

# Facts about the nursing and nurse faculty shortage

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## Factors in the nurse faculty shortage

- Looming retirements: average age of nurses is 45, average age of faculty is 53 in Nebraska and 54 in the United States. To prepare more nurses, it's imperative to prepare more faculty.

## Factors in the nursing shortage

- Without action to address Nebraska's nursing shortage it will be even more difficult to provide the appropriate level of nursing care in outpatient clinics, emergency rooms, hospitals, nursing facilities and even in the schools. School nurses are especially in short supply.
- Large waves of retiring Baby Boomers will dramatically increase demand for nurses, pushing the already serious shortage of nurses to crisis stage in the years ahead. Currently one in six 6 Nebraskans is older than 60.
- Federal and state statistics indicate that Nebraska's nursing shortage will jump from 9 percent in 2002 to 20 percent in 2020. A National Center for Health Workforce Analysis suggests by the year 2020, Nebraska will have a shortage of about 3,800 registered nurses. The projected U.S. nursing shortage in 2020 is estimated at 808,000.
- The demand for nurses is amplified by the fact that the average age of registered nurses has increased to age 45 and a smaller percentage are under the age of 30. More than 55 percent of nurses intend to retire between 2011 and 2020.

- Currently there are 17,422 registered nurses in Nebraska according to the Nebraska Center for Nursing.
- Current nurse-to-patient ratio in Nebraska: 1 to 11 in metropolitan areas and about 1 to 15 in non-metropolitan areas according to Nebraska Center for Nursing, RN Survey Report 2007; U.S. Census Bureau 2006 Census data for Nebraska.
- Aging of the population and other issues such as increasing seriousness in conditions, requires more nursing care, which requires more education. Also there is a need to focus more on public health, long term care, safety and quality issues.
- The highest percentage of nurses work in hospital settings.

## The nursing shortage also affects economics in Nebraska's communities

- The shortage is most severe in small towns and rural areas. Lack of care impedes not just physical health but also economic health—the ability of communities to draw and hold residents and the businesses that employ them.