

NEWS RELEASE

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New Study Finds Dramatic Changes in Nursing School Application Data

Portland, OR – A new study by the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN), a non-profit organization created to address Oregon's ongoing nursing shortage, has found a significant change in the number of qualified students applying for admission to Oregon's nursing programs. Previous reports indicated that, in Oregon, there were 5-6 qualified students for each nursing school position. The new study, supported by a grant from the Oregon Workforce Investment Board, indicates that there are approximately 2 qualified applications for each available nursing school position. This is significantly lower than previous reports, and, according to Kristine Campbell, Executive Director of the OCN, "indicates, while applying to nursing school is still a highly competitive process, fewer students are being turned away than previously reported."

Since 2002, Oregon nursing programs doubled student enrollment in preparation for the impending nursing shortage. In 2008, after this huge increase, the OCN created the Nursing Student Admissions Database, an innovative program to collect accurate data on the number of students applying for nursing school. Campbell said, "This project improved upon previous research because it used a cross-referencing process to account for students who applied to more than one program. This approach resulted in more accurate numbers because students were only counted once instead of every time they applied." The new process indicates that the acceptance rate for nursing school in Oregon is about 45 percent, or one out of every two applicants.

The Nursing Student Admissions Database Pilot Project also collected data on gender, race and ethnicity. Campbell continued, "Collecting this kind of data is an important first step in working towards more diversity in the nursing workforce. Our study found that students from under-represented groups who met the minimum qualifications were admitted at similar rates to nursing school as Caucasian students."

The full report, "Who Gets In? Pilot Year Data from the Nursing Student Admissions Database," can be accessed at www.oregoncenterfornursing.com.

About the Oregon Center for Nursing: The Oregon Center for Nursing is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established in 2002 by nursing leaders from the Oregon Nursing Leadership Council with the mission of providing the leadership to solve Oregon's nursing workforce shortage. The Oregon Center for Nursing continues to fulfill this critical leadership role through collaborative work, and a variety of programs, projects and initiatives in the areas of nursing workforce analysis and research, nursing workforce diversity initiatives, nursing leadership development, support of nursing education initiatives and innovations, and the StudentMAX web-based clinical placement program.

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