

1997 REPORT ON STATUS OF NURSING PERSONNEL

Japanese Nursing Association
Survey & Research Section

Japanese Nursing Association has implemented the report on status of nursing personnel for its member every four years since 1965. The 1997 report is nine conducted. Members of this association include those who are qualified as public health nurse (female and male), midwife nurse, nurse (female and male), assistant nurse (female and male), and nursing instructor.

Questions on the report cover: age, marriage status, children (number of children, age of youngest child), academic background, license (qualification) held, years of experience, type of shift, type of occupation, position, work location, work hours per week, per month, night shift (form of work, frequency, night duty compensation), form of weekly holiday paid vacation, system of leave from care taking, special monthly holidays for women, monthly income, prenatal and postnatal measures for maternity protection, years of service, assignment transfers within the last five years, experience in charge of occupation, desire for further study at undergraduate or graduate levels, awareness regarding continuation of work, degree of satisfaction with work, the habit of smoking, knowledge on certification systems, type of nursing specialists required, supporting services required of nursing specialists, social changes and hopes for the future, awareness of social changes, knowledge and skills required of nursing specialist, acquisition of degrees and qualifications, key factors in selecting employment, desirable working life, continuous working as a nursing specialist, problems in daily work and nursing, ethics opportunities to discuss nursing ethics, and experience with computers.

The survey was conducted in November 1997, by way of sending survey sheets at random to 10,913 members of Japanese Nursing Association. There were 4,636 responses: response rate (rate of recovery) was 42.5%, lower than 52.4% of the 1993 report.

Major result of the survey was as follows.

I. Characteristics of Nursing Personnel

Ninety-eight percent of those surveyed were "female", 1.7% were "male".

Average age of the group as a whole was 37.3 years; 37.3 years for "public health nurses (female and male)", 37.6 years for "midwives", 36.2 years for "nurses", 42.6 years for "assistant nurses (female and male)", and 41.3 years for "nursing instructor".

Regarding marriage status, 57.6% (includes divorce, lost spouse), were married; of these, 85.4% had children, the average number being two. Of these with children, 29.9% had children below school age, and 14.5% were infants below two years of age.

General academic background were as follows: 77.8% were "high school" graduates, 9.3% were graduates of "junior college", 5.6% were graduates of "junior high school", and 2.7% were "University" graduates.

As for specialized education: 11.3% were graduates of "practical nursing programs, high school practical nursing programs", 33.3% were graduates of "college preparatory course". 34.8% were graduates of "nursing school (3-year course)", 4.9% were graduates of "junior college of nursing (3-year course)", 11.8% were graduates of "public health nursing school, midwife school etc." 0.8% were graduates of "colleges and graduate schools majoring nursing", and 0.6% were graduates of "old-style educational system".

Average years of experience in nursing were extended compared to the 1993 report, to 14.8 years.

II. Working Conditions

As for as form of employment goes, 97.3% were "regular employees"; 1.7% were "part-time workers", 1.2% were "temporary employees", 0.1% were "self-employed", 0.2% were "on vacation or suspended business", and 0.7% had "left jobs (includes retirees)".

Regarding position, 72.7% were in "non-administrative position", 23.0% in "middle management", and 4.1% in "administrative position".

Regarding work site, 85.4% worked in "hospitals", 4.0% in "municipal offices", 1.9% in "health centers", 2.6% in "educational for nursing" (excluding those who have left work).

The average number of work years at current workplace was 11.1 years.

Fifty-three percent had experienced a change of occupation.

III. Working Terms

Prescribed work hours per week was on average, on 40 hours and 24 minutes, being less than the average 41 hours and 13 minute of the 1993 report.

Of the regular employees 79.5% did overtime work. The average number of overtime work was 12 hours 42 minute.

As for the types of night duty of regular employees of hospitals (non-administrative positions) 58.2% were on "regular three shifts", 6.3% were on a "night shift" and "irregular three shifts", 11.8% were on the "regular two shift and an irregular two-shifts".

Regarding the number of night shift per month for a regular employee of a hospital (non-administrative position), "8 times" was the most common. Response of "9 to 10 times", and "11 times or more" decreased in comparison to 1993 report. The average number of night shifts was 8.4 times, less than 8.7 times of 1993 report. In this sense, a slight improvement was seen in terms of frequency of night shift.

The average number of days prescribed as annual paid vacation for regular employees was 19.6 days (18.2 days in the previous report), and the average number of paid holidays actually taken was 9.1 days (9.4 days in the previous report), with an acquisition rate of 49.9% (51.5 % in the previous report). The average number of paid vacation days and its acquisition rate decreased compared to the 1993 report.

The average monthly salary before taxes for regular employees with 15.3 years experience and continued service of 11.1 years was 359,751 yen, with the basic salary being 280,194 yen.

A question about maternal protection during pregnancy and at childbirth was asked of people with 0-3 children. In consequence 257 regular employees responded.

As for maternal protection measures received before giving childbirth, the most common was "exemption from night shift, night duty" at 38.5% (exemption period was provided on average, after the 6.2 month of pregnancy), followed by "reduced number of night shift, night duty" at 20.6%, and so on. However, 31.9% were "not provided with any particular measures", which leaves an area for improvement.

Regarding maternal protection measures provided after childbirth, the most common was "nursing leave" at 48.2%, decreased than the 53.3% of the 1993 report.

IV. The Habit of Smoking

Smoking experience

"Have you ever been smoking for over half a year?"

To this question, 25.5% of the respondents answered yes, 65.6% of who smoke everyday, and 21.0% have quit smoking. The average age at which they started smoking is 21.7, and the average age they quit smoking is 29.6.

Those between 40 and 44 have the highest rate of smoking experience (20.7%); the older the respondents, the lower the rate of smokers. The most common reason for starting to smoke is the influence of friends (45.0%), followed by Curiosity (36.2%), and irritation (31.0%).

The percentage of the last reason is high particularly in the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups.

V. Certification Systems

1. Knowledge on certification systems

"Do you know about the certification systems operated by the Japanese Nursing Association (JNA), namely, the Certified Clinical Specialist System, The Certified Nurse System, and the Certified Nursing Manager Certification System?"

To this question, the total of respondents who replied either they know or have heard about the system was 69.5% and 60.8% for the Certified Clinical Specialist System and the Certified Nurse System, respectively, while 28.0% and 36.2% replied they don't know about the two systems, respectively.

Concerning the Certified Nursing Manager Certification System, as many as 59.5% don't know about it, which is higher than percentages of negative answers concerning other two systems.

2. Type of nursing specialists required

"What type(s) of nursing specialists (Certified Clinical Specialist, Certified Nurse, Certified Nursing Manager) do you think is (are) necessary to improve the quality of nursing care?" (Multiple answers accepted.) The top three answers to this question were psychological nursing, including liaison (60.5%), visitation nursing (59.9%), and hospice care (57.7%).

3. Supporting services required of nursing specialists

"What type(s) of supporting services do you need nursing specialists (Certified Clinical Spe-

cialist, Certified Nurse, etc.) to provide, to improve the quality of nursing care?" (Multiple answers accepted)

As shown in Figure 21, the most popular answer was up-to-date knowledge and skills in specialized fields (76.3%), followed by advice on specific methods for providing care (61.2%), treating mental problems for patients and their families (53.5%), and instruction and guidance for patients and their families (51.7%).

VI. Social Changes and Hopes for the Future

1. Awareness of social changes

"As a nursing specialist, what do you think of the rapid changes in society, including the reform of systems for providing health, medical, and welfare services?"

We offered four choices for this question: "rather desirable trend, desirable timing", "rather undesirable trend, bad timing", "no changes, no influence", and "don't know".

Categories with the highest rate of respondents who said these changes are desirable were Nursing Teachers (64.8%) by occupation, and Managers (73.5%) by position.

2. Knowledge and skills required of nursing specialist

"Do you think the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of nursing specialists are changing in this time of transformation in providing health, medical, and welfare services?"

To this, 87.7% of the respondents answered yes, and 9.9% said no. We asked those who answered yes what type(s) of knowledge, skills, and abilities they thought were required of them. The top three replies were knowledge and skills in the field of home and visitation nursing (71.6%), more

Sophisticated skills in counseling, education, and instruction (60.8%), and knowledge about welfare policies and social welfare services (53.4%).

3. Acquisition of degrees and qualifications

"Do you plan to get new degrees or qualifications?"

To this question, 34.8% answered yes, and 62.7% said no. The younger people showed more willingness to obtain new qualifications. The most popular qualification was Care Manager (Care Supporting Specialist), accounting for 22.3%, followed by Emergency Life Saving Technician (12.7%).

4. Key factors in selecting employment

"Which of the following factors do you regard as most important in selecting employers and types of employment?" The most common answer to this question was compatibility with private life (45.9%), followed by satisfactory nursing available (31.7%), high income (8.1%), time available for obtaining qualifications and pursuing interests (4.0%), and light workload (0.9%).

5. Desirable working life

"How would you like to continue working?"

As high as 71.0% of the respondents said they want to continue working in some type of employment or another, 19.6% answered they may leave their jobs upon marriage, childbirth, and nursing, but would try to re-enter into employment, and 7.1% said they would leave their jobs and giving priority to private life such as marriage, childbirth, and nursing.

6. Continuous working as a nursing specialist

"Would you like to continue working as a nursing specialist?"

While 60.8% of the respondents answered yes, 32.7% said they wanted interesting jobs, whether they were nursing jobs or not, 1.5% wanted jobs other than in nursing, and 4.2% replied they wanted to leave their jobs if possible.

VI. Problems in Daily Work and Nursing Ethics

1. Problems

We offered eighteen cases that could cause problems to nurses in their daily work, and asked them to select those situations in which they would be worried, and those they had encountered. To the former question, the largest share of respondents (46.2%) chose: "When you are required to perform a job beyond your ability, with little confidence in your knowledge and skills" the younger the respondents, the higher the rate. As for the latter question, 49.6% of the respondents selected: "Although you don't think a doctor's instructions are most suitable for a patient, you can't tell the doctor your opinion, and are forced to obey the instructions".

2. Response to problems in daily work

We asked the respondents what measure(s) they would take when they encountered the above cases (multiple replies accepted). The largest number of respondents (71.9%) said they would "consult with a third party", followed by "discuss with the parties concerned" (54.3%), "refer to literature" (36.1%), "worry secretly" (23.2%), "try not to think seriously" (11.8%),

"leave the problem alone, because there is no way to resolve it" (11.0%), "refer the matter to ethics committees in the workplace" (6.3%), and "no item applicable" (1.2%).

3. Nursing ethics

1) The Code of Nursing Ethics

"Have you ever used The Code of Nursing Ethics published by the JNA?"

While as high as 92.8% of the respondents answered no, 5.2% said yes, and 2.0% gave no or indefinite replies.

2) Re. ethics committee

"Are there ethics committees and similar system in your workplace?"

To this, 15.6% of the respondents answered yes, 41.3% said no, 40.4% didn't know whether there were those systems in their workplace or not, and 2.7% gave no or indefinite answers.

3) Opportunities to discuss nursing ethics

"Are there opportunities to discuss problems on nursing ethics in your workplace?"

To this question, 16.7% answered yes, 47.6% said no, 31.9% replied they don't know, and 3.8% made no or indefinite replies.

VIII. Experience with Computers

1. Use of computers

"Do you use a computer?"

To this, 28.9% of the respondents use a computer only in the workplace, 8.0% only at home, 9.2% in the workplace and at home, 53.0% do not use one, and 0.8% gave no or indefinite answers. And 35.2% of nursing teachers said they use computers in the workplace and at home; this is the highest rate among all relevant occupations surveyed.

2. Interests in computers

"What would you like to do with a computer?" (Multiple answers accepted.) The top three answers were: access the Internet (57.1%), word processing (50.7%), and information retrieval (39.1%).

3. E-mail

"Do you have an e-mail address?"

To this question, 5.0% of the respondents answered yes, and 92.8% answered no.

Categories that included the largest share of users were nursing teachers by occupation (19.1%), and managers by position (7.6%).

4. JNA homepage

“Have you ever accessed the JNA homepage?”

To this, 6.1% of the respondents answered yes, 33.6% said they had heard about the Website, but had never accessed it, 58.7% didn't know about it, and 1.7% made no or indefinite replies.