

BRIEF

Registered Nurses in Management Positions (2013)

The province needs visionary leaders and strong managers to address the complex challenges in health care and to achieve quality outcomes for clients and the health care system. Registered nurses (RNs) in management positions help to create professional practice environments that support the provision of quality care. Research has shown that nurse managers can positively influence patient outcomes (Germain & Cummings, 2010) and reduce adverse events, complications and mortality (Wong & Cummings, 2007). Research has also shown that support from managers plays a vital role in adopting evidence-informed practice (Baeza, Fitzgerald & McGivern, 2008; Van Patter Gale & Schaffer, 2009). The use of evidence-informed practice is recognized as a way to enhance the quality of care and contribute to better value within the health care system (Health Innovations Working Group, 2012). The 2012 ARNNL Survey of RNs in Management Positions showed that more than 75 percent of managers are the primary identifier, implementer, and evaluator of best practices and health care innovations in their area of responsibility (ARNNL, 2012).

Each year, several hundred ARNNL members indicate that they are practicing in formal management positions such as CEO, Director, Vice-President, Manager, and Supervisor. Although the roles and responsibilities vary with the size of the organization and the position held, 7-out-of-10 nurse managers reported that they were satisfied with their current role (ARNNL, 2012). They cited autonomy, participation in decision making, ability to lead change, providing a voice for nursing, and supporting staff as examples of the positive aspects of their positions. However, many common challenges were also identified by the RNs who assume these positions; excessive workload and span of control, and fair compensation are of particular concern because these factors have been shown to influence recruitment and retention (Brown, Fraser, Wong, Muise & Cummings, 2013).

ARNNL recognizes that Government and the Regional Health Authorities have made investments to address these challenges. However, we believe that further attention is required because almost half (43.9%) of RNs currently employed in management positions will have reached or exceeded the usual age of retirement by 2020 (see ARNNL Snapshot of Management Statistics on opposite page). When asked, nearly half (46.2%) indicated that their organization would have difficulty finding a qualified replacement if they were to leave their position (ARNNL, 2012). Workload, stress levels and compensation were identified as the top three barriers to recruitment. Additionally, results from the 2013 ARNNL Member Survey demonstrate that the vast majority of RNs do not want to enter management positions. If we are to address the potential gap caused by the retirement of current nurse managers and continue to support the vital role that nurse managers assume in the health care system, we must make entering management an attractive proposition.

Further, we must assist current nurse managers to fulfill the various responsibilities of management positions. Continuing education is critical to obtaining and maintaining the knowledge and skills needed to continuously improve the quality of nursing management in the health care setting. The majority of nurse managers (73.8%) reported that they did not believe RNs entering management are adequately prepared for the role and responsibilities, citing conflict management, HR issues, budget/payroll, change management and addressing staff performance issues as examples of areas in which they believe further preparation is required (ARNNL, 2012). These results suggest that more programs and supports are needed to attract and retain professionals in management positions in health care.

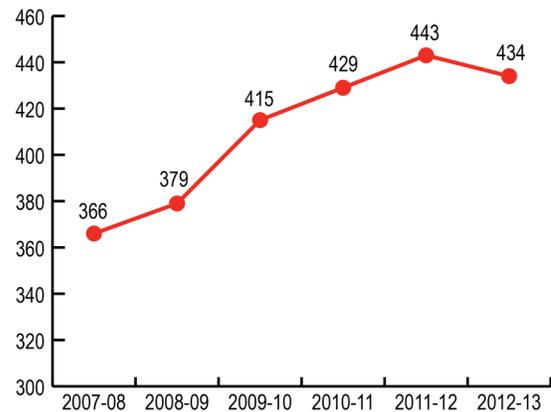
ARNNL believes that the development of a comprehensive succession plan is required to ensure an adequate number of nurse managers for the future. The plan should incorporate strategies to address the challenges of RNs in management positions as well as ensuring adequate opportunities for RNs who are not currently in management to develop the competencies required to become skilled managers and visionary leaders.

References available upon request.

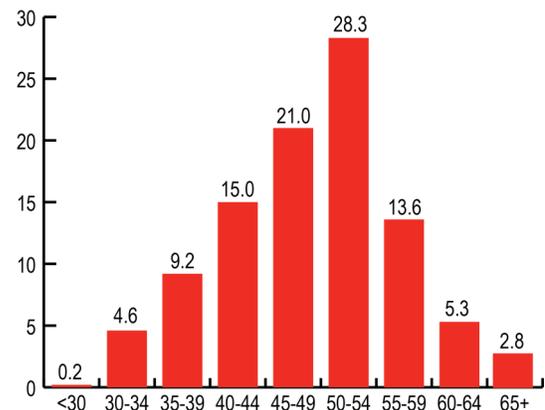
ARNNL Snapshot of Management Statistics (2013-14)

- In the 2012-13 licensure year, 434 practicing ARNNL members reported that they were employed in a management position¹, down slightly from 443 in the previous year. This is the first year since 2006-07 that there has been a decrease in the number of RNs in management positions. Although this is only a slight decrease (2.0%), the importance of having RNs in leadership positions suggests this trend should be closely monitored.
- The average age of RNs in management positions was 49.4 years. This is higher than direct care RNs (41.2 years), advanced practice RNs (45.8 years), and RNs employed in Long Term Care (48.3 years). The average age of all practicing members is 43.0 years.
- Half of RNs in management positions are age 50 or older. Approximately one-in-ten (12.9%) were age 58 or older (the usual age of retirement for RNs) at year end. Almost half (43.9%) of RNs in management positions will have reached or exceeded the usual age of retirement by 2020.
- In the 2013 *ARNNL Member Survey*, members who were not currently in management were asked to rate the likelihood that they would enter into a management position; most (53.2%) rated it as 1 (i.e., not at all likely). Less than one-in-10 (9.8%) rated it as 8 or higher indicating they were likely to enter management. This is consistent with results of the 2011 *ARNNL Member Survey*.
- Results of ARNNL's *Survey of RNs in Management Positions (2012)* show that high levels of responsibility and compression of salaries make management roles unattractive. For example:
 - 83.5% of survey respondents indicated staff report directly to them. Of these:
 - 45.6% have more than 30 direct reports
 - 77.3% have staff in more than one unit/department/program
 - 58% have staff in more than one building
 - 78.2% reported they work the equivalent at least one hour of unpaid overtime per day; 25.9% work in excess of 15 unpaid overtime hours per week.
 - Less than half (48.1%) agree that remuneration is fair and reasonable.

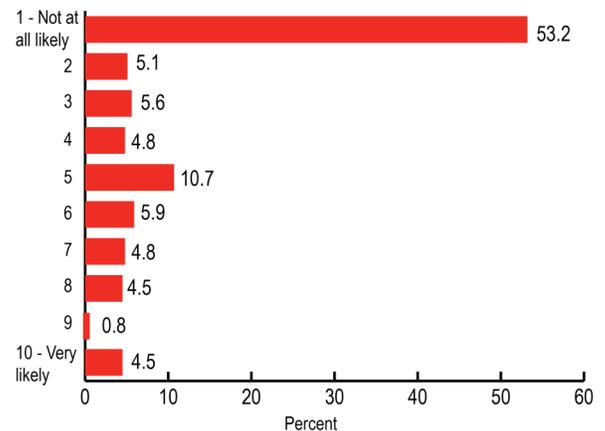
Number in Management by Licensure Year



Age of RNs in Management Positions



Likelihood Members Will Enter Management



¹ ARNNL defines management using the following employment position categories from the Member Database: Executive, Director/Assistant Director, Manager/Assistant Manager/Head Nurse, and Supervisor.