



Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce in New Jersey

Susan H. Weaver PhD, RN, CRNI, NEA-BC

Edna Cadmus, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN

Pamela B. de Cordova, PhD, RN

New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing

NJ Collaborating Center for Nursing



Funding was received from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing 2019 Grant Award for research “Exploration of the Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce.”

LPNs in the U.S.

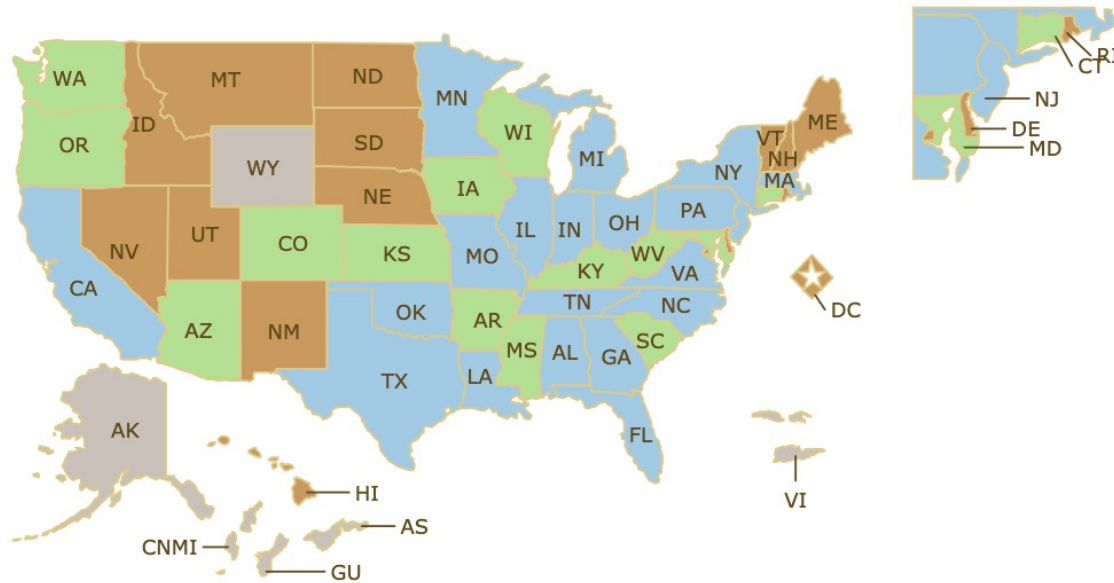
NUMBER OF ACTIVE PN LICENSES BY STATE

Hover over state for details

[State Participation Information](#)

Total Number of PN Licenses: 968,050

Total Number of Practical Nurses: 915,163



Last updated(12/18/2023)



Purpose

Phase I - Explore the perceptions of LPNs and LPN employers about the LPN roles and job functions across settings.

Phase II –

- ❖ Describe the current nursing activities and job satisfaction of LPNs in NJ and determine if there is a difference in job satisfaction of LPNs working in nursing homes and those working in other settings.
- ❖ For LPNs working in nursing homes, describe their perception of patient safety culture.

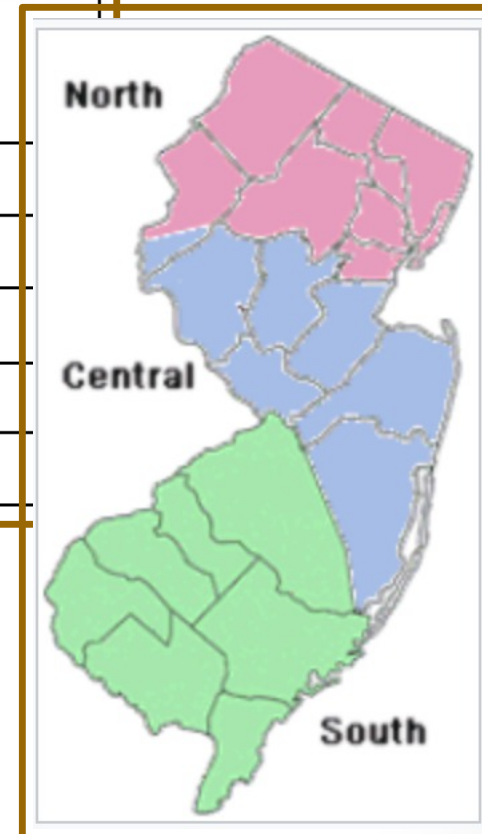
Phase I - Focus Groups with LPNs

LPN Focus Group Participants n = 43	
<u>Category</u>	<u>Mean (SD)</u>
Age	45.51 (10.3)
Age Range	29 - 62
Years in Position	8.45 (9.7)
<u>Gender</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
Male	1 (2)
Female	42 (98)
<u>Education</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
Community College	7 (16)
Vocational Technical School	34 (79)
Other	2 (5)
<u>Employment Setting</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
Long-term care facility/Sub-acute/Assisted living	18 (42)
Home Health/Hospice	9 (21)
Physician Office/Clinic	9 (21)
Hospital	3 (7)
Insurance Company	2 (5)
Other	2 (4)



Interviews with Employers

Employers of LPNs n = 17	
<u>Setting</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
Long term care, subacute, assisted living	7 (41)
Home health	6 (35)
Continuing Care Community	1 (6)
State correctional facility	1 (6)
Insurance Company	1 (6)
Psychiatric Continuum of Care	1 (6)



Common Themes



Common Themes LPNs and LPN Employers	
Themes	Subthemes
Uncertainty in the future of LPNs	There continues to be a demand for LPNs
	LPNs are running long-term care units
	LPNs believe they're going to die out.
LPNs need more hands-on experience	

LPN Focus Group Themes



LPN Focus Group Themes	Subthemes
LPNs question what they should do, can do, and will do.	RNs sign off on the LPNs' work
	LPNs just do what their told
LPNs are stuck in their role	LPNs find it nearly impossible to go back to school
	LPNs are unable to advance in their role
LPNs pray they make it through their shift	

LPN Employer Themes



LPN Employer Themes	Subthemes
RNs and LPNs are pretty much interchangeable	Facility policies dictate practice
LPNs make economic “cents”	

Phase II - Methods



Descriptive, cross-sectional study

Qualtrics survey to the 20,773 LPNs who had an email listed with the NJ Board of Nursing.

- Nursing activities survey
- Job Satisfaction questions
- Demographic questions
- For LPNs working in nursing homes the Nursing Home Survey on Patient Safety Culture

Survey open for 4 weeks in October 2020

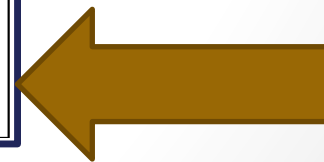
Demographics



	LPNs (n = 804)
<i>Age, y</i>	
Mean (SD)	48.6 (3.1)
Range	22–74
<i>Gender, n (%)</i>	
Male	34 (5)
Female	614 (92)
Transgender/Prefer not to answer	18 (3)
<i>Ethnicity/Race, n (%)</i>	
Hispanic/Latino	60 (8)
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1 (0)
Asian	23 (3)
Black/African American	130 (18)
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	5 (1)
White/Caucasian	381 (53)
Other	121 (17)
<i>Employment Setting, n (%)</i>	
Long-term care/sub-acute/assisted living facility	272 (41)
Home health/hospice	118 (18)
Hospital	41 (6)
Insurance company	14 (2)
Other	221 (33)



Nursing Activities	Total LPN Respondents	All settings n (%)			Nursing Homes n (%) n = 258
		Daily	Weekly or Monthly	Rarely/ Never	Daily
Document patient care	741	625 (84)	64 (9)	52 (7)	243 (94)
Provide basic nursing care	739	612 (82)	61 (9)	66 (9)	241 (93)
Check and monitor vital signs	745	606 (82)	87 (12)	52 (67)	239 (93)
Document observations	740	602 (81)	80 (11)	58 (8)	240 (93)
Administer oral, subcutaneous, and intramuscular medications	743	520 (70)	123 (17)	100 (13)	218 (84)
Assist with Activities of Daily Living (ADL)	743	444 (60)	119 (16)	180 (24)	201 (78)
Perform blood glucose monitoring (Check blood sugars)	743	426 (57)	164 (22)	153 (21)	217 (84)
Turn and reposition patients	739	418 (56)	91 (12)	230 (31)	208 (81)
Provide wound care	742	391(52)	189(25)	162 (22)	210 (81)
Communicate with families (change in condition, treatment, etc.,)	693	389 (56)	210 (30)	94 (14)	164 (64)
Supervise unlicensed assistive personnel, such as CNAs	695	389 (56)	106 (15)	200 (29)	220 (85)



Nursing Activities

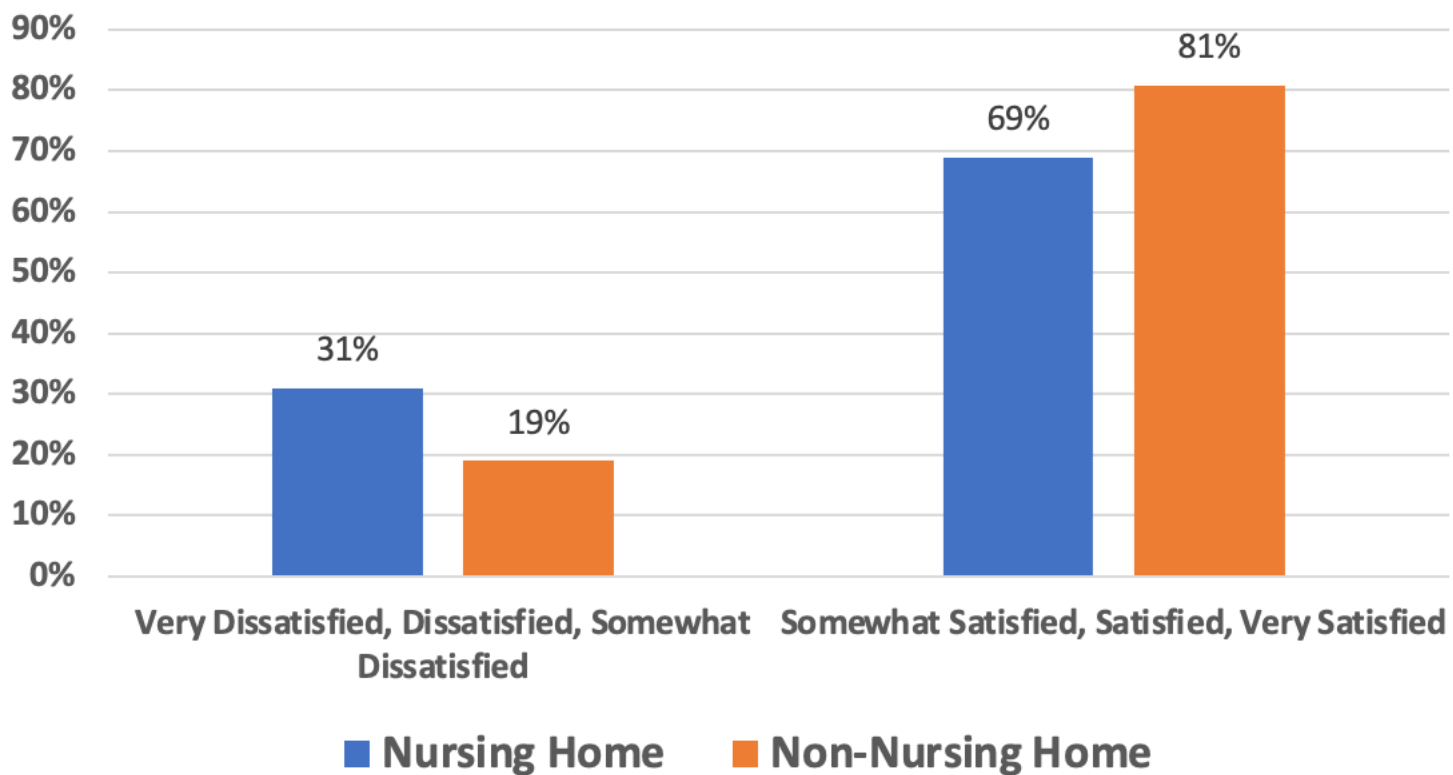


Nursing Activities	N	All settings <i>n</i> (%)	
		Daily, Weekly, or Monthly	Rarely/ Never
Complete and document a comprehensive admission assessment independently	690	379 (55)	311 (45)
Complete and document a comprehensive admission assessment with RN	692	312 (45)	380 (55)
Complete and document a focused assessment such as a respiratory assessment independently	693	402 (58)	291 (42)
Complete and document a focused assessment such as a respiratory assessment with RN	692	261 (38)	431 (62)
Formulate care plans	691	270 (39)	421 (61)

Job Satisfaction



How satisfied are you with your job?



Demographics – LPNs working in Nursing Homes



	LPNs n = 258	NJCCN LPN Nursing Home Workforce Data n = 5466	<i>p</i>
<u>Category</u>	<u>Mean (SD)</u>	<u>Mean (SD)</u>	
Age	48 (11.1)	46.6 (11.9)	.049*
Age Range	24-72	23-87	
<u>Gender</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	
Male	22 (10)	642 (14)	.923
Female	197 (86)	4,055 (86)	
Transgender/Prefer not to answer	10 (4)	1 (0)	
<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	
Hispanic/Latino	21 (8)	344 (8)	.975
<u>Race</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1 (0)	4 (0)	.999
Asian	12 (5)	504 (13)	
Black/African American	54 (22)	1,493 (37)	
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	3 (1)	40 (1)	
White/Caucasian	101 (41)	1,317 (33)	
Other	56 (23)	313 (8)	
<u>Multiple positions</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	
One position	142 (63)	3,672 (83)	.954
Two positions	74 (33)	674 (15)	
Three positions	10 (4)	55 (1)	
<u>Job status</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	
Full-time	166 (73)	3,439 (79)	.999
Part-time	34 (15)	445 (10)	
Perdiem	25 (11)	340 (8)	
Other	3 (1)	138 (3)	

*p < .05
 Participants may have skipped questions, causing data in this table to add up to less than the total number of participants.

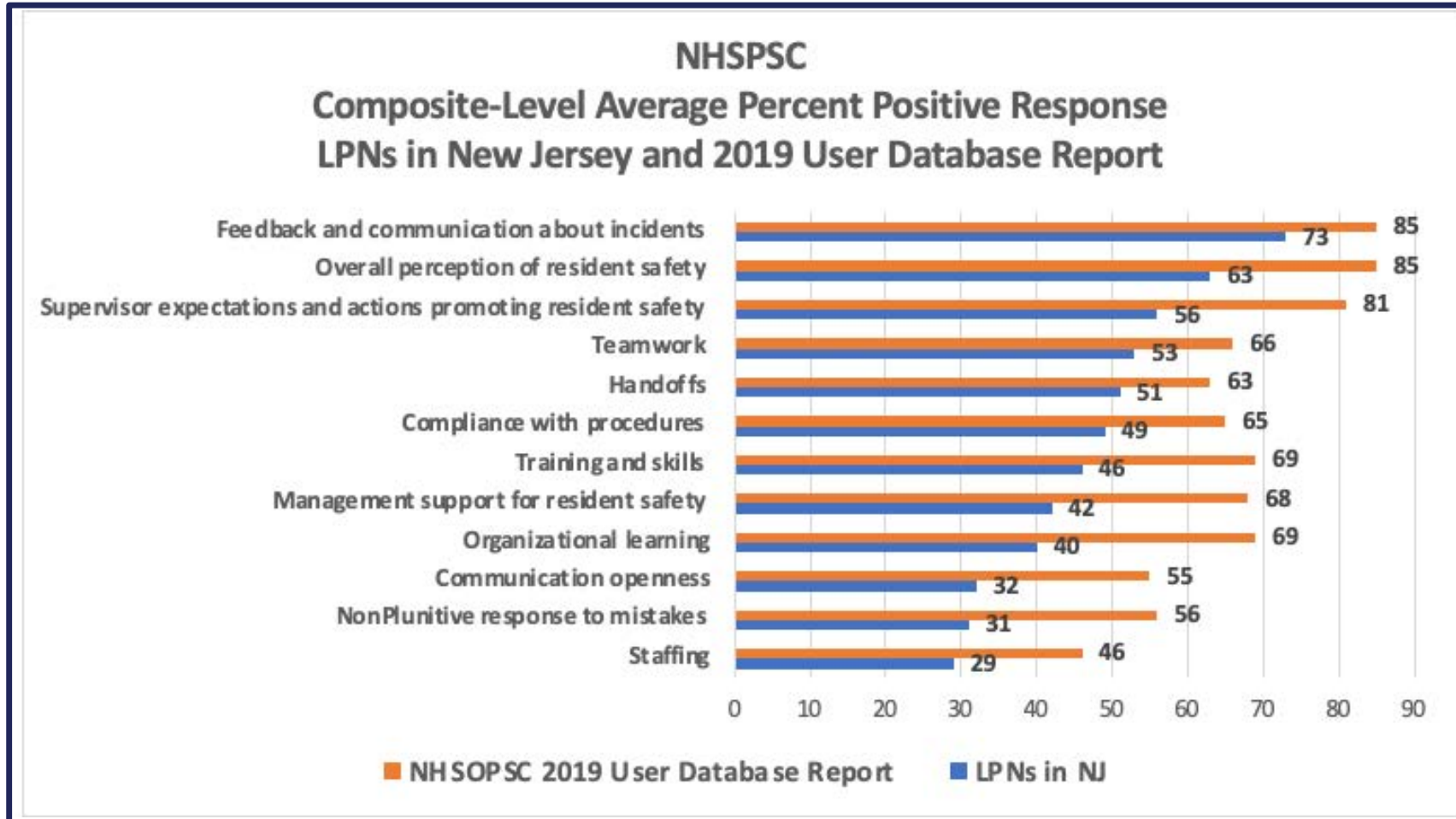


Positive responses

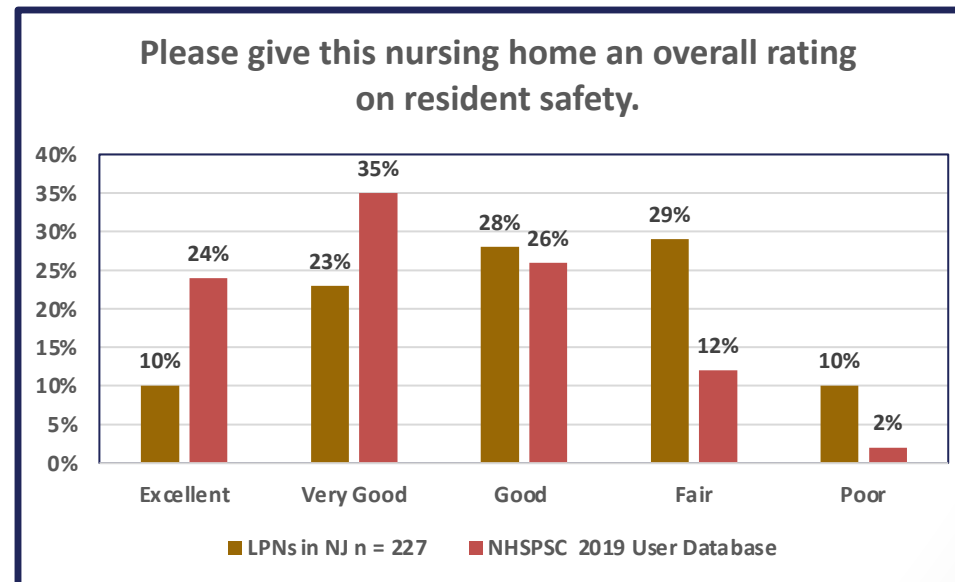
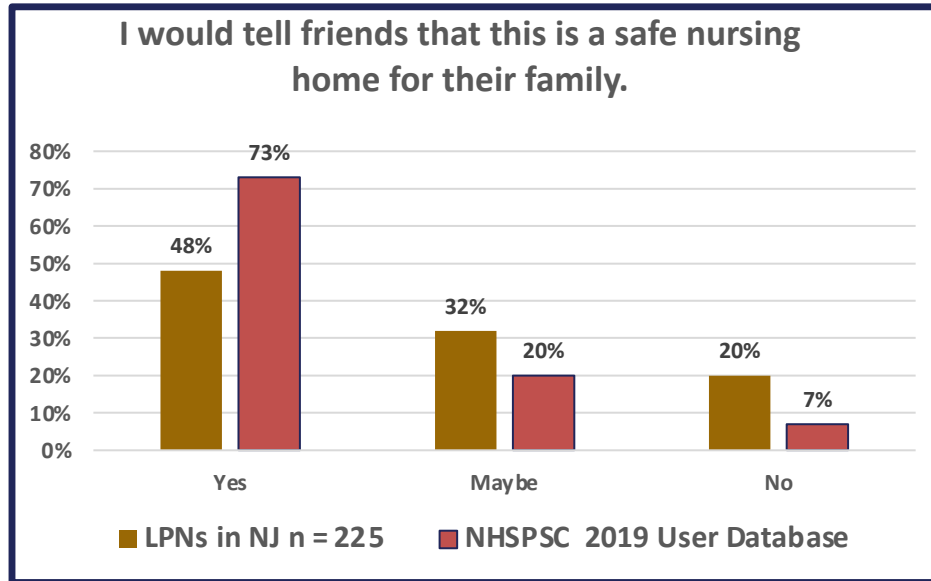


	LPNs in NJ working in Nursing Homes n=230	NHSPSC 2019 User Benchmark
Staffing (Cronbach 0.994) Composite 29% Positive	n (%)	%
A3. We have enough staff to handle the workload	35 (16)	34
A8. Staff have to hurry because they have too much work to do (N)	35 (15)	30
A16. Residents' needs are met during shift change	109 (47)	63
A17. It is hard to keep residents safe here because so many staff quit their jobs (N)	86(38)	56
Organizational learning (Cronbach 0.997) Composite 40% Positive	n (%)	%
D3. This nursing home lets the same mistakes happen again and again	54 (24)	65
D4. It is easy to make changes to improve resident safety in this nursing home	99 (44)	65
D5. This nursing home is always doing things to improve resident safety	105 (46)	75
D10. When this nursing home makes changes to improve resident safety, it checks to see if the changes worked	106 (47)	72
Feedback and Communication about Incidents (Cronbach 0.999) Composite 73% Positive	n (%)	%
B4. When staff report something that could harm a resident, someone takes care of it	172 (75)	83
B5. In this nursing home, we talk about ways to keep incidents from happening again	152 (67)	83
B6. Staff tell someone if they see something that might harm a resident	188 (82)	89
B8. In this nursing home, we discuss ways to keep residents safe from harm	154 (68)	84

Patient Safety Culture



Patient Safety Culture



Scope of Practice

Some LPNs are functioning beyond their scope of practice and independently completing comprehensive admission assessment and care plans.

NJ Board of Nursing administrative code states,
“Registered nurses shall not delegate physical, psychological, and social assessment of the patient.... shall not delegate the formulation of the plan of nursing care and evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan.”



STAFFING

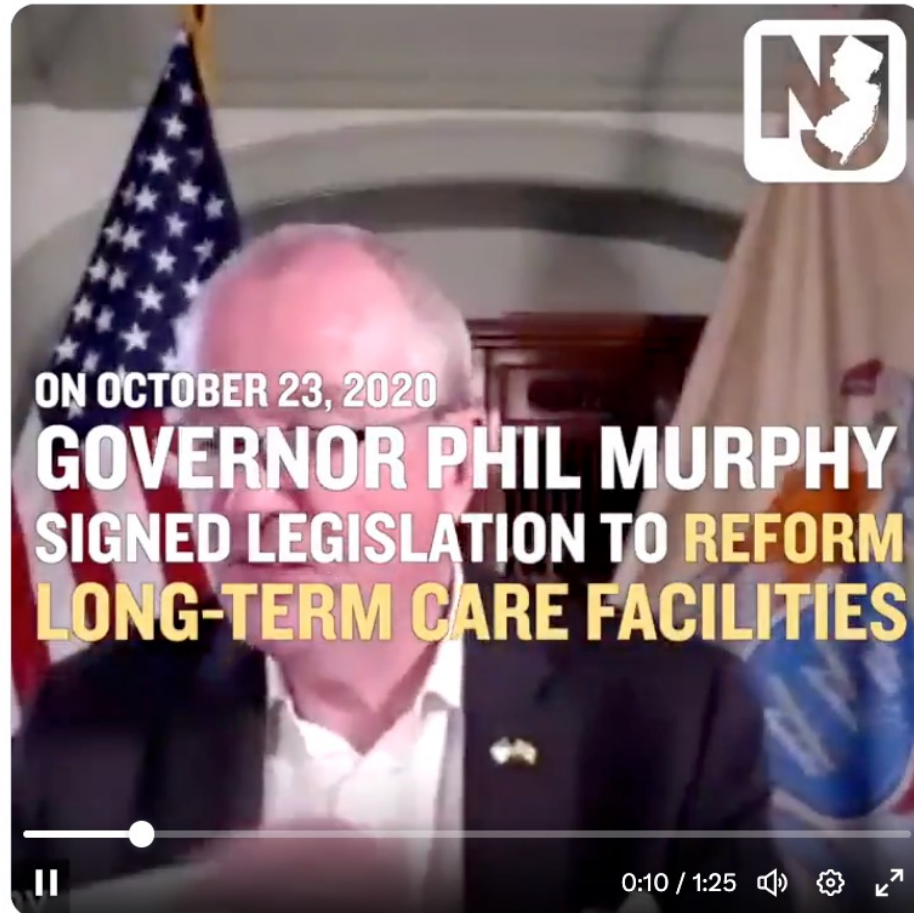


Governor Phil Murphy 
@GovMurphy

Today I signed legislation to:

- ✓ Enact minimum direct care staff-to-resident ratios for our nursing homes
- ✓ Create a Special Task Force on Direct Care Workforce Retention & Recruitment
- ✓ Ensure communication with loved ones remains strong and intact

[nj.gov/governor/news/...](https://nj.gov/governor/news/)



2:47 PM · Oct 23, 2020

Improvement in Patient Safety Culture is needed.





Please contact Sue
Weaver if you have any
questions
susan.weaver@rutgers.edu
201-787-1281

Nursing Home Patient Safety Culture Perceptions Among Licensed Practical Nurses

Susan H. Weaver, PhD, RN, CRNI, NEA-BC; Pamela B. de Cordova, PhD, RN-BC; Arun Ravichandran, MS; Edna Cadmus, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN

ABSTRACT

Background: Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) working in nursing homes are the primary licensed nurses providing care and ensuring patient safety in New Jersey. As such, it is important to understand LPNs' perception of patient safety culture (PSC) and job satisfaction, which may impact resident safety.

Purpose: To describe the relationship between LPNs' perception of PSC in nursing homes and job satisfaction.

Methods: A cross-sectional study design was used to survey LPNs in New Jersey.

Results: LPNs working in nursing homes were less satisfied than LPNs working in other settings, and their perception of PSC was lower than that in 2019 national data report.

Conclusion: LPNs in nursing homes indicated that PSC needs improvement. Now is an opportune time to implement initiatives to foster a culture of safety in nursing homes.

Keywords: job satisfaction, licenses practical nurses, nursing homes, patient safety

Patient safety is a nationwide concern, particularly for the 1.16 million residents living in one of the 15 183 United States (US) nursing homes.¹ As the primary licensed nurse providing direct care to residents in nursing homes,

LPNs are instrumental in ensuring patient safety in the nursing home/extended care.^{3,4} Thus, their perception of how to maintain safety for residents can provide insight into how to improve the quality of care for vulnerable patients in nursing homes.

The National Academy of Sciences, En-

Nursing Activities and Job Satisfaction of the Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce in New Jersey

Susan H. Weaver, PhD, RN, CRNI, NEA-BC; Pamela B. de Cordova, PhD, RN-BC; Arun Ravichandran, MS; and Edna Cadmus, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN

Background: Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) are important members of the nursing workforce in the United States, particularly in long-term care and home care settings. A previous qualitative study found LPNs have expanded their role, yet detailed information about the nursing activities performed by LPNs is lacking in New Jersey (NJ). **Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to describe current nursing activities and job satisfaction of LPNs in NJ and to determine whether there is a difference in the nursing activities and job satisfaction of LPNs working in nursing homes and those working in other settings. **Methods:** For this descriptive, cross-sectional study, LPNs who had email addresses listed with the NJ Board of Nursing were sent a survey about their nursing activities and job satisfaction. **Results:** The 804 LPNs who completed the survey were representative of the NJ LPN workforce. The top nursing activities that LPNs performed daily were documenting, providing basic nursing care, checking vital signs, and administering medications. LPNs working in nursing homes also identified supervising unlicensed assistive personnel as an additional top nursing activity. Many LPNs also reported independently performing comprehensive and focused assessments and formulating care plans. Compared with LPNs working in other settings, LPNs working in nursing homes had less job satisfaction. **Conclusion:** Our findings reveal that LPN scope of practice has increased, and some LPNs are functioning beyond their scope of practice. With a shared agenda, nurse leaders in practice, academe, trade organizations, and regulatory bodies should convene to discuss and ensure a clear understanding of the LPN role and scope of practice.

Keywords: Licensed practical nurse, scope of practice, job satisfaction, workforce, long-term care, vocational nurse, nursing activities

Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) in the United States are essential members of the nursing workforce who support the health-care team in providing patient care in varied settings. With the growing elderly population nationwide, the 900,988 U.S. LPNs are increasingly important in caring for patients in the home and long-

nurse practice acts (NPAs) and the accompanying regulations define and describe LPN scope of practice. In New Jersey (NJ), the board of nursing (BON) delineates the practice of nursing for LPNs as "performing tasks and responsibilities within the framework of casefinding; reinforcing the patient and family teaching program through