

Solving the Nursing Shortage

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Helen Moss, MA
Labor Education and Research Center



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Recent Research - Same Bad News

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- RN shortage 500,000 by 2025
- Need to expand # of grads by 30%
- More than 1 million new nurses needed by 2016
- 2007 national vacancy rate for RNs - 8.1%
- 5.4% increase in enrollment in 4 year programs
- 2007-2008 these programs turned away 40,285 qualified applicants
- First year nurses who leave within a year - 27.1%

Important Question

- Shortage of nurses

or

Shortage of nurses
willing to work for
deteriorating wages
and working
conditions?

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More patients per
nurse

Increased duties

Sicker patients

Rapid patient
turnover

Unsafe working
environments

Less support

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**Increased
stress and
burnout**

Strategies that work

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- **Address the problems that make nurses leave**
- **Add staff at all levels**
- **Give staff a real voice - Unions!**

Good but Limited Strategies

- Increase # of RN programs
- Increase # of RN faculty
- More scholarships
- Recruit more candidates
- Public image campaign

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Short-sighted and Unproductive Strategies



- Trying to end lateral hostility through zero-tolerance programs
- Adding RNs but cutting other staff that support RNs

Practical Ideas

- More “grow your own” programs
- Where appropriate, bring back LPNs
- Encourage nurses to work at the top end of their scope
- Pay more for increased duties



“Nursing needs people with different skill sets and talents – whether it is an aptitude for technology or interpersonal communications. Everyone can find a place to thrive and be happy and useful in this broad and challenging field.”

Dr. Margaret McClure