

Future of Nursing West Virginia Nursing Student Survey

Survey period 8/5/16 – 8/31/16

Demographics (n=122)

Age: Average age 25 yrs., Range 18-55 yrs.

Gender: Male = 9 (7%)
Female = 113 (93%)

Nursing programs:

LPN-RN = 3 (2.46 %)
ADN = 35 (27.9%)
BSN = 80 (65%)
BS/BA-BSN = 4 (3.28%)

Question 1: What first sparked your interest in becoming a nurse?

The respondent:

1. was inspired by the care a nurse gave to a self or a family member. (n=29)
2. was encouraged or inspired by a family member who was a nurse—mother, father, grandmother, and aunt. (n=27)
3. felt compelled by a desire to help others. (n=26)
4. had a previous health care job or volunteer position that gave him or her a close-up view of nursing. (n=14)
5. wanted to be a nurse since childhood or felt called to be a nurse. (n=12)
6. became fascinated with nursing. This was often due to a school (high, middle, vocational) experience, such as anatomy class. (n=11)
7. became interested in nursing after caring for an ill family member. (n=4)
8. loved the idea of “medicine,” but decided that nursing was a better fit than medicine because of the close relationship with patients. (n=5)

Question 2: What, if any, obstacles did you overcome before you could enroll in nursing school?

Significant barriers included:

1. financial difficulties. (n=22)
2. rigorous requirements for admission, including GPA and ACT. (n=19)
3. completing pre-requisite courses, which were time-consuming or difficult. (n=17)
4. childcare. (n=12)
5. poor self-confidence, lack of courage, or anxiety. (n=10)
6. a confusing, time consuming, and rigorous application process. (n=4)
7. personal or family illness. (n=3)

Survey Limitations

The results of this survey are limited by a low response rate of Associate Degree students, who comprise a large portion of nursing students in the state.

Recommendations

The nursing student survey was conducted to elicit information that could assist the Future of Nursing West Virginia to more effectively and efficiently target potential students for future recruitment into the profession. Below are recommendations based upon the most common responses:

1. **Target West Virginia nurses to become recruiters for the profession.** Based on the rank ordered responses to the question, “What first sparked your interest in becoming a nurse,” it is clear that nurses themselves are the best recruiters. Future nurses pay attention to nurses giving care to themselves and their family members. They are also inspired by their mothers, fathers, aunts, and grandmothers, who are nurses. Therefore, articles and ads should target nurses to inform them about their strong influence on potential nurses of the future.
2. **Target faith-based organizations to inspire youth to make a commitment to nursing as a helping profession.** Many respondents reported that they knew “forever” that they wanted to be nurses, and many responded that they entered nursing because of a desire to help others. In fact, one, wrote that he or she felt “called” to become a nurse and another felt led by God. Faith-based organizations may have youth who are ripe for the message that nursing is a path towards helping others. Therefore, a concerted effort should be made to gain access to these organizations for the purpose of recruiting potential nurses.
3. **Target middle school and high school science teachers.** Several students used the term “fascinated” when describing middle school or high school science classes that sparked their interest in nursing. Therefore, an effort should be made to communicate with high school and middle school science teachers to so they will communicate to students that nursing is a good profession for those interested in the sciences.
4. **In recruiting materials, include information on financial resources available to nursing students.** Since financial barriers are the leading barrier in West Virginia, more information about financial resources may be helpful to those deciding to apply to nursing school.
5. **In recruiting materials, include information on prerequisite courses necessary for admission to nursing programs.** Several responses implied that prerequisite courses were taken at the last minute or that applications to nursing school were submitted only after prerequisites were completed. If potential students plan prerequisites early on, they might be more likely to apply to nursing programs upon graduation from high school.