



Employment Outlook • March 2011

The Demand for Nursing Personnel Remains Strong in South Carolina

Every two years, the South Carolina Department of Commerce and the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics collaborate to estimate future employment levels for a wide variety of healthcare occupations. Their most recent report covers the period from 2008 to 2018. Summarized below are their estimates of how demand for different types of licensed and unlicensed nursing personnel is expected to change in South Carolina over the next decade. The number of anticipated annual openings include those due to growth (new jobs) and those created when people leave the workforce through retirement, career change, or for other reasons (replacements).

Nurses and Support Occupations	Employment			Total % Change	Average Annual Openings
	Actual 2008	Estimated 2018	Total Change		
Registered Nurses ^a	38,401	48,021	9,620	25%	1,633
Licensed Practical / Vocational Nurses ^b	9,955	11,851	1,896	19%	501
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants ^c	20,094	23,395	3,301	16%	530
Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides ^d	31,632	39,207	7,575	24%	1,073

Note: Registered Nurse and Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse counts in this table are based on survey data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and may differ from counts based on analysis of South Carolina license data used in the "South Carolina Health Professions Data Book."

a The group "Registered Nurses" includes the following job titles: Registered Nurse (RN), Staff RN, Staff Nurse, Charge Nurse, Operating Room RN, Oncology RN, Relief Charge Nurse, Cardiac Care Unit Nurse, Certified Nurse Operating Room, Coronary Care Unit Nurse.

b The group "Licensed Practical / Vocational Nurses" includes the following job titles: Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Charge Nurse, Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), Clinic Licensed Practical Nurse, Pediatric Licensed Practical Nurse, Clinic Nurse, Office Nurse, Private Duty Nurse, Triage Licensed Practical Nurse.

c The group "Nursing Aides Orderlies and Attendants" includes the following job titles: Certified Nurse Aide, Certified Nursing Assistant, Nursing Assistant, Patient Care Assistant, Patient Care Technician, Certified Medication Aide, Attendant, Psychiatric Attendant, Hospital Assistant.

d The group "Nursing, Psychiatric and Home Health Aides" includes the following job titles: Home Health Aide, Psychiatric Aide, Nursing Assistant, and Orderly.

Most of the future anticipated openings for nursing personnel in South Carolina is being driven by new job growth. Among Registered Nurses 59% of the projected annual openings are due to new job growth. The same is true for unlicensed, direct care personnel: among those in the occupational group Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides new job growth accounts for 71% of all anticipated annual openings in South Carolina. Among Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants 62% of all jobs are expected to be from new growth. The one nursing occupation where this trend does not hold true is among Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses where the majority of future openings will be driven by replacement needs rather than new growth.

Although the growth rates (Total % Change) for the nursing personnel types included in this table are not overly large, note that more than 1,600 job openings were expected each year for Registered Nurses, and a similar number for direct care aides at the time this study was completed. The economic recession may have reduced the actual number of annual openings in recent years, but the general outlook is still very strong.

Data Source: Unpublished tables provided by the South Carolina Department of Commerce "2008 - 2018 Healthcare Workforce in South Carolina by Occupational Title." National occupational projections can be found at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.toc.htm>