

# Kansas Nursing Occupational Outlook 2002-2012

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The Kansas Department of Labor recently released a study of occupational employment throughout the state. The data was compiled using data collected from the unemployment insurance program and the Occupational and Employment Survey (OES). The study projects employment by industry and occupation from the year 2002-2012. Projected demand for occupational employment is significantly affected by the projected employment for industries.

The 2012 Kansas Occupational Outlook projects total employment to increase by more than 200,000 jobs, a 13.4 percent increase from 2002 to 2012. Employment in all industries is projected to increase during this period. (For the purposes of this study, the Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers were added as an industry to incorporate the Total Employment concept. This group is projected to decline from 2002 to 2012.) The Healthcare Support occupations are projected to grow the fastest (25.6%) from 2002 to 2012, adding more than 10,000 jobs.

## Economic Assumptions

The projections reported in this study are estimates and are not intended to be precise measurements of future employment growth or employment levels. They are intended to provide an indication of the direction and extent of employment change over the projection period. This study was carried out under the following economic assumptions:

1. The economic structure of the United States and Kansas will not change radically.
2. Economic activity, staffing patterns, long-term growth, and industrial composition during the projection years will not alter radically due to any major events.
3. The rate of technical and scientific change will continue its current trend.
4. Current social trends including the value placed on work, education, income, and leisure will not change radically.

As the economy has shifted towards service-oriented industries, the goods-producing industries share of total employment has declined. This trend is expected to continue through 2012.

## RN's # 1 Top 10 Occupations Adding the Most Jobs

Of the top ten occupations projected to add the most jobs in Kansas between 2002 and 2012, Registered Nurses will add the most jobs (7,500), followed by Cashiers (5,540) and Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, including Fast Food (5,470).

## RN's #5 Top 10 High-Demand Occupations

High-demand-occupations are defined as occupations having 500 or more projected average annual job openings. Registered Nurses are fifth in the state in this category, with 1320 openings annually from 2002 to 2012. Nurses Aids, Orderlies, and Attendants are seventh, increasing by 820 openings annually.

## Trends

The growing nursing shortage is impacting every aspect of the U.S. health care delivery system and contributing to diminished patient care. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that registered nursing will have the second greatest job growth of all U.S. professions in the time period spanning 2004-2014. HRSA projects that, absent aggressive intervention, in the year 2020 the shortage will grow to more than 1 million RNs (representing a shortage of 36 percent).

*The Registered Nurse Population: Findings from the 2004 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses reported in March 2006.*

### Highlights

- Number of licensed registered nurses (RNs) in the United States grew by almost 8 percent between 2000 and 2004 to a new high of 2.9 million
- Average age of RNs climbed to 46.8 years, the highest average age since the first comparable report was published in 1980.
- Just over 41 percent of RNs were 50 years of age or older (33 percent in 2000 and 25 percent in 1980).
- Only 8 percent of RNs were under the age of 30, compared with 25 percent in 1980.
- Average annual earnings for RNs were \$57,785.
- Real earnings (comparable dollars over time) have grown almost 14 percent since 2000, the first significant increase in more than a decade.
- Employment in nursing rose to more than 83 percent of RNs with active licenses, the highest since 1980.

According to the report, there are an estimated 29,892 RN's in Kansas, with 24,869 employed in the profession for a 83.2% employment rate. This translates to 909 RN's employed per 100,000. This 83% employment rate is equal to the national average. According to the Kansas Hospital Association, at the end of 2006 the RN vacancy rate in Kansas was 8%.

## Policy Initiatives in Response to the Occupational Outlook Forecast

In February 2005 the Kansas State Nurses Association in response to the statewide nursing shortage requested the Kansas legislature to have a report prepared by the Kansas Board of Regents that would identify what resources would be necessary to increase the ability of these institutions to educate 25% or 250 additional nursing students annually. The report by the Kansas Board of Regents, proposed a ten-year, \$30 million initiative aimed at increasing nursing capacity in the state by 25%. The 2006 and 2007 Kansas legislature has authorized both the first and second year of the funding initiative. The legislature added some requirements for "match dollars" from the programs seeking funding. This initiative is divided into three main areas, including: 1) Nursing Equipment and Facility Upgrades; 2) Nursing Faculty Salaries and Supplies; and 3) Nurse Educator Scholarships. Each of these grants requires matching funds from the applying institution or other sources. The grant proposals fully implemented are projected to increase the 24 Regents funded schools nursing program capacity by over 500 additional nursing students and provide the state with additional nurse educators for the future.