified applicants admitted	4,119
Number admitted who actually enrolled	3,690

\* Each program determines whether applicants meet the entrance criteria for their program.

Most (52.5%) PNE programs did not see a significant change – defined as a change greater than 20% - in the number of applications received in the 2007-08 academic year as compared to the previous year. Of those that did see a difference, eight programs (20%) reported a decrease and eleven (27.5%) reported an increase. There was no statistically significant association between program size as measured by the number of 2007-08 applicants that actually enrolled and whether the program reported an increase or decrease in applications.

## **Enrollments**

Only 35 of the 40 PNE programs were able to report the number of seats available for new enrollees, as some of the schools, particularly the proprietary school, are able to expand their enrollment to meet the demand. However, all programs did report the number of new enrollees in their programs as of October 15, 2008: a total of 1,904. Thirty programs reported the number of new enrollments as of October 15, 2007: in only one case was there a decrease in new enrollments of more than 20% between 2007 and 2008. Five programs saw an increase of more than 20% in that time period.

On October 15, 2008 a total of 3,517 students were enrolled in New Jersey’s practical nursing education programs. The majority (80.6%) were enrolled on a full-time basis. Table 2 reports information about these PNE students in terms of their gender, race and age: 16% were male, 40% were from minority groups, and 20% were over the age of 40.

**Table 2. Practical Nursing Education Students Enrolled on October 15, 2008 - Demographics**

	Enrolled full-time		Enrolled part-time		Total enrolled	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Total students enrolled</b>	<b>2,835</b>		<b>682</b>		<b>3,517</b>	
Gender:						
Female	2,300	81.1	369	54.1	2,669	75.9
Male	335	11.8	231	33.9	566	16.1
Gender not reported	200	7.1	82	12.0	282	8.0
<i>Gender Totals</i>	<i>2,835</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>682</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>3,517</i>	<i>100</i>
Race						
White, non-Hispanic	594	21.0	107	15.7	701	19.9
Black, non-Hispanic	1,409	49.7	216	31.7	1,625	46.2
Asian / Pacific Islander	215	7.6	58	8.5	273	7.8
American Indian / Alaska Native	4	0.1	2	0.3	6	0.2
Hispanic, any race	318	11.2	79	11.6	397	11.3
More than one race	14	0.5	16	2.3	30	0.9
Race unknown	281	9.9	204	29.9	485	13.8
<i>Race Totals</i>	<i>2,835</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>682</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>3,517</i>	<i>100.1</i>
Age Groups						
Under age 26	716	25.3	155	22.7	871	24.8
Age 26 to 30	591	20.9	150	22.0	742	21.1
Age 31 to 40	799	28.2	211	30.9	1,010	28.7
Age 41 to 50	459	16.2	112	16.4	570	16.2
Age 51 to 60	89	3.1	23	3.4	112	3.2
Age 61 or older	8	0.3	3	0.4	11	0.3
Age unknown	173	6.1	28	4.1	201	5.7
<i>* Age Totals</i>	<i>2,835</i>	<i>100.1</i>	<i>682</i>	<i>99.9</i>	<i>3,517</i>	<i>100</i>

\* One PNE program aggregated full-time and part-time students together when reporting student age. In that cases counts were disaggregated by imputing counts for full-time and part-time students based on the proportional distribution of all students applied to the N of all full-time or part-time students.

Note: Percentage sums may not equal 100% due to rounding.

## Graduates

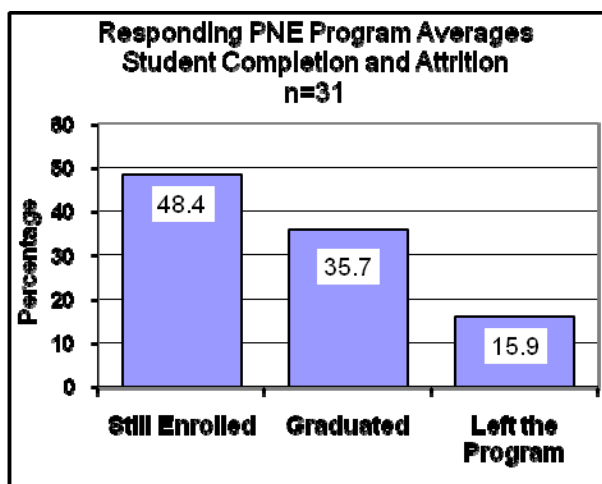
Seven of the forty programs (17.5%) reported having no graduates in the 2007-08 academic year (defined as Fall 2007 through Summer 2008). Three of those programs indicated that they had not yet had a graduating class due to the fact that the programs were only recently started. The other four programs reporting zero graduates did not offer an explanation. Of the 33 PNE programs that reported graduates in the 2007-08 year, those graduates totaled 1,719 students. Table 3 describes these recent PNE graduates in terms of their gender, race and age characteristics: 22% were male, 46% were from minority groups, and 19% were over the age of 40.

**Table 3. Practical Nursing Education Graduates in the 2007 2008 Academic Year - Demographics**

		<b>Students graduating between Fall, 2007 and Summer, 2008</b>	
<b>Total number of graduates in the 2007 – 08 academic year</b>		<b>1,719</b>	
		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender:</b>			
	Female	1,347	78.4
	Male	372	21.6
	<i>Gender Totals</i>	<i>1,719</i>	
<b>Race</b>			
	White	474	27.6
	Black	737	42.9
	Asian / Pacific Islander	175	10.2
	American Indian / Alaska Native	3	0.2
	Hispanic, any race	129	7.5
	More than one race	14	0.8
	Race unknown	187	10.9
	<i>Race Totals</i>	<i>1,719</i>	<i>100.1</i>
<b>Age Groups</b>			
	Under age 26	328	19.1
	Age 26 to 30	413	24.0
	Age 31 to 40	516	30.0
	Age 41 to 50	240	14.0
	Age 51 to 60	78	4.5
	Age 61 or older	11	0.6
	Age unknown	133	7.7
	<i>Age Totals</i>	<i>1,719</i>	<i>99.9</i>

Note: Percentage sums may not equal 100% due to rounding.

PNE programs were asked a question designed to assess the completion rate for their program in the previous year. The question was: “Of the students who enrolled on a full-time basis for the first time between Fall semester, 2007 and Summer session, 2008, what percentage of those students were still enrolled, had graduated, or had left the program without graduating as of October 15, 2008?” The average percentages



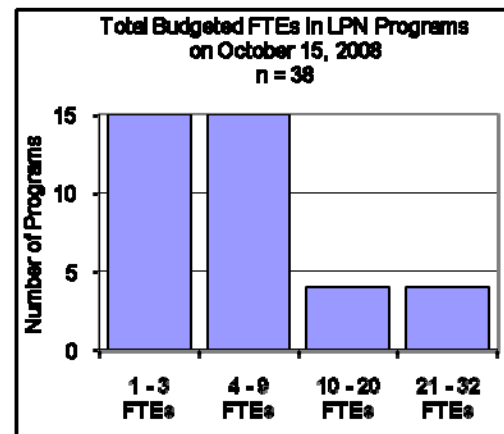
computed across the 31 programs that provided usable data are shown in the chart to the left.

For programs that have a single entry point in the Fall semester of the academic year and a curriculum that lasts 12 months or less, this question provides a reasonable measure of student attrition and completion. However, the survey did not include a measure of the curriculum length (number of months from start to finish) nor an indicator of the number of entry points into the program and whether entry occurred in the Fall, Spring, or Summer semester. Such information would allow us to determine whether this measure of student attrition and completion is measuring the same thing in every PNE program. Since the generalizability of this question across all programs is unknown, these summary statistics should be used with caution.

## Nursing Education Faculty

### Budgeted and Vacant Positions

PNE programs in New Jersey were asked to report on the size and characteristics of their full- and part-time faculty members. The chart to the right illustrates that most PNE programs are relatively small – with fewer than 10 full-time equivalents positions (FTEs) in their budget. Altogether there were 281.3 FTEs budgeted on October 15, 2008 in the 38 PNE programs that provided this information. Thirty-two (80%) of those programs reported no vacant FTEs on that date. Six programs had a total of 20 FTE vacancies on that date. Across the 38 programs that provided this information on budgeted and vacant FTE positions, 7.1% of all budgeted positions were vacant on October 15, 2008 – a relatively high position vacancy rate.



**Table 4. Faculty Positions in PNE Programs as of October 15, 2008**

	Sums and Rates
Budgeted FTEs	281.3
Vacant FTEs	20.0
Vacancy rate for FTEs	7.1%
Part-Time faculty employed	248
Full-Time faculty employed	169
Full-Time faculty vacancies	12
Total full-time faculty head count when fully staffed	181
Vacancy rate for full-time faculty based on head counts	6.6%

The PNE programs that responded to the survey rely heavily on adjunct and part-time faculty to teach their students. They reported a total head count of 169 full-time faculty employed on

October 15, 2008 and a total head count of 248 adjunct or part-time faculty. They also reported a total of 12 full-time positions vacant on that date for an overall position vacancy rate of 6.6% for full-time positions in these programs (see Table 4). This difference in position vacancy rates for budgeted FTEs versus full-time positions shows that the majority of FTE vacancies were being allocated to part-time positions, which is consistent with the heavy reliance on part-time faculty.

Of the six PNE programs that reported having a vacant full-time position, two of them had 1 position open, two of them had 2 positions open, and two of them had three full-time vacancies on October 15, 2008. Five of the six programs reported the type of faculty person they were seeking to fill those open positions. Table 5 summarizes those characteristics.

**Table 5. Full Time Faculty Being Sought by PNE Programs on October 15, 2008**

Degree type desired	Specialties sought
BSN	Pediatrics / OBGyn / Mental Health
BSN	Medical / Surgical
BSN	Generalist (2)
BSN	no specialty noted
BSN / MSN preferred	no specialty noted

#### Faculty Recruitment, Retention and Retirements

Nursing education programs were asked to rank order four factors that – in general - can influence faculty recruitment and retention. A rank of 1 indicates the most influential factor for that program, while a rank of 4 indicates less influence. The percentage of PNE programs ranking each factor is presented in Table 6. Five of the forty responding programs did not complete this question.

The results suggest that PNE programs differ broadly in the factors that impact their ability to add and/or recruit new faculty members. The strongest finding is that 40% of all responding PNE programs said that the most influential factor was their inability to offer competitive salaries to RNs qualified to teach. Other factors identified by our respondents include the imbalance between the workload demanded by a faculty position and the available salary; the fact that school location can make it difficult to attract qualified candidates for evening programs; and another blamed the problem on a lack of dedication, or “poor work ethic” among nursing educators. One program cited a contract requirement in their school that all faculty have teaching certificates, but also noted that the state is no longer issuing new teaching certificates to teachers of adult programs.

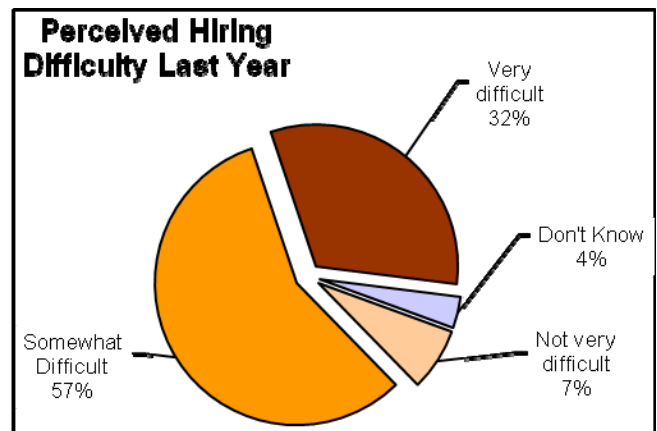
**Table 6. Influential Factors for PNE Programs' Faculty Recruitment and Retention**

Factor	Percent of programs choosing each ranking			
	Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3	Ranked #4
Not enough budget lines available	20.0	11.4	20.0	48.6
Not enough qualified candidates	28.6	40.0	22.9	8.6
Not able to offer competitive salaries	40.0	20.0	31.4	8.6
Faculty jobs are less attractive than other jobs	14.3	31.4	22.9	31.4

A rank of 1 = most influential 4 = less influential

Note: Five programs did not answer this question. The percentages in the table are based on n = 35.

Twenty eight of the 40 responding PNE programs in the state attempted to hire new faculty in the year prior to the survey. These programs assessed the difficulty they faced in that endeavor, and to what extent each of the factors reviewed above contributed to the difficulty of that hiring process. The results of their assessment are summarized in the pie chart to the right. One respondent could not answer this question, so the effective 'n' equals 27 for this chart.



Approximately one-third of PNE programs that went through the recruitment process in the previous year said it was very difficult to recruit new faculty members, and another 57% reported it as somewhat difficult. Table 7 summarizes how much the influential factors reviewed earlier were thought to play a role in the hiring of new PNE faculty. The majority of programs (55.6%) identified a lack of qualified candidates as one of the difficulties they faced. Forty-four percent said their inability to offer a competitive salary caused their program a great deal of difficulty in the recruitment process.

**Table 7. PNE Programs that Hired Last Year - Assessment of Influential Factors**

Factor	Percent of eligible programs that said:			
	A great deal	Some	Not much	None
Not enough budget lines available	7.4	14.8	40.7	29.6
Not enough qualified candidates	18.5	55.6	14.8	7.4
Not able to offer competitive salaries	44.4	7.4	40.7	3.7
Faculty jobs are less attractive than other jobs	22.2	33.3	25.9	3.7

Note: Some row percents may not sum to 100% if one or more respondents said "don't know".

One eligible program did not provide an answer to these questions. Therefore, the percentages are based on n = 27.

PNE program educators were also asked to estimate the number of faculty retirements expected in the near future (see Table 8). At the time of the survey, six programs expected at least one faculty member to retire by the Fall of 2009. Between 2009 and 2011, 11 programs expect to lose a total of 17 faculty to retirement. Between 2011 and 2013, 13 PNE programs expect one or two of their current faculty to retire, for an overall loss of 20 full-time faculty.

Based on the total number of expected retirements reported (two of our forty responding programs did not complete this question) approximately 4% of the PNE faculty pool employed in October of 2008 will retire by the Fall of 2009. Another 10% are expected to leave by the Fall of 2011, and an additional 12% by 2013. When summed together, a total of 66 full-time faculty members are expected to be lost over the next 5 years – 39.1% of the current full-time faculty pool in PNE programs. This is proportionately a much greater loss than the retirement losses expected in New Jersey RN education programs. It is also more than would normally be expected, based on the age profile of full time faculty presented in Table 10.

**Table 8. Number and Percent of Full-Time Faculty Expected to Retire from PNE Programs**

	Number expected to retire		Percent of total 2008 FT faculty expected to retire
	1 year	3 years	5 years
Based on your current <u>full-time</u> faculty members, how many of them do you expect will retire from nursing education within:	6	17	11.8%
		20	3.6%
			10.1%

Note: The percentages in this table were calculated using a denominator of 169 full-time faculty employed in PNE programs as of October 15, 2008.

### Faculty Demographics

Nursing education programs reported the race and ethnicity characteristics of the faculty members employed on October 15, 2008 by their full or part-time employment status. There are slight differences in the distribution of the faculty across racial and ethnic categories depending on whether the faculty is full-time or part-time. The summary of that information for PNE programs is presented in Table 9. The age characteristics of PNE program faculty are also summarized in Table 9. Part-time faculty in New Jersey’s PNE programs tend to be slightly younger – as a group – than is true of the full-time faculty. Note, however, that about 12% of both part-time and full-time faculty employed in the responding PNE programs were age 60 or older as of October 15, 2008. There are considerable missing data in this table and the reliability may be questionable.

**Table 9. Race, Ethnicity and Age Characteristics of PNE Faculty Employed on October 15, 2008**

Racial and ethnicity categories	Full time faculty		Part time faculty		All PNE Faculty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Faculty Race</b>						
White, non-Hispanic	98	58.0	106	42.7	204	48.9



Black, non-Hispanic	42	24.9	69	27.8	111	26.6
Asian or Pacific Islander	9	5.3	25	10.1	34	8.2
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic, any race	4	2.4	22	8.9	26	6.2
More than one race	0	0	2	0.8	2	0.5
Race unknown / not reported	16	9.5	24	9.7	40	9.6
<i>Race Totals</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>100.1</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>100</i>

### **Faculty Age**

Age 20 - 34	12	7.1	23	9.3	35	8.4
Age 35 - 44	29	17.2	55	22.2	84	20.1
Age 45 - 54	53	31.4	80	32.3	133	31.9
Age 55 - 59	30	17.8	32	12.9	62	14.9
Age 60 - 64	18	10.7	22	8.9	40	9.6
Age 65 - 69	1	0.6	6	2.4	7	1.7
Age 70 or older	1	0.6	1	0.4	2	0.5
Age unknown / not reported	25	14.8	29	11.7	54	12.9
<i>Age Totals</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>100.2</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>100.1</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>100</i>

Note: Percentage columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Two programs did not provide race or age information. Therefore, counts and percentages are based on an n of 38.

One program combined their full-time and part-time faculty together when reporting age category counts. Counts were disaggregated for this program on the basis of the age distribution for the entire faculty by multiplying each category percentage against the count of full or part time faculty in that program.

## PNE Program Appendix

**Table A1. Accreditation Status Reported by New Jersey Practical Nursing Programs**

Program Name	NJ Board of Nursing	NJ Dept. of Education	NLNAC	Other
America Health Care, Inc.	x			
Atlantic County Institute of Technology		x		
AVTECH Institute of Technology	x			
Best care Training institute	x			
Burlington County Institute of Technology		x		
Camden City Board of Education		x		
Camden County College		x		
Cape May County Technical School District		x		
Center for Advance Training and Studies	x			
Center for Allied Health and Nursing Education	x			Council of Occupational Education and Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools
Cumberland County Technical Center		x		
Dover Business College	x			
Eastwick College	x			New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS)
Essex County College		x		
Essex County Vocational Technical School		x		
HoHoKus Hackensack School of Business and Medical Sciences	x			Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS)
Holy Name Hospital School of Nursing	x			
Hudson County Community College		x		
Lincoln Technical Institute	x			Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS)
Lincoln Technical Institute	x			Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS)
Lincoln Technical Institute	x			
Mercer County Technical Schools Health Careers Center			x	

*Table continued on next page.*

**Table A1 continued. Accreditation Status Reported by NJ Practical Nursing Programs**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>NJ Board of Nursing</b>	<b>NJ Dept. of Education</b>	<b>NLNAC</b>	<b>Other</b>
Merit Technical Institute	x			
Metropolitan Learning Institute	x			Council of Occupational Education
Middlesex County Vocational schools		x		
Monmouth County Vocational School District		x		Council of Occupational Education
Morris County School of Technology		x		Council of Occupational Education and Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools
NewCommunity School of Practical Nursing	x			
Ocean County Vocational Technical School			x	Council of Occupational Education
Passaic County Technical Institute		x		
Pinelands School of Practical Nursing and Allied Health	x			Dept.of Labor & Work
Prism Career Institute Practical Nursing Program	x			ACCET, pending final BON accreditation
Salem Community College		x		
Sierra Allied Health Academy	x			
Somerset County Technology Institute		x		
Southern New Jersey Technical School		x		
Technical Institute of Camden County		x		
Union County College		x		
Vineland Adult Education in Collaboration with Cumberland County College			x	
Warren County Technical School		x		