



# Return on Investment in South Carolina's Nursing Programs

Coordinating Council for Workforce Development Meeting

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# Acknowledgments

- These reports involved the work of many people within my division and agency as well as other CCWD member agencies, but the lead author and her supervisors should be recognized:
- Sophia Casler, Longitudinal Data Analyst
- Faith Kithome, Strategic Initiatives Manager
- Brandon Wilkerson, Labor Market Analytics Director

# Introduction

- The Nursing Employment Outcomes reports quantify who is receiving nursing degrees from our two- and four-year postsecondary institutions and the return on investment that accrues to graduates' wages.
- How will these reports be used? They can:
  - Provide actionable knowledge for jobseekers considering a health services career
  - Inform employers and policymakers about the labor market
  - Describe the pathway to priority occupations

# Methodology

- Additional information is assembled with partners at CHE and TCS to show wage trajectories for those interested in education programs.
- As presented to the CCWD previously, we have developed one-page flyers that summarize results in several fields, e.g., welding and mechatronics.
- Our first two full reports build out knowledge of nursing graduates, providing data that will assist in efforts to attract people to the field.

# Data and Analysis

- Our reports look at two groups of nursing program completers:
  - 21,715 associate degree holders from SCTCS two-year institutions, CY 2004-2021
  - 12,901 bachelor's degree holders from CHE four-year institutions, FY 2012-2021
- Demographics are available from administrative data.
- Total earnings one, five, and ten years after graduation were available for individuals in DEW wage records.\*

\*Records do not include students who work outside of the state, are self-employed, serve as independent contractors, or work for the federal government or military.

# Demographics of Associate Nursing Graduates

Category	Number	Share	Wage Record Retention Rate		
			One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Total	21,715	100%	87.2%	77.9%	71.9%
Female	19,554	90.0%	87.1%	78.2%	72.7%
Male	2,161	10.0%	87.3%	74.2%	64.7%
White	16,182	74.5%	87.8%	79.2%	73.1%
Black or African American	3,796	17.5%	87.2%	75.9%	70.6%
Hispanic or Latino	519	2.4%	75.3%	63.9%	54.6%
Asian	333	1.5%	79.6%	63.4%	61.0%
Two or more races	249	1.1%	85.5%	72.0%	59.3%
In-State	20,106	92.6%	89.7%	80.7%	74.3%
Out-of-State	1,609	7.4%	55.1%	40.6%	35.8%

# Median Earnings of Associate Nursing Graduates

Category	One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Total	\$60,637	\$70,956	\$77,132
Female	\$60,215	\$70,377	\$76,372
Male	\$64,482	\$77,417	\$86,730
White	\$60,310	\$70,351	\$77,132
Black or African American	\$62,435	\$73,992	\$79,672
Hispanic or Latino	\$58,558	\$70,852	\$74,542
Asian	\$59,756	\$77,262	\$82,218
Two or more races	\$62,945	\$78,630	\$83,098

Note: Calculation excludes part-time workers (salaries below \$14,500).

# Where Associate Nursing Graduates Are Employed

Sector	One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Health Care and Social Assistance	92.1%	86.7%	81.1%
Administrative and Support, etc.	4.8%	6.4%	6.0%
Public Administration	1.0%	1.7%	2.2%
Educational Services	0.4%	2.0%	3.6%
Finance and Insurance	0.1%	1.2%	3.4%
All Other Industries	1.7%	1.9%	3.7%



# Return on Investment - Associate Nursing Graduates

- The average sticker price for a two-year nursing degree across TCS institutions (i.e., not including aid or scholarships) is roughly \$10,000.
- The “wage premium” - the amount a typical graduate earned above the median high school graduate after completion - is \$23,000 per year.
- This means that a typical graduate from an associate nursing program recoups their investment in approximately five months, not including opportunity costs. This is reasonably consistent across all demographics.

# Demographics of Bachelor's Nursing Graduates

Category	Number	Share	Wage Record Retention Rate		
			One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Total	12,901	100%	77.6%	65.9%	70.0%
Female	11,502	89.2%	77.4%	66.3%	70.5%
Male	1,399	10.8%	79.6%	62.5%	66.1%
White	9,741	75.5%	77.0%	65.8%	71.2%
Black or African American	1,707	13.2%	83.1%	70.7%	66.7%
Hispanic or Latino	458	3.6%	74.2%	57.0%	63.8%
Asian	247	1.9%	76.9%	59.5%	
Two or more races	298	2.3%	74.5%	58.7%	
In-State	8,680	67.3%	84.3%	70.8%	74.1%
Out-of-State	4,221	32.7%	63.8%	56.1%	32.7%

# Median Earnings of Bachelor's Nursing Graduates

Category	One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Total	\$62,296	\$74,871	\$86,637
Female	\$62,065	\$74,128	\$83,821
Male	\$64,604	\$81,366	\$107,683
White	\$62,419	\$75,252	\$84,284
Black or African American	\$61,935	\$73,712	\$91,373
Hispanic or Latino	\$61,101	\$68,421	N/A
Asian	\$62,977	\$72,553	
Two or more races	\$61,912	\$74,555	

Note: Calculation excludes part-time workers (salaries below \$14,500).

# Where Bachelor's Nursing Graduates Are Employed

Sector	One Year	Five Years	Ten Years
Health Care and Social Assistance	91.9%	85.7%	84.3%
Administrative and Support, etc.	5.9%	7.8%	4.0%
Educational Services	0.7%	1.8%	2.3%
Prof., Scientific, & Tech. Services	0.3%	0.8%	3.0%
Finance and Insurance	0.3%	1.1%	2.7%
All Other Industries	0.9%	2.9%	3.7%

# Return on Investment - Bachelor's Nursing Graduates

- The average sticker price for a four-year nursing degree across CHE institutions (i.e., not including aid or scholarships) is roughly \$60,000.
- The “wage premium” - the amount a typical graduate earned above the median high school graduate after completion - is \$25,833 per year.
- This means that a typical graduate from a bachelor's nursing program recoups their investment in approximately 29 months, not including opportunity costs. This is reasonably consistent across all demographics.

# Return on Investment - Conclusions

- Nursing is a profession in demand, as registered nurses represent the single highest count of job postings of any occupation in the state.
- This is reflected in the wage premium of \$23,000-\$26,000 per year that students can expect to earn by receiving a degree in the field.
- Ultimately, we will create the comprehensive ROI analysis contemplated in the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act.
- The work of the CCWD Baseline Metrics Committee will greatly improve the state's capacity to answer more, increasingly complex questions.



# Thank you