

# NURSING WORKFORCE OKLAHOMA

## REPORT

March 15, 2018

### **Nursing Professions Workgroup**

Healthcare Workforce Subcommittee

Governor's Council on Workforce & Economic Development



**OKLAHOMA  
WORKS**

# Acknowledgements

This report will serve to provide a comprehensive review of our nursing professions in Oklahoma. Many thanks to those who contributed to this report which include those who serve on the Oklahoma Governor's Council on Workforce and Economic Development Health Workforce Subcommittee\* and others.

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**Data Limitation:** *It is important to note that the data collected for this report is an estimate and may include duplications, and some data may not be available to report.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The nursing workforce constitutes a large percentage of the health workforce in Oklahoma. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Oklahoma has 56,000 Registered Nurses (RNs), 18,000 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and 3,572 Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). However, with a ratio of 700 RNS per 100,000 populations, Oklahoma ranks well below the national average of 1,150 per 100,000<sup>1</sup>.

There are multiple entry points into the nursing profession in Oklahoma. Nurses may seek training from career technology centers or institutions of higher learning. Career technology centers offer two-year certificates of completion while higher education institutions provide the opportunity to earn degrees that range from Associates, Bachelors, Master of Science in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice and Doctorate of Philosophy Degrees in Nursing.

Depending on the type of certificates or degree, nurses can also work in a variety of practice settings. While most nurses in the workforce provide direct patient care, a large percentage are employed as patient educators or serve in administrative roles such as a case manager, nurse manager, quality assurance, or nurse administrator. Nurses may serve in private or public sectors, including service in the National Public Health Service Corps.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) may choose a specialty focus. Areas of focus include Certified Nursing Practitioner (CNP), Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) and/or a certified nurse midwife. According to the Oklahoma Board of Nursing, Oklahoma currently has 2,517 Certified Nurse Practitioners (CNPs), 713 Clinical Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNAs), 277 Certified Nurse Specialists (CNSs), 65 Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs). Of these, 2,169 CNPs, 443 CRNAs, 182 CNSs and 50 CNMs have prescriptive authority<sup>2</sup>. Oklahoma is a restricted practice state for APRNs, thus, the impact of the APRN profession on Oklahoma's health system may be limited compared to other states with less restrictive practice environments.

The Health Care Workforce Subcommittee of the Governor's Council on Workforce and Economic Development has produced an initial report describing the Oklahoma nursing workforce, their competencies, scopes of practice, number of professional licenses and the workforce distribution. The Subcommittee is currently developing recommendations to address barriers to ensuring an adequate supply of nurses is available to meet the demands of Oklahoma's healthcare industry and the needs of the population. An issue brief detailing recommendations is currently on target for a 2018 release.

Approved by the Healthcare Workforce Subcommittee on March 15, 2018

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<sup>1</sup> National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2017). Journal of Nursing Regulation: The 2017 Environmental Scan. Retrieved from [https://www.ncsbn.org/2017\\_Environmental\\_Scan.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/2017_Environmental_Scan.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Oklahoma Board of Nursing, 2017

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Registered Nurse (RN)</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Additional Degrees for RNs</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Nursing Workforce Distribution Data</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Nurses by Licensure .....	10
LPNs with Oklahoma Licenses .....	10
LPN Workforce Age in Years .....	11
LPN Practice Settings .....	11
RNs with Oklahoma Licenses .....	12
RN Workforce Age in Years.....	12
RN Practice Settings .....	13
Hospital Based RNs .....	13
APRNs in Oklahoma FY 2017 .....	14
<b>The Nursing Pipeline</b> .....	<b>15</b>
New LPN Licenses Issued by Examination .....	15
New RN Licenses Issued by Examination .....	15
New APRN Licensures in Oklahoma .....	16
Oklahoma APRN Growth Trends .....	17
<b>Appendix</b> .....	<b>18</b>

# INTRODUCTION

## NURSING WORKFORCE IN OKLAHOMA

The nursing workforce is a field that spans through all education levels and contains many different licensure requirements, levels, and competencies. The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) is educated at Career Tech locations whereas Registered Nurses (RN) are educated at the Associates and Bachelor degree levels. The diversity of education level within the profession provides a great deal of difference with the roles each individual nurse may have. The competencies differ among each licensure as well because of the different roles of each nurse. An LPN may play a different role within a health team compared to an RN or an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), who is licensed as an APRN and an RN. The vast numbers of nurses and the contrast in their roles within a health system or clinic results in a very diverse field within the healthcare industry. The nursing workforce is likely misunderstood to be limited to nursing in a hospital or clinic; however, nurses can fill many other roles than just that. Nurses are administrators, executives, academics, researchers, scientists, legal consultants, etc. Contingent on education level and licensure some nurses, such as APRNs, may have their own independent practice.

For nurses to fill all the roles that they do, the programs in which they study must receive accreditations and prove that the competencies tested by licensing exams match the standard curriculum of the educational institution. The Oklahoma Board of Nursing, who is the licensing body for nurses and approves nurse training programs, is governed by Board rules that set the standards for how Oklahoma's nurses are trained and educated. New programs go through approval steps before admitting students. The Board may grant provisional, full, or conditional approval dependent on the criterion met by the program. All licensed nurses share a common base of responsibility and accountability defined by the practice of nursing. Competency-based practice scopes of individual nurses may vary according to the type of basic licensure preparation, practice experiences and professional development activities. The Decision Making Model, developed by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing (see Appendix A), summarizes a process to determine acts appropriate to nursing at various levels.

Approved by the Healthcare Workforce Subcommittee on March 15, 2018, this report provides information on the education requirements, competencies, scopes of practice, and workforce distribution for each licensure. The final section of the report shows data from the Nursing Pipeline, which indicates the growth or decline experienced by each licensure. The sections are divided by licensure requirements and followed by the workforce distribution data.

# LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

## EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) are an occupation certified through the Oklahoma State Board of Nursing. The Board of Nursing requires that each applicant be a minimum of 18 years old, hold a high school diploma or GED, completion of a state-approved Practical Nursing program at a Career Tech or community college campus, and passage of the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. Each Practical Nursing program incorporates coursework that covers nursing theory, labs, and clinical learning environments. About half of the Practical Nursing curriculum is spent in a clinical setting to ensure each student gains the knowledge and abilities vital to the LPN profession.

The following competencies for Licensed Practical Nurse are tested by the NCLEX-PN licensure exam:

LPN Competencies
1. Coordinated Care
2. Safety and Infection Control
3. Health Promotion Maintenance
4. Psychosocial Integrity
5. Physiological Integrity
6. Pharmacological Therapies
7. Reduction of Risk Potential
8. Physiological Adaptation

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The scope of practice for LPNs is determined by Oklahoma State Law within the Nursing Practice Act (Title 59, Ch. 12, Section 567.1). LPNs can be found in paragraph 4, under section 567.3a. The section reads as follows: ***“Licensed practical nursing” means the practice of nursing under the supervision or direction of a registered nurse, licensed physician or dentist. This directed scope of nursing practice includes, but is not limited to:***

- a. contributing to the assessment of the health status of individuals and groups,
- b. participating in the development and modification of the plan of care,
- c. implementing the appropriate aspects of the plan of care,
- d. delegating such tasks as may safely be performed by others, consistent with educational preparation and that do not conflict with the Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act,
- e. providing safe and effective nursing care rendered directly or indirectly,
- f. participating in the evaluation of responses to interventions,
- g. teaching basic nursing skills and related principles,
- h. performing additional nursing procedures in accordance with knowledge and skills acquired through education beyond nursing preparation,
- i. delegating those nursing tasks as defined in the rules of the Board that may be performed by an advanced unlicensed assistive person.

# REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

## EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Registered Nurses (RNs) are licensed by the State Board of Nursing. The requirements for applying to be licensed are that each applicant must be a minimum of 18 years old, hold a degree in Nursing from a state accredited program, and successfully have passed a federal background check as well as the NCLEX-RN licensure exam. There are two degrees to qualify for licensure as a Registered Nurse. The Associate's degree track is a 2-3 year program that requires the completion of basic science education, nursing fundamentals, and clinical experience in acute and outpatient care. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree requires completion of additional leadership and population health components and additional clinical training. RNs with Associate degrees may elect to complete their BSN after they have started practicing.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program is typically offered at any four-year university or college. Registered Nurses can also obtain additional degrees at the Master and Doctoral levels. Education level determines the roles and practice settings of Registered Nurses.

Degree Program	Role/Practice Setting	Competencies*
Associate of Applied Science	<p><b>Roles:</b> Direct Patient Care, Mid-level Manager (smaller hospitals), and/or Clinical Nurse</p> <p><b>Practice Settings:</b> Hospitals and/or Ambulatory/Outpatient settings</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liberal education for baccalaureate generalist nursing practice</li> <li>2. Basic organizational and systems leadership for quality care and patient safety</li> <li>3. Scholarship for evidence-based practice</li> <li>4. Information management and application of patient care technology</li> </ol>
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	<p><b>Roles:</b> Acute care, Patient Educators, Academia, Clinical Nurse Educators, Quality/Case Managers, Mid-Level Managers, Nurse Administrators, Public Health Corps.</p> <p><b>Practice Settings:</b> Acute Care, Primary Care, Schools and Universities, Government, Community Agencies, Research Firms, Military, Health IT Firms, and/or Insurance Companies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health care policy, finance, and regulatory environments</li> <li>2. Interprofessional communication and collaboration for improving patient health outcomes</li> <li>3. Clinical prevention and population health</li> <li>4. Professionalism and professional values</li> <li>5. Baccalaureate generalist nursing practice</li> </ol>

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The scope of practice for Registered Nurses is determined in Oklahoma State Law by the Nursing Practice Act (Title 59, Ch. 12, Section 567.1). The section regarding RNs can be found in Paragraph 3 under Section 567.3a. The section reads as follows: ***“Registered nursing” means the practice of the full scope of nursing which includes, but is not limited to:***

- a. assessing the health status of individuals, families and groups,
- b. analyzing assessment data to determine nursing care needs,
- c. establishing goals to meet identified health care needs,
- d. planning a strategy of care,
- e. establishing priorities of nursing intervention to implement the strategy of care,
- f. implementing the strategy of care,
- g. delegating such tasks as may safely be performed by others, consistent with educational preparation and that do not conflict with the provisions of the Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act,
- h. providing safe and effective nursing care rendered directly or indirectly,
- i. evaluating responses to interventions,
- j. teaching the principles and practice of nursing,
- k. managing and supervising the practice of nursing,
- l. collaborating with other health professionals in the management of health care,
- m. performing additional nursing functions in accordance with knowledge and skills acquired beyond basic nursing preparation, and
- n. delegating those nursing tasks as defined in the rules of the Board that may be performed by an advanced unlicensed assistive person.



# ADDITIONAL DEGREES

## FOR REGISTERED NURSES

All of these advanced degrees are additional to a BSN and RN licensure. The reasons a RN may choose to achieve an advanced degree would be to broaden their scope of practice, transition into administrative/management roles, teach in Nursing education programs, or conduct academic research. The roles/functions of RNs at different degree levels have a high level of diversity in how they practice and where they practice.

Degree Program	Role/Practice Setting	Competencies*
Master of Science in Nursing	All BSN functions, APRN, Nurse Educators (RN and some MSN programs), Nurse Executives, and/or Clinical Research Nurses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Background for Practice from Sciences and Humanities</li> <li>2. Organizational and Systems Leadership</li> <li>3. Quality Improvement and Safety</li> <li>4. Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice</li> <li>5. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies</li> <li>6. Health Policy and Advocacy</li> <li>7. Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes</li> <li>8. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving Health</li> <li>9. Master's Level Nursing Practice</li> </ol>
Doctor of Nursing Practice	All BSN and MSN functions, Advanced Clinical Leadership Roles, and/or Nurse Educators (MSN and DNP programs)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scientific underpinnings for practice</li> <li>2. Organizational and systems leadership for quality improvement and systems thinking</li> <li>3. Clinical scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice</li> <li>4. Information systems/technology and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of health care</li> <li>5. Health care policy for advocacy in health care</li> <li>6. Inter-professional collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes</li> <li>7. Clinical prevention and population health for improving the nation's health</li> <li>8. Advanced Nursing Practice</li> </ol>
PhD in Nursing	All BSN, MSN, and DNP functions, Nurse Scientist, and/or Academic Leadership	

# ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE (APRN)

## EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) are registered nurses who hold a high school diploma, a Bachelor degree in Nursing, a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), and pass a national certification examination in the role and specialty of preparation.<sup>1</sup> APRNs are allowed to choose which role they wish to enter. Roles included in the APRN title include Certified Nurse Practitioner (CNP), Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM), and a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). Each certification varies in clinical requirements, competencies, and scopes of practice. Standards are set typically by the Board of Nursing, the certifying body, and/or state law. APRNs are allowed to run an independent practice; however, prescriptive authority is restricted unless the APRN has a physician supervisor. Additional education and clinical supervision are included prior to an APRN receiving the privilege to prescribe selected medications. The Oklahoma Board of Nursing rules provide differing requirements for prescriptive authority based on APRN specialty.

Certification	Education/Certification	Foci of Practice
Certified Nurse Practitioner (CNP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing (many have Doctor of Nursing Practice [DNP] degree)</li> <li>• Completion of a nationally accredited Nurse Practitioner Program.</li> <li>• Successful completion of national certification exam</li> <li>• Prescriptive Authority (OK) requires additional education and supervision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Primary Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Adult/Geriatrics</li> <li>• Pediatrics</li> <li>• Psych/Mental Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Acute Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Adult/Geriatrics</li> <li>• Critical Care/Emergency/Trauma</li> <li>• Neonatal</li> </ul>
Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing (many have Doctor of Nursing Practice [DNP] degree)</li> <li>• Completion of a nationally accredited Clinical Nurse Specialist Program.</li> <li>• Successful completion of national certification exam in some specialties</li> <li>• Prescriptive Authority (OK) requires additional education and supervision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Acute Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult/Geriatrics</li> <li>• Pediatrics</li> <li>• Psych/Mental Health</li> <li>• Trauma</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public/Community Health</li> </ul>

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# APRN continued...

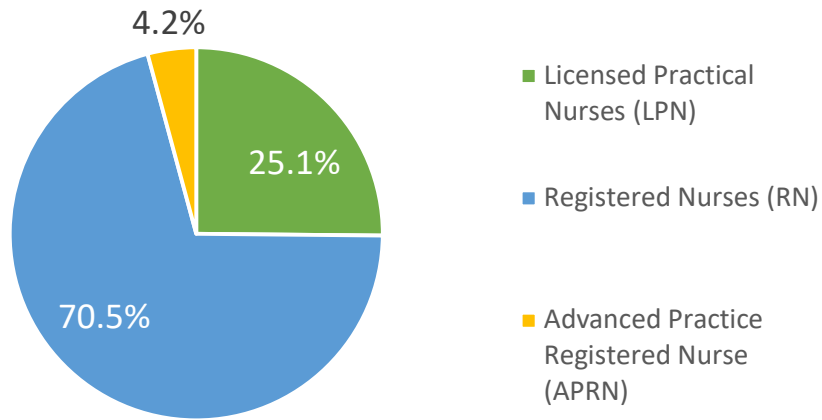
Certification	Education/Certification	Foci of Practice
Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing (many have Doctor of Nursing Practice [DNP] degree)</li> <li>• Completion of a nationally accredited Nurse Anesthetist Program.</li> <li>• Successful completion of national certification exam.</li> <li>• Prescriptive Authority (OK) requires additional education and supervision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lifespan Foci</b></p> <p><b>Ambulatory Care Settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dental Offices</li> <li>• Surgical Centers</li> </ul> <p><b>Hospitals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surgery</li> <li>• Outpatient Surgery and Procedures</li> </ul>
Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing (many have Doctor of Nursing Practice [DNP] degree)</li> <li>• Completion of a nationally accredited Nurse Midwife Program.</li> <li>• Successful completion of national certification exam.</li> <li>• Prescriptive Authority (OK) requires additional education and supervision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Maternity Foci</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birthing Centers</li> <li>• OB/GYN Practices</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> </ul>

Certification	Scope of Practice
Certified Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Specialist, and Certified Nurse Midwife	(a) promotion and maintenance of health; (b) prevention of illness and disability; (C) diagnosis and prescription of medications, treatments, and devices for acute and chronic conditions and diseases; (D) management of health care during acute and chronic phases of illness; (E) guidance and counseling services; (F) consultation and/or collaboration with other health care providers and community resources; (G) referral to other health care providers and community resources. Authority (OK) requires additional education and supervision
Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist	"A Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist, under the supervision of a medical doctor, osteopathic physician, podiatric physician or dentist licensed in this state, and under conditions in which timely, on-site consultation by such medical doctor, osteopathic physician, podiatric physician or dentist is available, shall be authorized, pursuant to rules adopted by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing, to order, select, obtain and administer legend drugs, Schedules II through V controlled substances, devices, and medical gases only when engaged in the preanesthetic preparation and evaluation; anesthesia induction, maintenance and emergence; and postanesthesia care. A Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist may order, select, obtain and administer drugs only during the perioperative or peripostetrical period."

Source: Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act, OK Board of Nursing

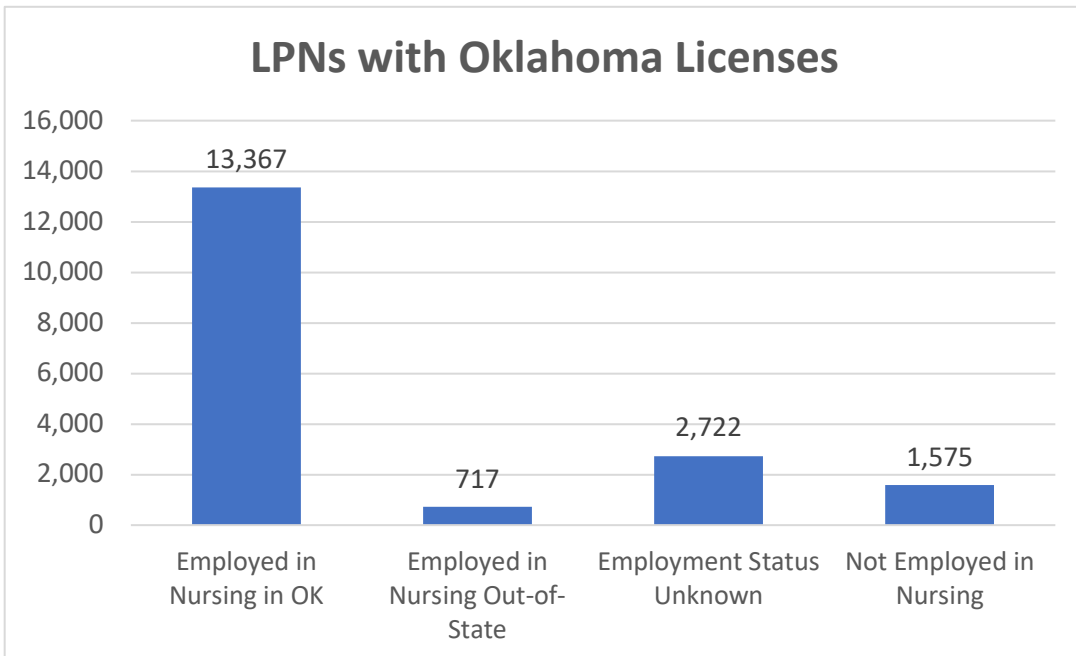
# NURSING WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION DATA

## Nurses By Licensure



\*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

## LPNs with Oklahoma Licenses

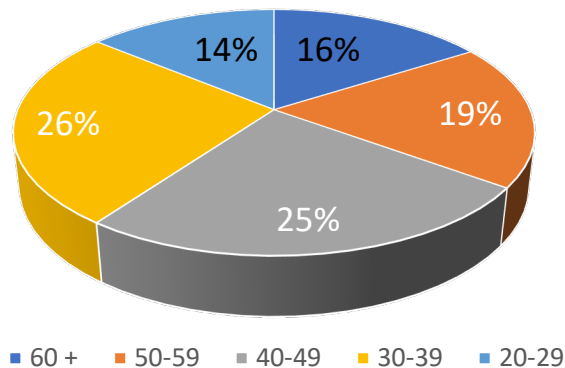


Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

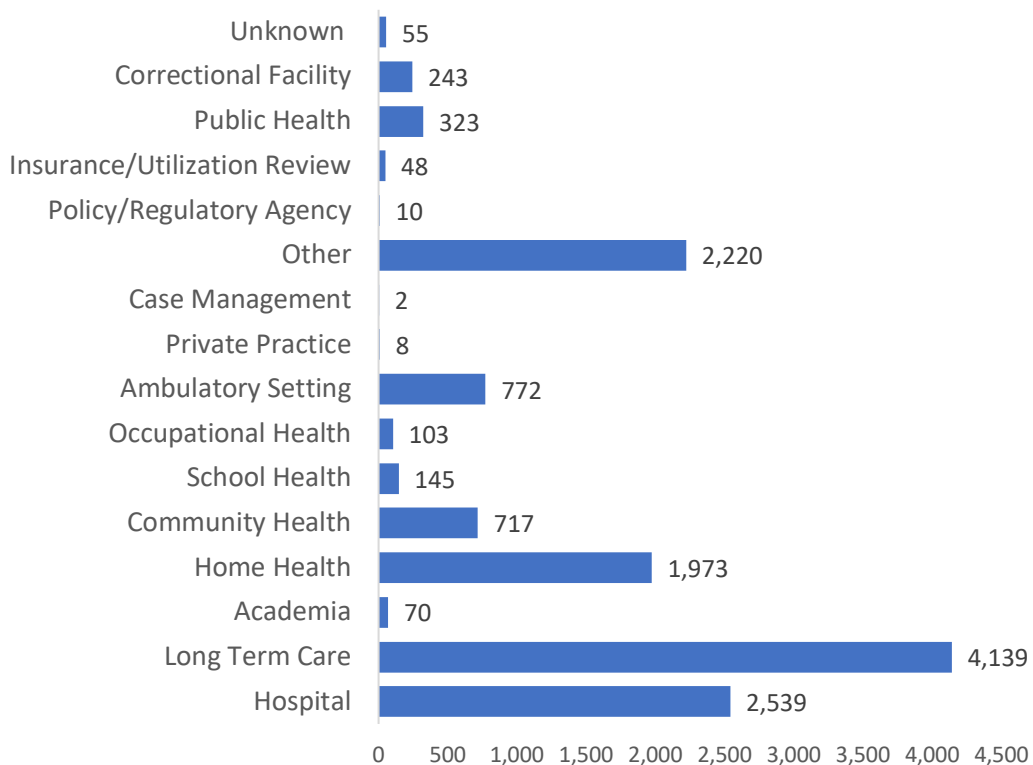
# NURSING WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION DATA

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## LPN Workforce Age in Years FY 2016



## LPN Practice Settings

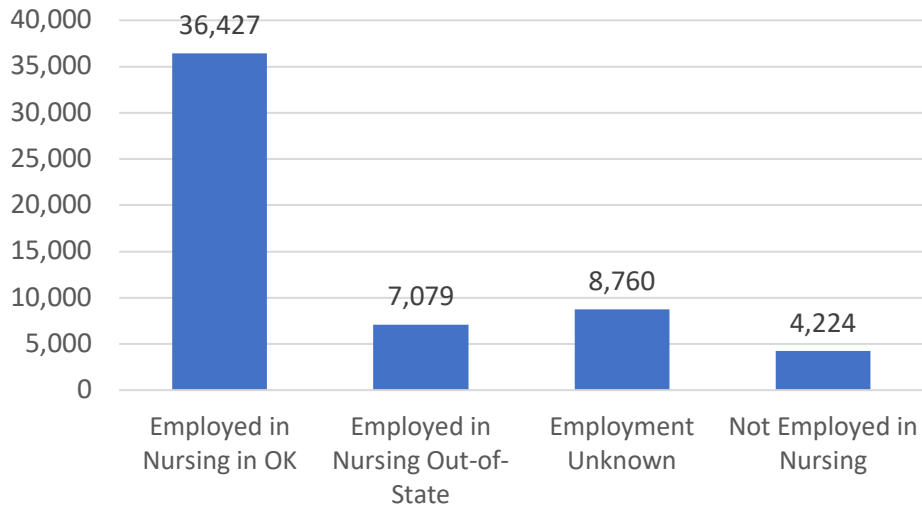


Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

# NURSING WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION DATA

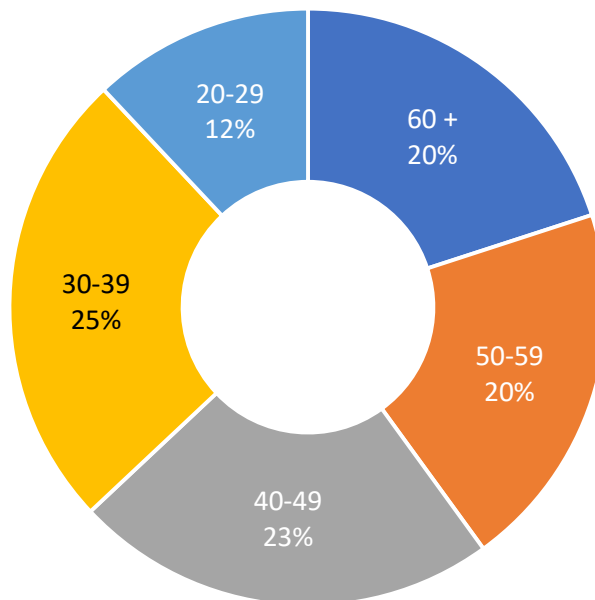
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## RNs with Oklahoma Licenses



Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

## RN Workforce Age in Years

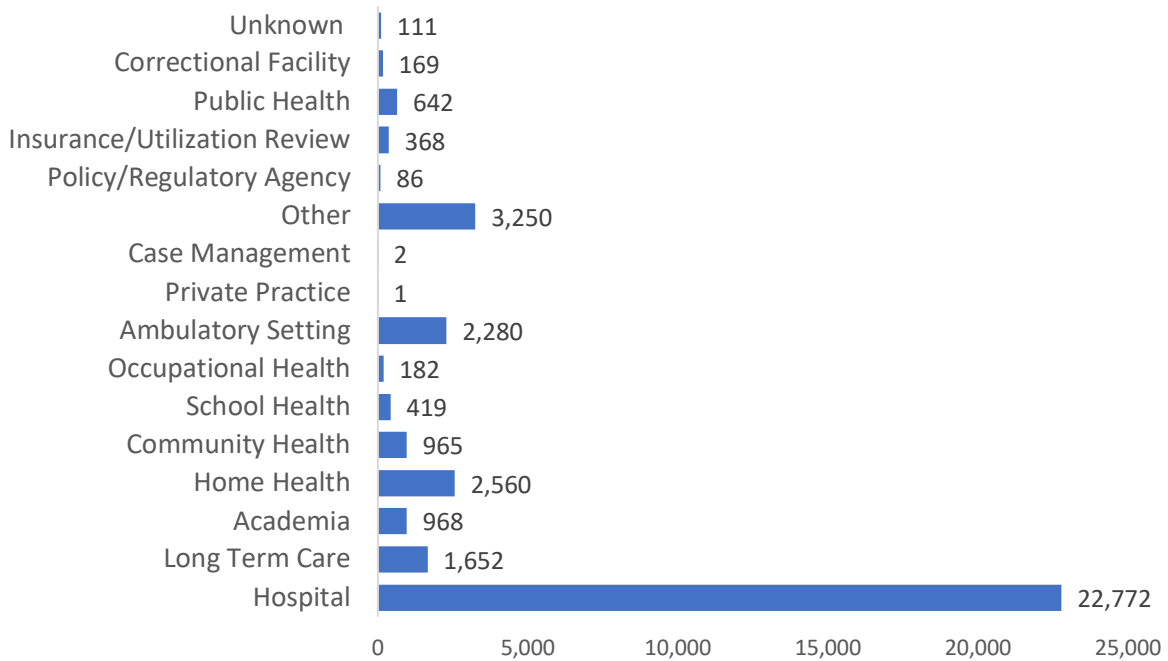


Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

# NURSING WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION DATA

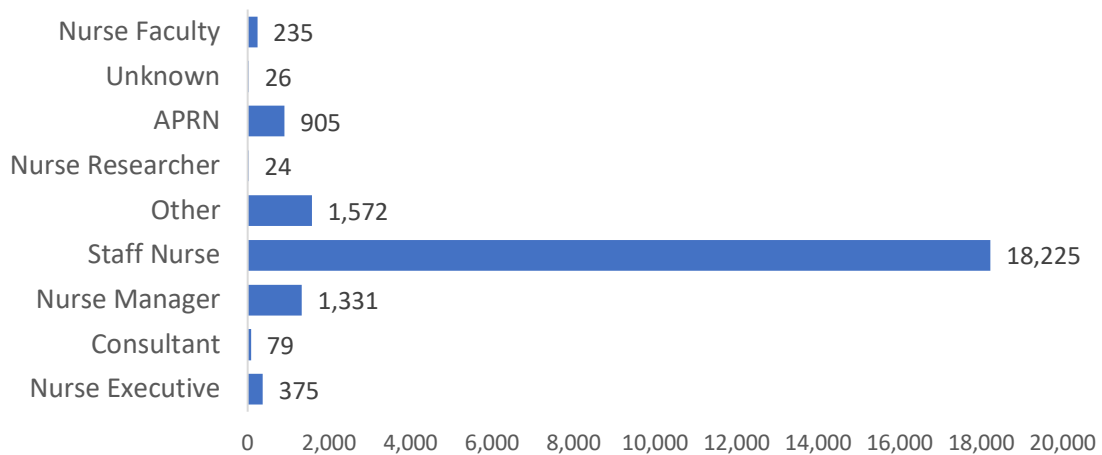
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## RN Practice Settings



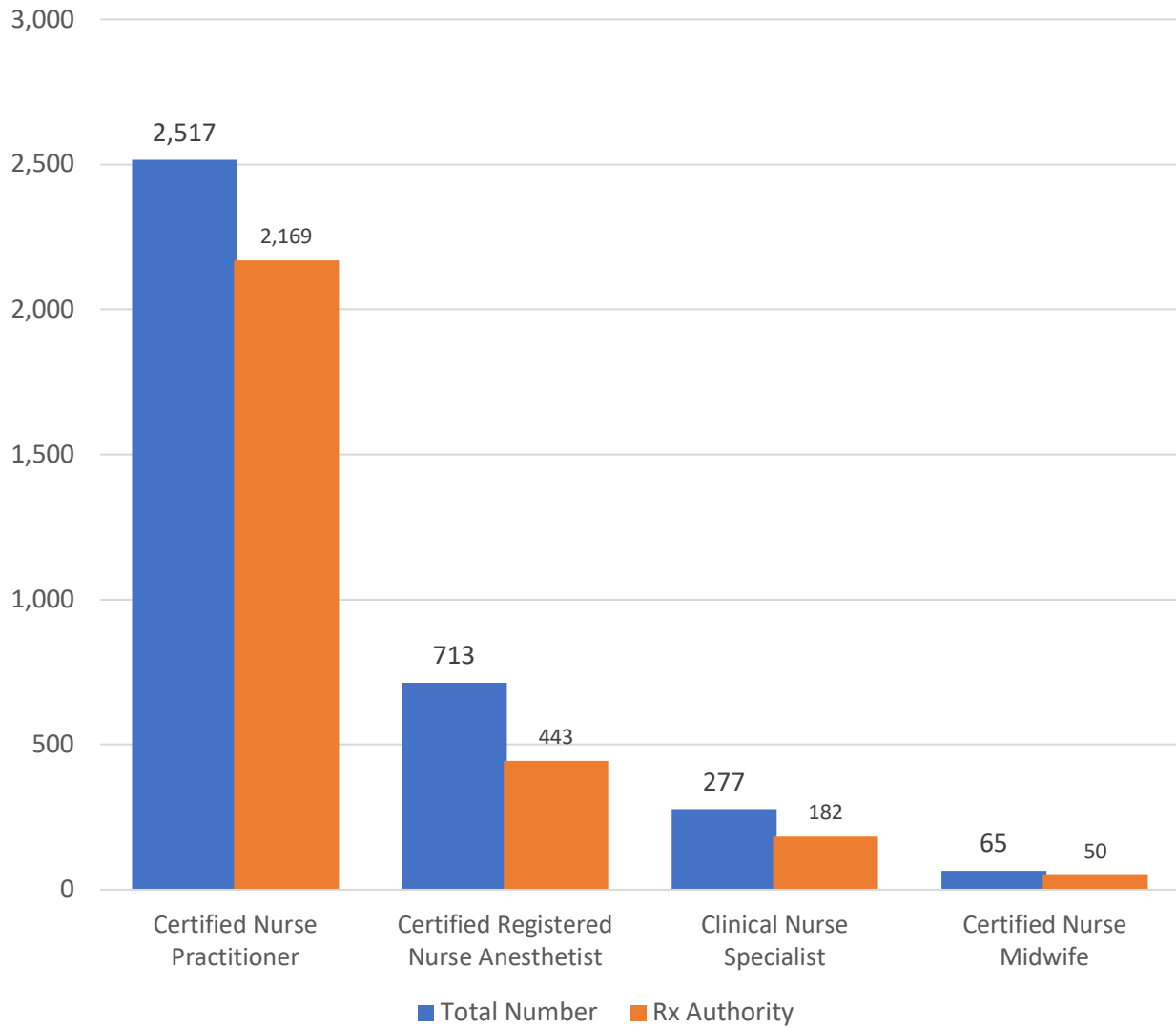
Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

## Hospital Based RNs



Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

## APRNs in Oklahoma (FY 2017)



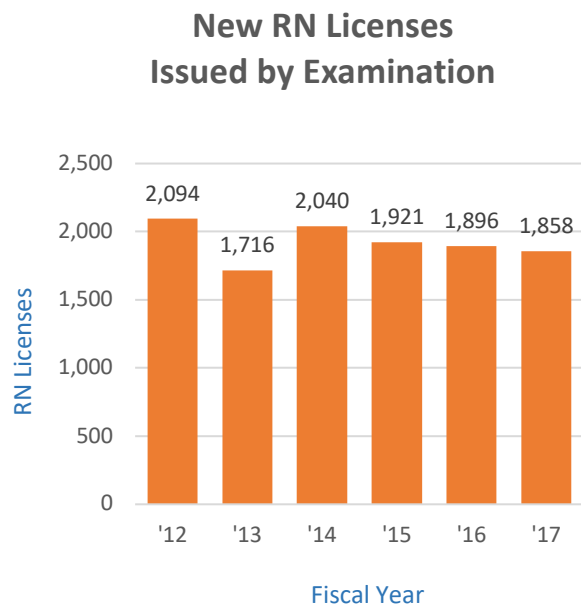
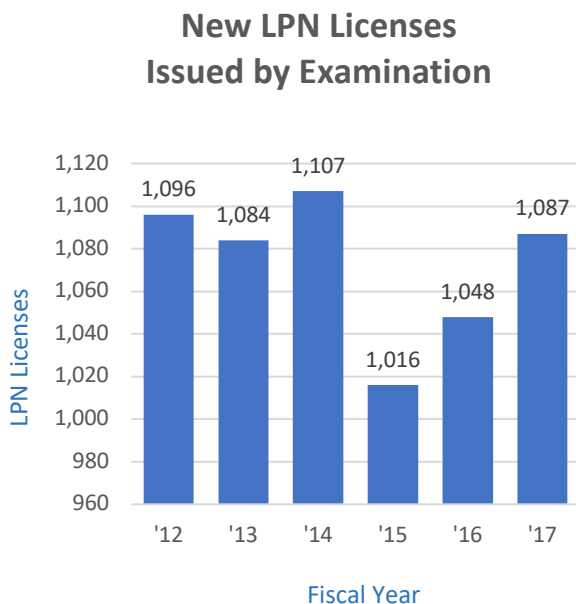
Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing



# The NURSING PIPELINE

The Nursing pipeline is composed of all nursing education programs across the state of Oklahoma. There are varying degrees of education required for each nursing field. LPN programs are contained within the Department of Career Tech, which has campuses all across the state. Career Tech has 68 LPN programs on 108 campuses statewide. RN programs are mostly held on community college or university campuses. At the Associate degree level, which is housed at community colleges, there are 21 degree programs on 35 different campuses. The Bachelor degree option, or BSN, offers 14 programs on 23 university campuses. RNs are able to achieve advanced degrees in nursing at the Master, Doctoral, and PhD levels. There are eight universities offering MSN programs, four offering DNP programs, and two offering PhD programs. The combination of these education programs creates what is known as the nursing pipeline. This pipeline services health in the state of Oklahoma by supplying an educated workforce to hospitals and health centers statewide.

After education, nurses must seek licensure from the Oklahoma Board of Nursing. For APRNs, additional certification is required dependent on the specialization each graduate seeks. There are five Certified Nurse Practitioner programs in the state currently. These programs are all within the Adult/Gerontology and Family Focus track. There are presently no CNP programs in Psychology/Mental Health, Neonatal, or Pediatrics. There is one program for Clinical Nurse Specialists in the state. It is in the Adult/Gerontology discipline. There is also one Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist program currently in development. The time frame of its implementation is to be determined. Additionally, there are no Certified Nurse Midwife programs located in the state.

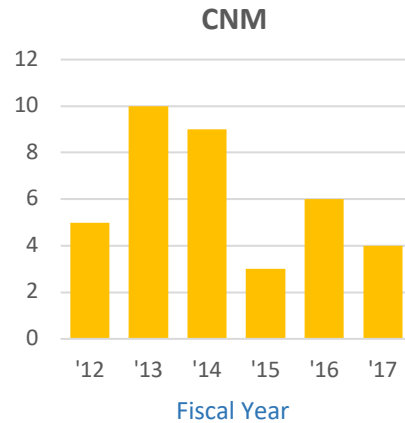
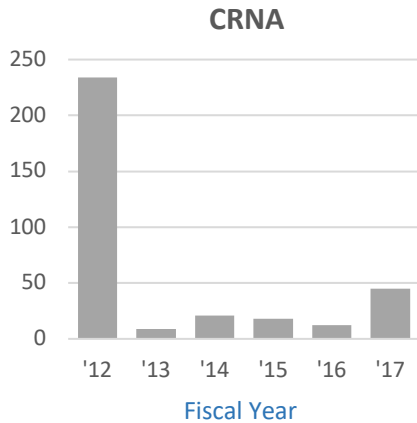
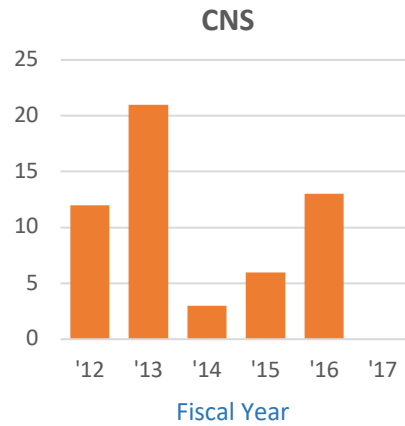
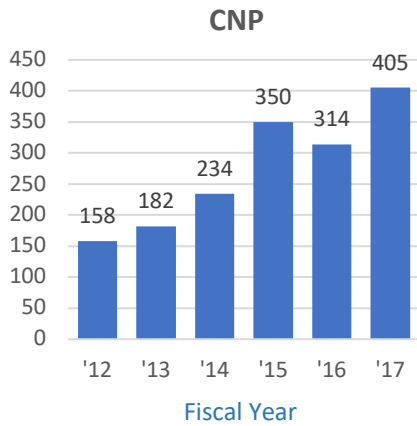
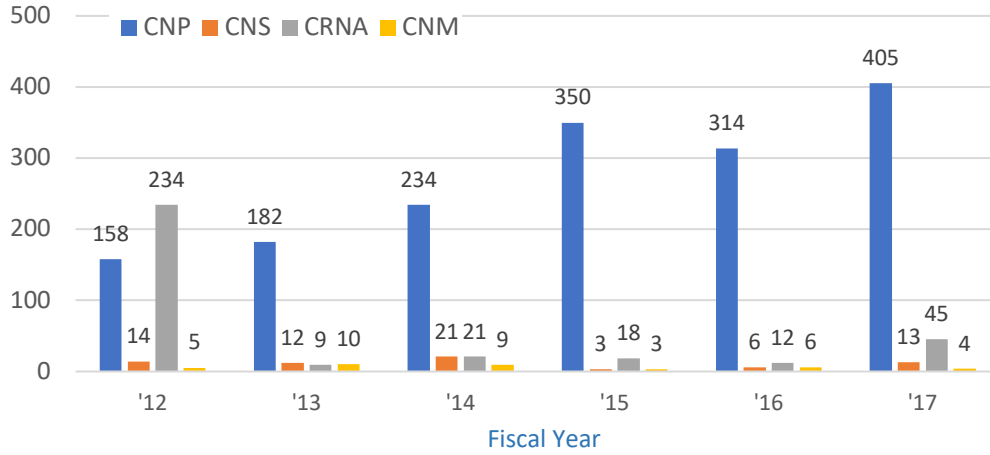


Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

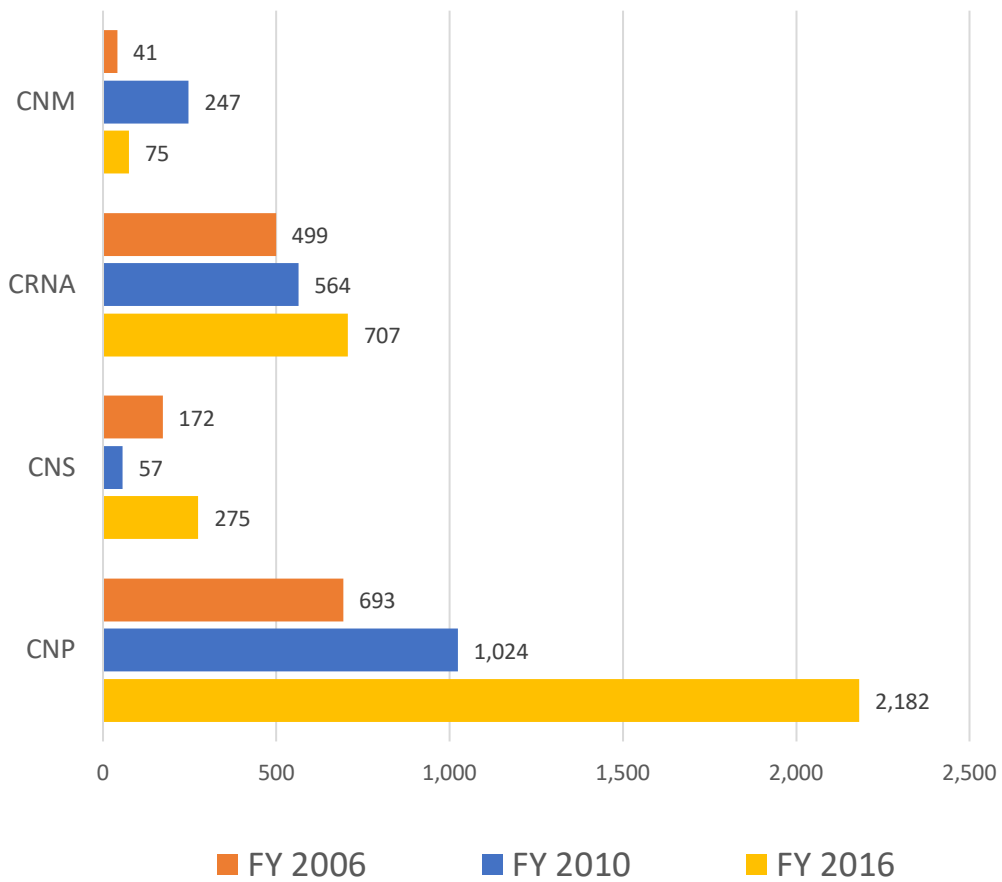
# The NURSING PIPELINE

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## New APRN Licensures in Oklahoma



## Oklahoma APRN Growth Trends



Source: Oklahoma Board of Nursing

# APPENDIX

## Summary of Decision Making Model

Is the act expressly permitted by the *Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act and Rules*, or Declaratory Rulings or any other applicable law?

If you are an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), is the act for APRNs within the generally recognized scope and standards of your certifying body? (If yes, proceed to decision #3.)

Does the act require you to have substantial *specialized* nursing knowledge, skill and independent judgment?

Is the act consistent with ALL of the following:

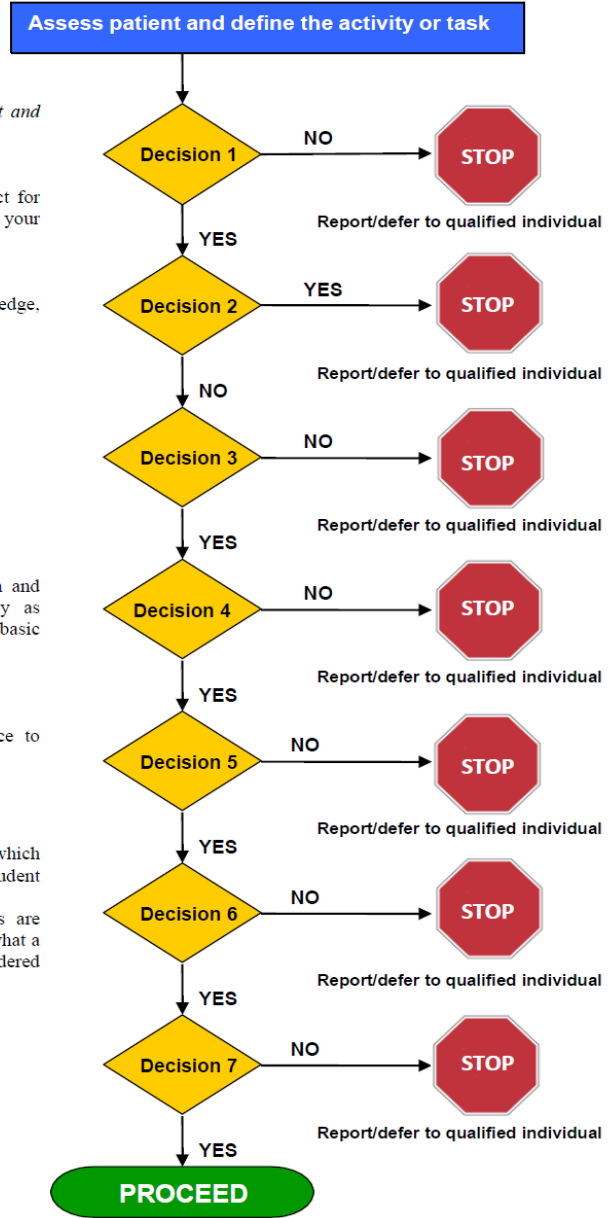
- Current national nursing standards?
- Current nursing literature and research?
- Appropriately established written policy and procedure of employing facility?
- Current employing facility accreditation standards?

Do you (as an RN, LPN, or APRN) personally possess the depth and breadth of knowledge to perform the act safely and effectively as demonstrated by knowledge acquired in a pre-licensure program, post-basic program, or continuing education program?

Do you personally possess current, documented clinical competence to perform this act safely?

Is the performance of this act within accepted "standard of care" which would be provided in similar circumstances by reasonable and prudent nurses who have similar training and experience?  
As Declaratory Rulings, Board Guidelines and Position Statements are developed by the Board in response to a specific question(s) to guide what a reasonable and prudent nurse should do, such rulings should be considered when responding to this decision.

Are you prepared to accept the consequences of your actions?



Board Endorsed: 9/1993

Reviewed w/o Revision: 7/25/2001; 9/28/2010

Board Revised: 3/31/2004; 5/29/2007; 11/10/2009; 5/25/2010; 8/3/2010; 9/24/13

OBN Policy/Guidelines #P-10

Page 4 of 5

P:/Administration/Executive/Policies/Practice/DecisionMaking