Public Health Nursing Learning Lab Series

February 18th, 2026

Session 5 Leveraging PH WINS to Strengthen the Public Health Nursing Workforce

PH WINS Overview

- **PH WINS (Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey)** is a national survey of the governmental public health workforce.
- **Primary goal:** inform workforce **recruitment and retention** efforts.
- **Survey instrument:** includes multiple topic areas; the **Workplace Infrastructure** section rotates each cycle to reflect current workforce priorities.
- **2024 PH WINS scale:**
  - 56,595 employees completed the survey
  - 37% response rate
  - Largest PH WINS survey to date

PH WINS Recruitment Approach

- Recruitment supported through national and field-based partnerships:
  - Partner organizations assist with **state-level recruitment**
  - **Public Health Training Centers (PHTCs)** support recruitment of local health departments
  - **Big Cities Health Coalition** supports participation from large city health departments

Public Health Nurses (PHN) Snapshot

- PHN workforce trends older:
  - Ages 36–54 represent ~51% of PHNs
- Pipeline considerations:
  - Majority of younger nurses enter public health from **outside the field**
  - 84% report coming from "different jobs," rather than public health–specific roles

Workforce Attrition: Who Is Leaving and Why

- Primary reasons for leaving:
  - Pay
  - Work overload and burnout
  - Job satisfaction
  - Organizational climate and culture
  - Stress
- Approximately **34%** leave **governmental public health**
- Retirement accounts for approximately **5%** of departures

Get Access to Data

- **PH WINS Dashboard**
  - Live data exploration and filtering
  - Methodology ("Behind the Numbers") available
  - User guide includes data request process
- **Data access**
  - Custom data requests supported
  - Research use permitted via formal request
- **State and local comparisons**
  - State and local health department dashboards available
  - Password-protected; access provided through request

Questions from Chat
- **Do you have data on how many hold a BSN degree?**
  - Yes, but it is not currently displayed on the dashboard
  - Over 50% based on current data
  - Can be pulled and added to the PHN Learning Lab library
- **How did you determine who is included in the "nurses" category—by degree or job classification?**
  - Both job type and degree are used
- **Is there information on retiring as a reason for leaving?**
  - Approximately 5%
- **Will it be possible to get Maddy's slides?**
  - Session materials will be posted in the PHN Learning Lab on the **Association of Public Health Nurses** website
  - Link: https://www.phnurse.org/learning-lab-content
- **Is there a way to compare within a state across all local health departments?**
  - Yes, via the state and local health department dashboard
  - Dashboard is password-protected but can be shared widely
  - Requests submitted through the user guide page
- **Do you include school nurses as public health nurses?**
  - No, school nurses are not specifically captured in PH WINS job classifications
- **Is there data on PHNs being replaced by Community Health Workers or other public health specialists?**
  - Not well disaggregated in the dashboard
  - May be possible through a custom data request
  - Current indication suggests this trend is relatively low
- **Can we access the data for research purposes?**
  - Yes, submit a data and support request through the PH WINS dashboard support page
- **Is it possible to compare responses across tiers (frontline, supervisors, executives)?**
  - Yes, filters are available in the dashboard
- **Are there plans to bring back 2021 items on health equity and racism?**
  - These topics rotate by survey cycle
  - 2024 included related items under "community engagement"

   ◦ Language adjustments were required due to federal funding

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Announcements

- **Next full PH WINS survey:** 2027
- **Mid-cycle survey:** launching next week for prior participants
  - Results expected summer 2026

Resources

- **APHN Annual Virtual Conference**
  Dates and conference theme are listed on the slide.
  Registration is available on the **Association of Public Health Nurses** website.
  Early registration rates remain in effect through February 28.
  Approximately **20 nursing continuing education units (CNEs)** will be available for attendees.
- **Insights from Public Health Nurse Leaders: Promoting PHN Satisfaction and Retention**
  March 18 | 3:00 PM ET
  Register via the PHN Learning Lab:
  https://www.phnurse.org/learning-lab-content
- **APHN Website**: https://www.phnurse.org/