

The Louisiana Health Workforce: Highlights from the Health Workforce Profile

- ✓ There were nearly 200,000 people employed in the health sector in Louisiana in 2000, 10.7% of Louisiana's total workforce, higher than the national rate of 8.8%. Louisiana ranked 18th among states in per capita health services employment.
- ✓ Health services employment in Louisiana grew 44% between 1988 and 2000, while the state's population grew by only 4% during that period, resulting in a net per capita growth of 38% in health services sector employment, nearly twice the national rate of growth (21%).
- ✓ The total population of Louisiana is projected to grow 12 % between 2000 and 2020, while the population 65 and over is projected to grow 59%.
- ✓ In 1999, Louisiana had the highest rate of death in the country due to cancer and also ranked high in rates of deaths due to firearms and heart disease. In addition, Louisiana ranked high in the incidence of TB and reported AIDS cases in 2000.
- ✓ In 2000, Louisiana was above the national rate in the number of hospital beds per 100,000 population.

Highlights of the findings about the health workforce on Louisiana are presented below.

Medicine

- ✓ There were nearly 8,300 active patient care physicians in Louisiana in 2000. With 185 physicians per 100,000 population, Louisiana was lower than the national ratio of 198 physicians per 100,000. Louisiana ranked 27th among states in physicians per capita.
- ✓ Louisiana had 55 active primary care physicians per 100,000 population in 2000, lower than the rate of 69 per 100,000 for the entire country.
- ✓ Medical schools in Louisiana graduated over 400 new physicians in 1999-00. Louisiana ranked 11th among the 46 states with medical schools in number of medical school graduates. On a per capita basis, Louisiana graduated more new physicians per 100,000 population (9.8) than did the entire United States (6.4) and ranked 8th among the 46 states with medical schools in medical school graduates per capita.
- ✓ There were 359 physician assistants practicing in Louisiana in 2000. This is equal to 8 physician assistants per 100,000 population, less than the national rate of 14.4.

Nursing

- ✓ There were more than 40,600 licensed registered nurses (RNs) in Louisiana in 2000; nearly 37,300 were employed in nursing. This was equal to 833.9 RNs per 100,000 population in Louisiana in 2000, higher than the national rate of 780.2.
- ✓ Louisiana ranked 5th among the states in per capita employment of Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses (LPNs), with 366.5 LPNs per 100,000 population as compared to the national rate of 240.8 per 100,000. Louisiana ranked 16th in the number of LPNs employed in 2000 with 16,380 workers.
- ✓ Louisiana had more than 1,100 nurse practitioners in 2000. This was equal to 24.9 nurse practitioners per 100,000 population, less than the national rate of 33.7.
- ✓ With 34 certified nurse midwives in 2000, Louisiana had 0.8 certified nurse midwife per 100,000 population, well below the national rate of 2.9. Louisiana had one of the lowest rates of certified nurse midwives per capita in the country.
- ✓ With 721 certified registered nurse anesthetists in 2003, Louisiana had 16.1 nurse anesthetists per 100,000 population, higher than the national rate of 9.3.

Dentistry, Pharmacy and Mental Health

- ✓ There were 1,920 dentists, 1,420 dental hygienists, and 2,480 dental assistants practicing in Louisiana in 2000. There were 43 dentists per 100,000 population in Louisiana in 2000, below the national rate of 63.6. Louisiana ranked 42nd in the nation in dentists per capita. The per capita ratios of dental hygienists and dental assistants were also lower than their respective national rates.
- ✓ The number of dentists in Louisiana increased 6% between 1991 and 2000 while the state's population grew 5%. The result was no change in dentists per capita compared to a 16% increase nationwide.
- ✓ There were 3,670 pharmacists and 3,410 pharmacy technicians and aides practicing in Louisiana in 2000. Louisiana had 82.1 pharmacists and 76.3 pharmacy technicians and aides per 100,000 population in 2000, which ranked them 19th and 37th, respectively, among the 50 states.
- ✓ There were 462 psychiatrists, 460 psychologists and 4,530 social workers in Louisiana in 2000. This is equal to 10.6 psychiatrists, 10.3 psychologists, and 101.3 social workers per 100,000 population. Louisiana ranked 21st among states in psychiatrists per capita, 50th among states in psychologists per capita, and 46th among states in social workers per capita.

Aides

- ✓ There were 4,710 home health aides and 26,330 nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants working in Louisiana in 2000.