

WWAMI CENTER FOR HEALTH WORKFORCE STUDIES

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Project Summary

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Washington State Hospitals: Results of 2003/04 Workforce Survey

Background: The University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies and the Washington State Hospital Association’s Health Work Force Institute collaborated, for the third year, in a staffing survey of Washington’s non-federal acute care hospitals.

Methods: Eighty-eight hospitals were mailed a five-page questionnaire about employment and contracting of 21 occupations, and 81 percent of the hospitals responded.

Major Findings:

- ✦ Statewide, nursing has the most vacancies — 1,772. But the staff nurse vacancy rate dropped from 10.1 percent in 2002 to 6.2 percent in 2004.

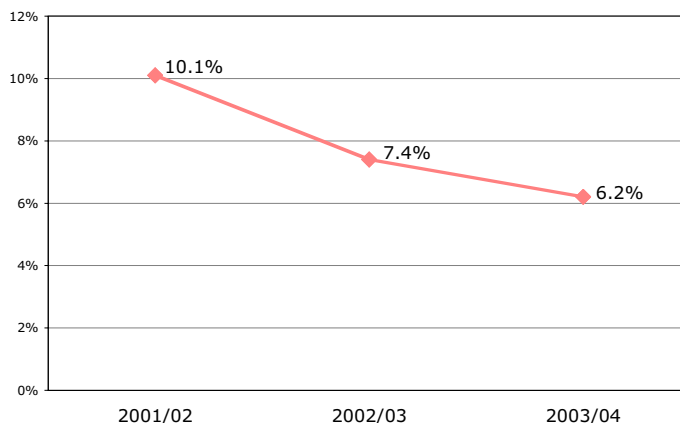
- ✦ The highest vacancy rates are for occupational therapists, physical therapists, ultrasound technologists, and nuclear medicine technologists.

- ✦ While all regions of the state cited difficulty recruiting some hospital staff, not all regions are having problems with the same occupations.

- ✦ Anesthesiologists and radiologists are the physician types most difficult to recruit.

Policy Implications: Workforce shortages are lessening among hospitals in Washington. It is not clear whether this is the result of changes in economic conditions or an increase in provider supply. But because there remain shortages for many hospital occupations and the average age of most of these workers is rising, close attention should continue to be paid to the trends among the hospital workforce.

Staff Nurse Overall Vacancy Rates: Washington Hospitals 2001/02 through 2003/04



Hospital Occupations with the Highest Vacancy Rates

Occupational therapists	13.5%
Physical therapists	11.7%
Ultrasound technologists	10.3%
Nuclear medicine technologists	9.6%
Medical clinical lab technologists	6.5%
Staff nurses	6.2%

Findings from this study are more fully described in WWAMI Center for Health Workforce Studies Working Paper #93: Skillman SM, Andrilla CHA, Hutson T, Deacon H, Praseuth T, Washington State Hospitals: Results of 2003/04 Workforce Survey, October 2004, available at <http://www.fammed.washington.edu/CHWS/>.

