RPNs have Spoken, Results from the 2010 RPN Retention and Recruitment Study

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RPNs, who are we?

Nurse by Category

Working Status of RPNs:
- Full-Time: 16,865 (58.6%)
- Part-Time: 9,576 (33.2%)
- Casual: 2,359 (8.2%)

Number of RPNs:
- Hospital: 13,381
- Long Term Care: 11,091
- Community: 4,551
- Other: 806
- Not Specified: 613

CNO 2009-10 Nursing Statistics
## College of Nurses Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RPNs Working in Ontario</th>
<th>RPNs not Working in Nursing</th>
<th>Full time working rate</th>
<th>RNs Working in Ontario</th>
<th>RNs not Working in Nursing</th>
<th>Full time working rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30,442</td>
<td>4460</td>
<td>57.95%</td>
<td>93,916</td>
<td>12,212</td>
<td>65.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>28,800</td>
<td>4386</td>
<td>58.56%</td>
<td>93,171</td>
<td>12,234</td>
<td>65.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>27,432</td>
<td>4277</td>
<td>56.31%</td>
<td>91,965</td>
<td>12,001</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>26,135</td>
<td>4548</td>
<td>54.94%</td>
<td>90,233</td>
<td>12,533</td>
<td>62.96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CNO, 2010
Background

- Research demonstrates that retention of nurses in Ontario is important to sustaining health care.
- Research shows that workplace factors contribute to the retention of nursing staff.
- RPNAO had long heard anecdotal stories of workplace issues experienced by RPNs.
- There is a lack of research specifically related to the workplace experiences of this group of nurses in Ontario.
What are the factors that affect the retention of RPNs in the workplace, and their ability to provide high quality care?
Research Process

Phase 1     Electronic Survey
  ◦ All RPNs in Ontario invited to participate.
  ◦ Members via email and non-members through regular mail.
    Total Sample - 28,752
    Respondents - 2,299 (8%)

Phase 2    Focus Groups
  ◦ Five focus groups were held throughout Ontario
  ◦ Including one with Internationally Educated Nurses.

Phase 3   Nurse Leader Strategies
Phase One Demographics

Number of Respondents by Sector

- Acute Care: 714
- Long Term Care: 612
- Community: 359
- Mental Health: 104
Results
Reason for Becoming an RPN

Top 5 Reasons
Phase I/Phase II Combined
% of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest in being in health care</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the idea of caring for people who are sick</td>
<td>63.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a people person</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have always had an interest in nursing</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like variety – working with different people and different situations</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First/Second Career

Is Nursing your first career?
by age range

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Nursing as a Second Career
Top Ten First Career Choices

- PSW/HCA 44
- Administration (clerical, clerk, EA) 39
- Accounting 20
- Retail 16
- Hair Stylist 15
- Developmental Service Worker 10
- Lab technician, technologist, asst. 10
- Factory Worker 10
- Early Childhood Education 8
- Education 7
Intent to Stay (Overall)

Intent to Stay by Sector

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## Intent to Stay (By Age Category)

### Intent to Stay by Age Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>For the foreseeable future</th>
<th>For the next few years</th>
<th>I am thinking about making a change in the next 6–18 months</th>
<th>I am currently looking for other work</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20–25</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–40</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–45</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46–50</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51–55</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56–60</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61+</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Work Situation

- Availability of Work: 18% (What's not working), 82% (What's working)
- Workload: 43% (What's not working), 57% (What's working)
- Work environment: 36% (What's not working), 64% (What's working)
- Compensation: 43% (What's not working), 57% (What's working)
- Love the profession: 7% (What's not working), 93% (What's working)
- Support received on the job: 49% (What's not working), 51% (What's working)
Love the Profession

% of total survey respondents by age range
Reasons for Wanting to Leave Practical Nursing (Overall)

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Reasons for Wanting to Leave Practical Nursing (By Sector)

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Career Options

To broaden my career options, I would have to leave the profession

- Agree
- Disagree
- N/A

- Agree: 68%
- Disagree: 29%
- N/A: 3%

There are a lot of options for broadening my practice as an RPN

- Agree
- Disagree
- N/A

- Agree: 60%
- Disagree: 39%
- N/A: 1%
Career Options

I would have to get a BScN or other certification to increase my career options Phase I

36% Agree
64% Disagree

I would have to get a BScN or other certification to increase my career options Phase II

32% Agree
61% Disagree
7% Not Applicable

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Willingness to Participate in a Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>1128</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>1461</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>2299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why have Focus Groups?

- Approximately 5,525 discrete comments were given by survey respondents
- This equates to approximately 510 pages of commentary
Phase Two Focus Groups

- 5 Focus Groups were conducted and locations were selected to ensure that urban, rural and remote nursing perspectives were captured

- n=31
Focus Groups – Results
Barriers to Providing High Quality Care

- Staffing Levels
- Workload
- Scope of Practice
- Communication
- Conflict/Workplace Violence
- Lack of Collaboration
Manager Supports for Engagement/empowerment

- Felt validated when manager listened
- Important that the manager is approachable
- Manager makes resources available that are needed for the work
- Recognition by manager
Conclusions

- 93% of RPNs love the profession
  - “So long as my body is willing and able, I will continue to perform my duties as an LPN/RPN to the best of my abilities. When I am able to bring happiness and contentment and an overall sense of well being to any of my patients, I know then, I have made a difference to at least someone. Even if it’s just a smile!” (survey comment June 2010)

- 44.4% are at risk of leaving the profession; 17% in the near future.

- Key reasons for wanting to leave:
  - Lack of respect for what they do (co-workers, public, within work environment, leadership)
  - Not enough pay for the work
  - Too political; issues about the differences between RNs and RPNs (role ambiguity, inadequate staffing, compensation, knowledge not respected, policy)
Conclusions con’t

- **Barriers to providing High Quality Care**
  - Scope of Practice
  - Workload/staffing levels
  - Lack of communication/collaboration
  - Conflict

- **Experiences of workplace violence**
  - Patients
  - Families
  - Coworkers
Conclusions con’t

- Engagement and Empowerment

  - RPNs can experience validation and empowerment to make patient centred decisions when there are adequate manager supports (visibility, approachability, and recognition of practical nurses; availability of resources)
Recommendations

- Develop and articulate well defined and respected roles for all nurses; valued equally
- Create one cohesive, supportive and respectful culture; emphasize collaboration and communication
- Ensure adequate staffing; manageable workload
- Empower RPNs through inclusion in joint decision-making and policy development
- Ensure violence-free and bullying-free respectful workplace
- Ensure managers maintain visibility, approachability, and personal contact with RPNs
Phase Three Leader Strategies

- Findings and recommendations presented at NLN in a Networking Café forum

- Café Intent – to engage nurse leaders with practical implementation strategies
  - Strengthen collaboration through education
  - Provide leadership/education opportunities
  - Leaders understanding of scope of practice, modeling behaviours

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RPNAO Implementation of Actions

Next steps—report to be inclusive of all three phases

- Disseminating Knowledge of Study and further research.
- Leadership Clinical Practice Fellowships
- Educational Opportunities

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Implementing Actions

Career Support

- Development of online career supports
- Available Fall 2011

- 7 module self-directed eLearning Program with self-assessment tools
- Available through www.rpnao.org
Clarity affords focus

Thomas Leonard

Thank you