

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Overview	3
Licensed Practical Nurses	5
The Profile.....	7
Overview	7
Comparisons	8
Regional Comparisons.....	9
Tables	11
Registered Nurses	25
The Profile.....	27
Overview	27
Comparisons	28
Regional Comparisons.....	29
Tables	31
Advanced Practice Nurses	45
The Profile.....	47
Overview	47
Comparisons	48
Regional Comparisons.....	50
Tables	51

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the data gathered in the 1999-2001 licensure/authorization renewal process for Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Advanced Practice Nurses in the State of Georgia. The report includes an overview of the state's nursing workforce and three sections organized by Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Advanced Practice Nurses. The purpose of this initiative is to support informed decision-making regarding nursing education and practice in the state of Georgia.

A Caveat. In the following Overview, we provide the number of nurses currently licensed/authorized by the State of Georgia. Please bear in mind that these figures change on a daily basis. Therefore, the raw numbers of nurses included in the tables in this report do not match these figures since the surveys included in this analysis were distributed, collected, and scanned at a much earlier date.

Additionally, data are not included for every nurse licensed/authorized during the 1999-2001 renewal cycle. Some renewal forms were submitted to the licensing boards after the deadline and therefore were not included in the batch of completed forms sent to the scanning contractor. Other renewal forms were damaged either by the respondent or during handling, rendering them unscannable. As in any survey, missing data are also an issue. Some survey recipients do not respond to all items; some are incorrectly marked. We caution you to refrain from using the raw numbers included in the tables. Draw your conclusions from the distribution of responses—the percentages—that are listed for each survey item.

The analysis of the data collected in licensure renewal surveys is an evolving process in the State of Georgia. This report represents a continuing focus on using the data to inform the decision-making process regarding the issues facing the nursing workforce and the populations these practitioners serve.

OVERVIEW

Georgia's nursing workforce—the largest health profession in the state—is comprised of 28,343 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and 81,106 Registered Nurses (RNs). Of the RNs, 4,030 are authorized Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs).¹

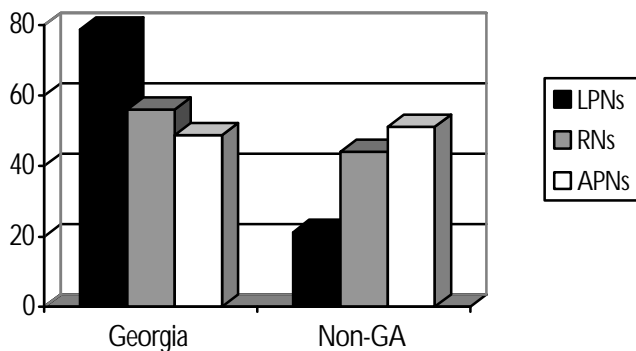
The basic demographic profile of the Georgia nurse is Caucasian and female. Males represent five percent of total nurses in the state; African Americans comprise 18 percent. As the nursing level progresses (LPN to RN to APN), the percentage of males increases (from 4.4% to 5.8% to 17.5%). Conversely, the percentage of African Americans decreases (35.1% to 13.8% to 7.5%) as the nursing level progresses.

Of Georgia's total nursing workforce, 74 percent are practicing in the state—of these, 80 percent full-time, 20 percent part-time. Nine percent are practicing nursing in a state other than Georgia. Fifteen percent are not practicing nursing in Georgia or any other state, but have retained their licensure/authorization in the state of Georgia.

NURSES IN GEORGIA

- 95% are female
- 18% are African American
- 74% work in Georgia
- 80% are full-time
- 51% work in a hospital setting

Location of Education



The likelihood that a nurse completed his or her nursing education in the state of Georgia decreases as the nursing level progresses. Eighty percent of LPNs, 56 percent of RNs, and 38 percent of APNs obtained their diplomas/degrees from educational programs in the state of Georgia. Nearly 36 percent of Georgia's combined nursing workforce obtained their initial nursing education in states other than Georgia (for LPNs/RNs—initial nursing education; for APNs, initial education in advanced practice nursing).

Fifty-one percent of Georgia's nursing workforce cites the hospital as the primary employment setting, followed by 13 percent in public health/community health. Ten percent of nurses provide care in nursing homes, 68 percent of these are LPNs.

¹ Georgia Board of Nursing, Effective May 2000

GEORGIA'S LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES

THE PROFILE

A practical nurse licensed by the State of Georgia is most likely to be a Caucasian female between the ages of 40 and 49, educated in Georgia and licensed within the last ten years. She is most likely to be working full-time in Georgia, having obtained her initial nursing education in an LPN program. Her principal employment setting is most likely to be a nursing home or other extended care facility, with a major practice area of geriatrics.

OVERVIEW

Nearly 96 percent of the LPNs licensed by the state of Georgia are female; 63 percent are Caucasian. African Americans comprise over one-third of the LPN population.

LPNs IN GEORGIA

- 96% are female
- 63% are Caucasian
- 76% work in Georgia
- 83% are full-time
- 80% were educated in Georgia

Of the LPNs licensed by the state of Georgia, 76 percent currently work in the state (of these, 83 percent full-time, 17 percent part-time). Five percent of the LPN population work in a state other than Georgia. Nineteen percent are not currently practicing, up from 15 percent during the 1997-99 licensure renewal cycle. Thirty-six percent of the LPNs licensed in Georgia obtained their initial license during the past ten years.

While the majority of LPNs renewing licenses during the 1999-2001 period indicated that they have worked more than four of the last five years as a LPN, nearly 12 percent reported working less than one year.

Nearly 80 percent of LPNs licensed in Georgia completed their initial nursing education in the state. The vast majority (96 percent) obtained their license by graduating from an LPN program, as opposed to military or work experience. More than 50 percent of LPNs licensed in Georgia cite that they do not plan to pursue additional education in the next five years. Of the minority who are planning to pursue additional education, 58% plan to obtain an associate degree.

The most frequently reported principal employment setting for Georgia LPNs is the nursing home/extended care environment (31 percent), followed by hospitals (26 percent) and medical offices (13 percent). Seventy-five percent of LPNs in Georgia reported that they will not seek employment in another nursing setting in the next five years.

With the high percentage of LPNs practicing in nursing home/extended care facilities, major practice area holds no surprises. Geriatrics leads the category with 32 percent of LPNs reporting this as their major practice area. General medical-surgical follows with 23 percent.

COMPARISONS

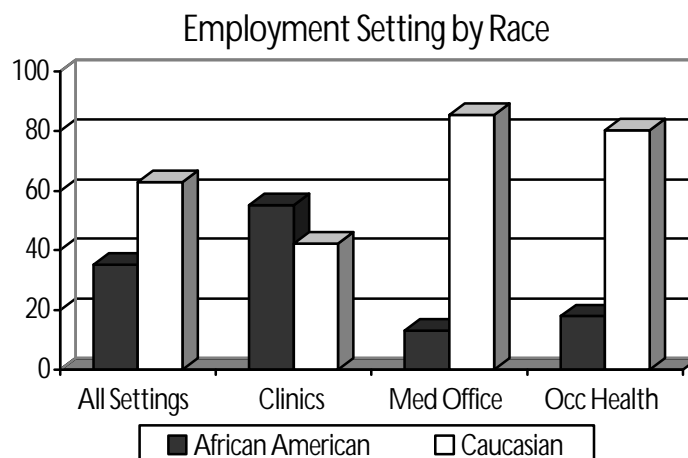
Inter-item comparisons were conducted to determine whether or not practice patterns of LPN subsets differ from those of the total LPN population when analyzed by basic demographic characteristics. Comparisons were conducted for employment setting by race and age.

Employment Setting by Race/Ethnicity

Caucasians represent 63 percent of Georgia's LPN workforce; African American LPNs comprise over one third of the LPN population. The remaining two percent are composed of Asian, Hispanic and other minority groups. The distribution of the races within each employment setting closely mirrors that of the total LPN population, with the exception of occupational health, ambulatory care clinics, and medical offices.

In the occupational health employment setting, the percentage of African American LPNs drops to 18 percent versus 80

percent for Caucasian LPNs. More dramatically, African Americans represent only 13 percent of the LPN workforce employed in medical offices, compared to 85.5% for Caucasians. Conversely, African Americans constitute more than half (55.2%) of the licensed practical nurses employed by ambulatory care clinics.



Employment Setting by Age

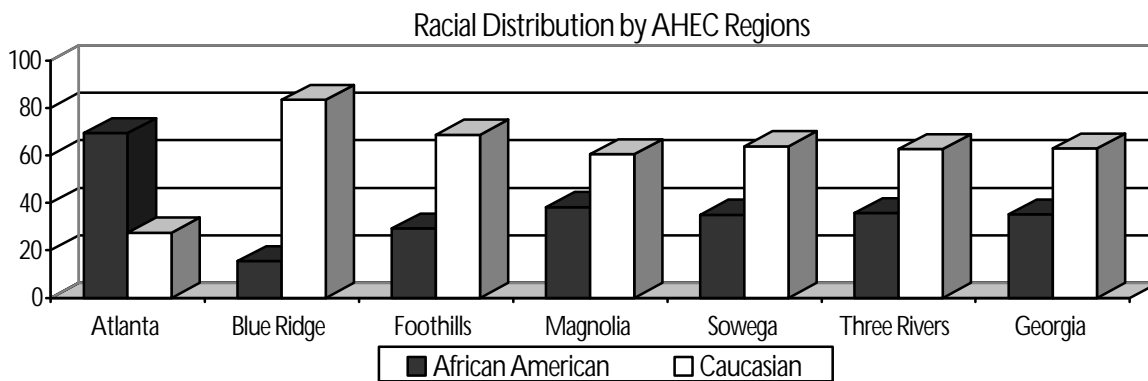
The age distributions by principal employment setting parallel that of the total LPN population with notable variations in three areas—ambulatory care clinics, medical offices and those who are self-employed. Younger LPNs (20-39), while representing over one-third of the LPN population, comprise approximately 45 percent of LPNs in ambulatory care clinics and medical offices. On the other hand, over one-third of LPNs who are 60 years of age and older (11 percent of the total LPN population in Georgia) are self-employed.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

For the purpose of this report, regional comparisons are analyzed based on Georgia Statewide Area Health Education Center (AHEC) catchment areas. There are six AHEC regions in the state of Georgia. While each AHEC is essentially a microcosm of the state, certain notable differences do exist in two areas: racial distribution and future plans, whether it be additional education or a change of employment setting.

Racial Distribution

While the majority of the AHECs were parallel to Georgia's LPN racial distribution, two regions—Atlanta and Blue Ridge—report markedly different results, as is evidenced by the following chart:



The regions of Foothills, Magnolia Coastlands, Sowega and Three Rivers closely resemble the racial distribution of Georgia overall. The opposite distribution occurs in the Atlanta region, where almost 70 percent of LPNs are African American (30 percent are Caucasian). Blue Ridge, on the other hand, has a high Caucasian LPN population at 83 percent (15 percent are African American).

Future Plans

Thirty-five percent of LPNs living in the Atlanta AHEC region plan to seek employment in another nursing setting in the next five years compared to an average 20 percent for the other AHECs. Also, the majority of Atlanta LPNs (nearly 62 percent) plan to pursue additional education in the next five years, while in Blue Ridge and Sowega, the majority (56.8% and 54.6% respectively) do not plan to pursue any additional education.

GEORGIA'S REGISTERED NURSES

THE PROFILE

A registered nurse licensed by the State of Georgia is most likely to be a Caucasian female between the ages of 40 and 49, educated in Georgia and licensed within the last ten years. She is most likely to be working full-time in Georgia, having obtained her basic nursing education in an associate program in this state. Her principal employment setting is most likely to be a hospital, with a major practice area of general medical-surgical.

OVERVIEW

The majority of RNs licensed by the state of Georgia are Caucasian females. Males represent six percent of total RNs. African Americans comprise 14 percent of registered nurses in the state.

RNs IN GEORGIA

- 94% are female
- 83% are Caucasian
- 73% work in Georgia
- 78% are full-time
- 56% were educated in Georgia
- 55% work in hospital setting

Of the RNs licensed by the state of Georgia, 73 percent currently work in the state (of these, 78 percent full-time, 22 percent part-time). Over ten percent of the RN population work in a state other than Georgia. Fourteen percent are not currently practicing nursing in Georgia or any other state. Thirty-five percent of the RNs licensed in Georgia obtained their initial license during the past ten years.

Fifty-six percent of RNs licensed in Georgia completed their initial nursing education in the state. Fifty percent obtained their basic nursing education in an associate degree program, followed by baccalaureate programs (27 percent) and diploma programs (23 percent). Over one-third of the RN population plan to pursue additional education in the next five years; of those, fifty percent plan to pursue a Bachelor's in Nursing.

The most frequently reported principal employment setting for Georgia RNs is the hospital (55 percent). Thirteen percent cite public health/community health as the principal employment setting. Over 13 percent of RNs are either self-employed or selected "Other" in this category. Fifty percent of RNs indicate Staff Nurse as the principal nursing position title.

COMPARISONS

Inter-item comparisons were conducted to determine whether or not practice patterns of RN subsets differ from those of the total RN population when analyzed by basic demographic characteristics. Comparisons were conducted for employment setting by race and age. Due to incorrect responses to the question related to principal employment setting (i.e., multiple responses), only 77 percent of respondents are represented in this comparison.

Employment Setting by Race

Caucasians represent 83 percent of Georgia's RN workforce; African American RNs comprise 13.8% of total RNs in the state. Other minority groups including Asian and Hispanic complete the remaining 3.2% of RNs in Georgia. The distribution of the races within each employment setting closely mirrors that of the total RN population, with minor exceptions noted in the nursing homes, ambulatory care clinics and RNs who are self-employed:

Employment Settings	Caucasian	African American
Hospital	83.7	12.6
Nursing Home	78.3	16.7
Nursing Education	82.0	15.3
Public/Community Health	82.5	15.7
Student Health	85.8	12.1
Occupational Health	87.6	10.6
Ambulatory Care Clinics	91.2	5.2
Other	85.4	13.0
Self-Employed	91.5	6.2
Georgia Total	82.7	13.8

While percentages in these types of settings closely resemble that of Georgia, particular subsets of these settings indicate more remarkable differences. Keep in mind, though, that with such specific data, the number of responses is significant. These are listed below:

Employment Settings	Caucasian	African American	Total
Federal government hospital	64.2	29.4	1,147
Facility for mentally retarded	70.6	29.4	68
Official state mental health agency	65.6	33.1	142
Rural health care center	90.9	6.1	33
Hospice	95.0	4.7	317
Private/parochial elementary school	91.4	4.3	76
Ambulatory surgical center	95.8	3.1	547
Health Maintenance Organization	68.8	28.3	314

Employment Setting by Age

One-third of the RNs in Georgia are 50 years of age and over. This percentage increases substantially in the employment settings of nursing education and occupational health, up to 52.4% and 43.4%, respectively. While RNs who are 60 years and over in the state represent 9.6% of total RNs, their concentration increases in the areas of nursing education (22.1%) and those who are self-employed (16.8%). The highest concentrations of younger RNs (20-39) is found in the hospital (45.3%) and the ambulatory care clinics (34.5%).

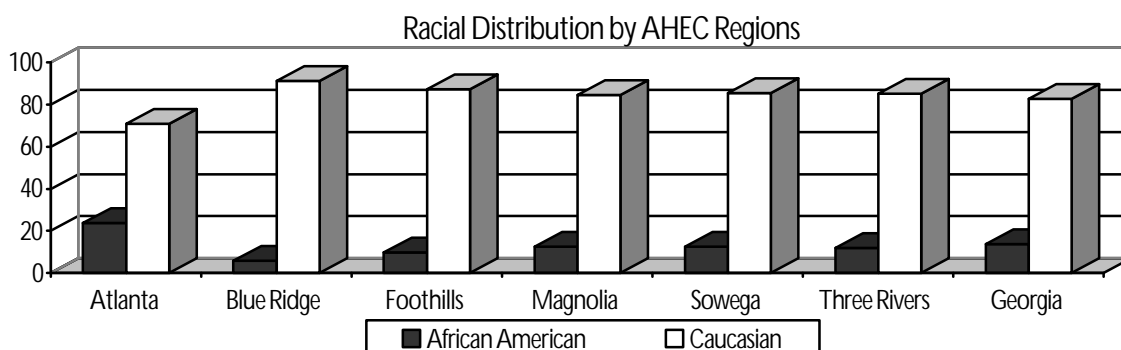
Employment Settings	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Hospital	13.6	31.7	34.6	16.2	3.4	0.4
Nursing Home	7.2	26.1	29.6	26.3	8.6	2.2
Nursing Education	4.9	12.8	29.9	30.3	16.0	6.1
Public/Community Health	5.8	25.9	37.8	23.4	6.0	1.1
Student Health	3.5	17.5	47.5	23.1	7.3	1.1
Occupational Health	2.8	17.3	36.4	31.6	10.6	1.2
Ambulatory Care Clinics	8.5	26.0	41.1	19.5	4.3	0.5
Other	5.8	23.6	37.6	23.7	7.5	1.7
Self-Employed	2.6	16.5	38.6	25.5	12.5	4.3
Georgia Total	8.6	26.1	35.0	20.7	7.6	2.0

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

For the purpose of this report, regional comparisons are analyzed based on Georgia Statewide Area Health Education Center (AHEC) catchment areas. There are six AHEC regions in the state of Georgia. While each AHEC is essentially a microcosm of the state, certain notable differences do exist in several areas, including racial distribution, educational attainment and employment settings.

Racial Distribution

While the majority of the AHECs were parallel to Georgia’s racial distribution, two regions—Atlanta and Blue Ridge—report slightly different results, as is evidenced by the following chart:



The regions of Foothills, Magnolia Coastlands, Sowega and Three Rivers closely resemble the racial distribution of Georgia overall. The Atlanta region reports a higher percentage of African Americans at 24 percent (71 percent are Caucasian). Blue Ridge, on the other hand, has a high Caucasian RN population at 91 percent (6 percent are African American).

Education

Fifty percent of RNs in the Atlanta AHEC obtained their initial nursing education outside of Georgia while 80 percent of RNs in Sowega obtained their education in the state. Also in Sowega, 70 percent of licensed RNs obtained their associate degree as their initial nursing education compared to 50 percent for the state overall.

Employment Settings

In the Magnolia Coastlands and Sowega AHEC regions, an average of 19 percent of RNs work in public health, compared to 13 percent in Georgia. Atlanta, Foothills and Three Rivers report over 60 percent of licensed RNs in their regions work in the hospital setting (55 percent for Georgia).

GEORGIA'S ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES

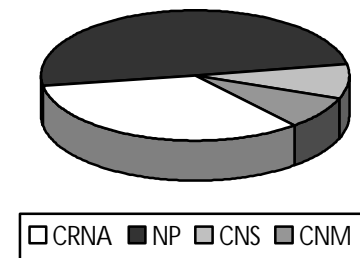
PROFILE

An advanced practice nurse authorized by the State of Georgia is most likely to be a Caucasian female between the ages of 40 and 49, educated outside of the state of Georgia. She is most likely to have obtained her initial education for advanced practice nursing in a Masters program. She is most likely to be working full-time in a hospital setting.

OVERVIEW

Of the registered nurses authorized by the state of Georgia as advanced practice nurses, nearly 49 percent are nurse practitioners. Nurse anesthetists comprise 33 percent of the APN population, followed by nurse midwives (7.8%). The state also authorizes psychiatric/mental health clinical nurse specialists. CNSs with a speciality in this area represent 8.5% of the total APN population in the state of Georgia.

APNs by GBON Authorization



While males represent only six percent of Georgia's total nursing workforce, they comprise nearly 18 percent of the APN population, largely due to the male presence in nursing anesthesia. Of the CRNAs authorized by the state, more than 44 percent are male. African Americans comprise 7.5% of the total APN population.

APNs IN GEORGIA

- 18% are male
- 91% are Caucasian
- 76% work in Georgia
- 81% are full-time
- 43% were educated in Georgia
- 39% work in hospital setting

Seventy-six percent of APNs authorized by the Georgia Board of Nursing work in Georgia (of these 81 percent full-time, 19 percent part-time). Nearly 16 percent work in a state other than Georgia. Less than one percent currently are not practicing nursing, compared to 19 percent of LPNs and 14 percent of RNs.

Forty-three percent of APNs obtained their initial education for advanced practice nursing in a masters of nursing program, following closely by certificate programs at 42 percent. Over 51 percent of APNs were trained in advanced nursing programs in other states.

APNs are most often found in the hospital, with 39 percent citing this environment as their principal employment setting. Ambulatory care facilities rank second at 31 percent, followed by public health/community health facilities at 14 percent. While the majority of APNs work in the previous categories, other employment settings included nursing education (5.6%) and “Other” (seven percent).

COMPARISONS

Inter-item comparisons were conducted to determine whether or not practice patterns of APN subsets differ from those of the total APN population when analyzed by basic demographic characteristics. Comparisons were conducted for the following:

- Employment setting by race and age
- Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by race, age, and gender
- Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by type of client and age of client

Additionally, special consideration was given to nurse practitioners and county of practice in order to quantify the characteristics of nurses who travel between multiple counties to deliver care to patients.

Employment Setting by Race

Caucasians represent 91 percent of Georgia’s APN workforce; African American APNs comprise 7.5% of the APNs in the state. The remaining 1.5% is composed of Asian, Hispanic and other minority groups. The distribution of the races within each employment setting closely mirrors that of the total APN population, with the exception of non-federal psychiatric hospitals and community mental health facilities, where African American APNs represent 22 percent and 24 percent, respectively, of nurses employed in these settings. African Americans represent a very small proportion of the APNs employed in ambulatory surgical care settings (two percent) or those who are self-employed (one percent).

Employment Setting by Age

Traditionally an older population, nearly 40 percent of APNs are 50 and over. Specific employment settings that may require attention due to the aging of the workforce include associate degree granting RN programs (58 percent over 50) and district/county health departments (also 58 percent over 50). Fifty-seven percent of self-employed APNs are over the age of 50.

Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by Age

A notable variation from the state population is found for clinical nurse specialists in the psychiatric/mental health field. Nearly 61 percent are 50 years of age and older compared to 38 percent of total APNs authorized by Georgia.

Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by Gender

It should be noted that while males comprise 17.5% of the total APN population, the majority of these are nurse anesthetists. Of the certified nurse anesthetists in Georgia, nearly 45 percent are male. Men represent 4.1% of the nurse practitioners in the state, 3.5% of the clinical nurse specialists, and less than one percent of the certified nurse midwives.

Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by Race

As noted above, African Americans represent 7.5% of total APNs authorized by the state of Georgia. This distribution is mirrored in nurse practitioner and certified nurse midwife populations. African Americans represent 13.3% of the CNS population and less than four percent of the state's nurse anesthetists.

Georgia Board of Nursing Authorization by Type and Age of Client

The client distribution of Georgia's APNs holds no surprises. Eighty-two percent of the psychiatric/mental health CNSs report that they treat clients with behavioral/emotional disorders. Ninety percent of certified nurse midwives report maternity patients as their primary clients. More than 88 percent selected the young adult age group (19 to 30) as the group that best represents the ages of their clients. Nurse practitioners are primarily treating well clients (49.5%) and clients with stabilized chronic conditions (23.1%).

Nurse Practitioners by Practice County(ies)

Nearly 84 percent of nurse practitioners authorized by the Georgia Board of Nursing work in the state of Georgia, either on a full- or part-time basis. Of these nurses, nearly one fourth (23.1%) work in multiple counties. The majority (70.4%) divide their time between two counties; 20.2% work in three counties. The remaining 9.4% travel throughout four or more counties to provide nursing services to patients.

Of the NPs who work in four or more counties, 81.5% cite public health or community health settings as their principal employment setting. Public health/community health settings also are the most frequently cited settings for NPs who work in three counties (35.3%). This is followed by ambulatory care (29.4%) and hospital (13.7%) settings.

For NPs whose practice is limited to two counties, the ambulatory care setting is the most frequently cited principal employment setting (39.1%). Hospital settings follow at 16.8%. The

same number of NPs report nursing education and public health/community health as their principal employment setting (14.9% each).

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

For the purpose of this report, regional comparisons are analyzed based on Georgia Statewide Area Health Education Center (AHEC) catchment areas. There are six AHEC regions in the state of Georgia. While each AHEC is essentially a microcosm of the state, certain notable differences do exist in several areas, including gender and racial distribution, educational attainment and employment settings.

Racial Distribution

While the majority of the AHECs were parallel to Georgia's racial distribution, two regions—Atlanta and Blue Ridge—report slightly different results.

The regions of Magnolia Coastlands, Sowega and Three Rivers closely resemble the racial distribution of Georgia overall. The Atlanta region reports a higher percentage of African Americans at 12.5% (85 percent are Caucasian). Foothills and Blue Ridge, on the other hand, have a high Caucasian LPN population at 95 percent (3.4% in Foothills and 4.7% in Blue Ridge are African American).

Gender Distribution

In Georgia, 17.5% of advanced practice nurses are male, 82.5% are female. This statistic is true of most of the AHEC regions, except in the Atlanta region; female APNs increase to 93 percent. Twenty-five percent of APNs in the Three Rivers AHEC region are male.

Educational Attainment

In the Blue Ridge and Atlanta regions, the majority of advanced practice nurses obtained an initial APRN education through a masters program (57% and 53% respectively). In Sowega, 58% obtained the initial APRN education through a certificate program.

Employment Status

In the Blue Ridge, Sowega and Three Rivers regions, 80 percent of APNs are employed full-time in Georgia compared to 62 percent in the state.

Employment Settings

While 31 percent of APNs in Georgia report ambulatory care as their principal employment setting, the percentage in Blue Ridge is 50 percent; in Magnolia and Sowega, approximately 27 percent work in public health (14 percent for Georgia).