

The Long Term Care Nurse Staffing Study (LTCNSS) assesses nurse staffing and related issues in the long term care setting. In 2023, approximately 28.6% of licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) and 3.1% of registered nurses (RNs) in Texas worked in the nursing home/extended care setting.¹ Long term care facilities may also employ certified nurse aides (CNAs), certified medication aides (CMAs), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), and restorative nurse aides (RNAs). During the spring and summer of 2024, the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) administered the LTCNSS to directors of nursing (DONs) or facility administrators of 1,186 Texas nursing facilities. A total of 229 facilities participated for a final response rate of 19.3%.

Studies have shown that DONs can have an impact on the quality of care in long term care settings. Facilities that reported having a DON with longer job tenure had higher quality of care scores.² This report provides information on DONs in Texas long term care nursing facilities, including salary, longevity, qualifications/experience, and reasons for DON turnover. 226 of 229 (98.7%) facilities reported having a DON at the time of data submission.

¹ This data comes from the 2023 Texas Board of Nursing licensure renewal file of actively practicing Texas nurses.

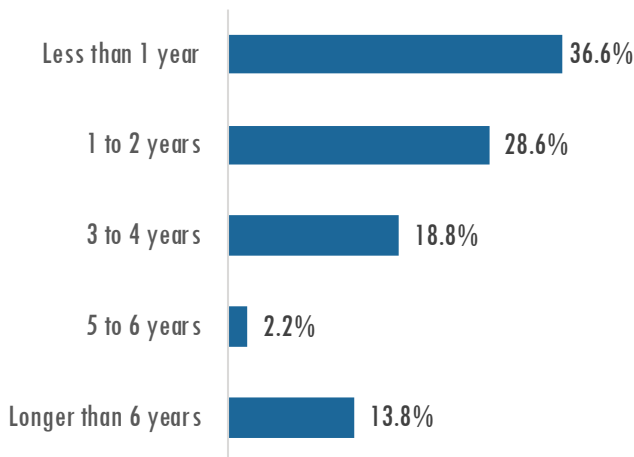
² Krause MR. Director of Nursing Current Job Tenure and Past Experience and Quality of Care in Nursing Homes. Health Care Manage Rev. 2012;37(1):98-108. doi:10.1097/HMR.0b013e318222429a

Longevity and Tenure

Figure 1 shows the proportions of the length of time DONs have held their current position. Figure 2 shows the proportion of DONs' experience in long term care.

- 82 of 224 (36.6%) DONs held their current position for less than 1 year.

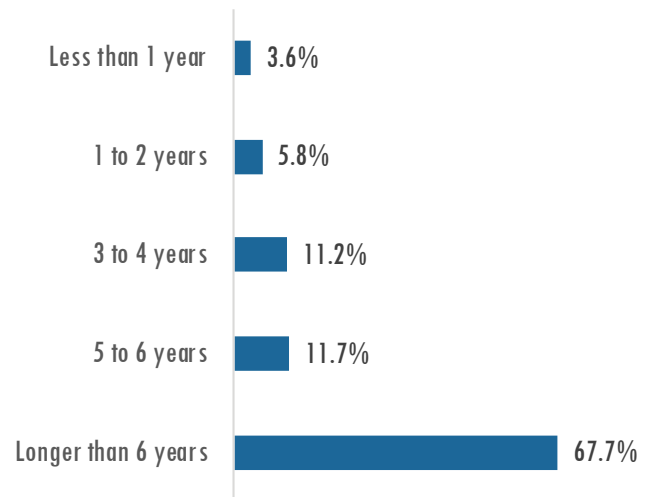
Figure 1. DON current position tenure (n=224)



Note: n=number of respondents

- In 2024, 151 out of 223 (67.7%) DONs had 6 or more years experience in long term care.

Figure 2. DON long term care experience (n=223)



Note: n=number of respondents

Reasons for DON Turnover

Table 1. Frequency of reasons reported for DON turnover (n=229)

Reason for DON turnover	# of respondents	% of respondents
DON turnover is not an issue in my facility	82	35.8%
Exhaustion and burnout	117	51.1%
Staffing issues	95	41.5%
Burden of regulatory requirements	77	33.6%
Expectations of residents and/or residents' family	49	21.4%
Excessive paperwork	45	19.7%
Lack of management and/or leadership skills	36	15.7%
Pay and/or benefits not commensurate with job duties and responsibilities	33	14.4%
Fear of litigation	30	13.1%
Lack of experience in long term care setting	22	9.6%
Lack of administrative and/or corporate support	17	7.4%
Lack of nursing knowledge	5	2.2%
Other	8	3.5%

Respondents were asked to select the issues that contributed to the turnover of DONs in their long term care facility. Respondents could select more than one option unless they selected “DON turnover is not an issue.”

- 82 of 229 (35.8%) respondents indicated that DON turnover was not an issue at their facility (Table 1), which was an increase from the 2022 study (30.3%).
- The most frequently cited reason for DON turnover was exhaustion and burnout (51.1%). This was also the most frequently selected reason in the 2022 study.

Of those respondents who selected the “other” category in their response to which reasons contribute to DON turnover, 8 facilities provided a written response and 1 facility provided more than one reason.

- Other responses included COVID-19 (2 facilities), high workload and stress (3 facilities), lack of experience of nursing staff (1 facility), lack of personal work ethic (1 facility), their facility’s DON salary is not competitive with other healthcare positions (1 facility), and the position’s requirement to be on-call (1 facility).

Education

Table 2 presents a breakdown of the most commonly held degrees by DONs.

- 213 out of 223 (95.5%) DONs had a nursing degree and 51.1% had a bachelor’s degree or higher in nursing, including one DON with a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) that is in the “Other” category.
- The most common degree type among DONs was a bachelor’s degree in nursing (43.0%). In all prior iterations of the study, the most common degree type for DONs was an Associate’s Degree in Nursing.
- Of those facilities who selected “other” as their response to their DON’s highest degree, 1 indicated their DON has an Associates in Health Science, 1 has a Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP), and 1 has a degree in Psychology.

Table 2. Educational attainment of DONs (n=223)

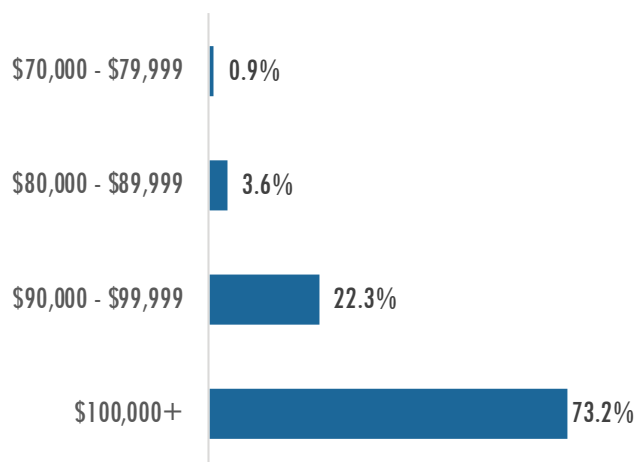
Degree Type	# of DONs	% of DONs
Diploma in nursing	12	5.4%
Associate's in nursing	87	39.0%
Bachelor's in nursing	96	43.0%
Bachelor's in field other than nursing	4	1.8%
Master's in nursing	17	7.6%
Master's in field other than nursing	2	0.9%
Other	5	2.2%

Salary

Survey respondents chose a salary range for the DON, from a minimum of less than \$40,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 and over (Figure 3). None of the survey respondents reported a salary below \$70,000.

- The majority (73.2%) of DONs had a salary of \$100,000 or greater.

Figure 3. DON salary range distribution (n=224)



Note: n=number of respondents

Summary of Highlights

- 82 of 224 (36.6%) DONs held their current position for less than 1 year.
- 151 out of 223 (67.7%) DONs had 6 or more years experience in long term care
- Exhaustion and burnout was the most selected reason (51.1%) for DON turnover.
- The most common degree type for DONs was a bachelor's in nursing (43.0%).
- The majority of DONs (73.2%) had an annual salary of \$100,000 or more.