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On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

## **Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Center for Nursing Jointly Announce Results from Survey of State's Registered Nurses**

*Information will help address greatest workforce shortage expected in state*

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman and Wisconsin Center for Nursing President Dr. Ann Cook today jointly announced the results of a survey of the state's 77,500 registered nurses. The findings will be used to strengthen the state's health care workforce.

"This survey provides valuable insights into Wisconsin's nursing field, which includes the largest group of health care workers in the state," DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman said. "We know there will be a need for over 8,000 new health care workers per year through 2018 to fill new jobs, and nurses are in the greatest demand of all occupations in the state. The information from the survey tells us nurses are significantly older than the general labor force, so we must keep advancing strategies to address these future labor shortages."

The Center for Nursing's Dr. Cook added: "On behalf of the Wisconsin Center for Nursing, I'd like to thank registered nurses for their cooperation in completing the survey. The data collected are critical to the future of nursing in Wisconsin. The data also are critical to the well-being and health of the citizens who rely on registered nurses who perform in a variety of roles including direct patient care provider, policy leader to health care manager, and nurse educator."

Findings of the 2010 Wisconsin Registered Nurse Survey include:

- Wisconsin registered nurses are predominantly female, well-educated and older than the workforce as a whole.
- The median age of registered nurses is 45-49 years old, while the median age of the state's workforce is 40-44 years old. Additionally, 46 percent are 50 years of age or older.
- Less than 50 percent of registered nurses work in hospitals; other workplace settings include ambulatory care, nursing homes and extended care, public health, and academic education.

These and other findings can be found in an "at-a-glance" document on the DWD WORKnet website at [www.worknet.wisconsin.gov](http://www.worknet.wisconsin.gov). The findings also will be presented Friday at 2:45 p.m. as part of the Wisconsin Nurses Association's annual conference in Madison at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.

The 2010 Wisconsin Registered Nurse Survey was conducted as a component of registered nurses' biannual license renewal earlier this year. The state Department of Regulation and Licensing (DRL) administered the survey online and in paper format, and DWD received and began initial analysis of the data in consultation with the Wisconsin Health Workforce Data Collaborative and the Wisconsin Center for Nursing.

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The project is being funded in part by the Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program, a component of the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin. State Senator Judy Robson was instrumental in securing funding for the survey through the legislative process.

State Department of Regulation and Licensing Secretary Celia Jackson said, "The license renewal process provided the means to reach as many registered nurses as possible. The Department of Regulation and Licensing felt it was important to assist in this important initiative."

State Department of Health Services Karen Timberlake said, "An adequate nursing workforce is vital to the health delivery system and the well being of Wisconsin residents. Thanks to the 2010 Wisconsin Registered Nurse Survey, we have accurate and comprehensive workforce data on RNs licensed in Wisconsin. This is a critical component to understanding the nursing supply and demand and allows us to better plan for the future."

Wisconsin Nurses Association President Carolyn Krause said, "Our organization has been very engaged and supportive of this historic project. We look forward to partnering with all of the key stakeholders in gaining more information and developing a strategy for assuring that the people of Wisconsin have access to a competent, committed and caring nursing workforce for the future. "

The survey was developed through assistance by DWD's Division of Employment and Training and Office of Economic Advisors, and further supported by the following organizations:

- **State agencies:** Departments of Regulation and Licensing and Health Services;
- **Educational Institutions:** University of Wisconsin System – Schools of Nursing, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and the Wisconsin Technical College System;
- **Nursing Organizations:** Wisconsin Center for Nursing, Wisconsin Nurses Association and the Wisconsin Nursing Coalition; and,
- **Health Care Organizations:** Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative, Wisconsin Hospital Association, Wisconsin Medical Society, Medical College of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) System.

A survey of Licensed Practical Nurses is slated for 2011, and will be administered by DRL as part of license renewal.

Once all survey data are analyzed, the Wisconsin Center for Nursing is charged with developing a statewide strategic plan to address nursing workforce needs in Wisconsin. The plan will analyze and seek resolution of regional and specialty shortages; monitor and evaluate trends in nursing supply and demand; develop recruitment and retention strategies across the continuum of care; and, support expansion of capacity in nursing education programs. A formal report is due to the Wisconsin Legislature in September 2011.