

Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Report

Expanding Georgia's Nursing Workforce Through Data-Driven Collaboration

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1. Introduction

Georgia is experiencing a significant and growing registered nursing (RN) workforce shortage driven by population growth, an aging population, and increasing healthcare demands. Recent estimates indicate that Georgia currently faces an annual shortage of approximately 772 registered nurses, and projections suggest that the shortage may increase to over 2,200 registered nurses by 2030 if current workforce trends continue (Grapevine, 2025; Kousouris, 2023). Georgia also ranks among the lowest states nationally in nurse-to-population ratio, with approximately 7.8 registered nurses per 1,000 residents, below the national average (Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, n.d.).

These workforce shortages negatively impact healthcare quality by increasing nurse burnout, reducing staffing ratios, lengthening patient wait times, and contributing to poorer patient outcomes, particularly in underserved and rural communities. Because nursing workforce shortages affect multiple sectors simultaneously, addressing the issue requires a coordinated stakeholder engagement strategy that strengthens collaboration between educational institutions, regulatory agencies, workforce organizations, and healthcare employers.

2. Key Organizations Supporting Georgia's Nursing Workforce

University System of Georgia (USG)

The University System of Georgia oversees Georgia's public universities and is responsible for educating bachelor's and graduate-prepared nurses through BSN, MSN, and doctoral nursing programs. USG institutions play a critical role in expanding Georgia's nursing workforce pipeline by increasing nursing student enrollment, graduation rates, and faculty development.

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)

The Technical College System of Georgia oversees technical colleges that provide practical nursing (LPN) and associate degree nursing (ADN) education. TCSG serves as a major entry point into nursing for many Georgia students and contributes significantly to workforce pipeline development, particularly in rural and underserved regions.

Georgia Board of Nursing

The Georgia Board of Nursing is the state regulatory body responsible for licensing nurses, approving nursing education programs, and enforcing nursing practice regulations. The Board ensures workforce readiness while maintaining public safety standards.

Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce (GBHCW)

The GBHCW is a state agency responsible for collecting and analyzing healthcare workforce data. It supports workforce planning efforts through research, policy recommendations, and workforce analytics tools that inform state decision-making.

Georgia Nursing Workforce Center

Housed within the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University, the Georgia Nursing Workforce Center conducts workforce research and analyzes nursing supply, demand, education capacity, and workforce trends. The Center provides evidence-based recommendations to support statewide workforce planning initiatives.

Georgia Center for Nursing Excellence (GCNE)

The Georgia Center for Nursing Excellence is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening Georgia’s nursing workforce through advocacy, leadership development, and workforce collaboration initiatives. GCNE promotes stakeholder partnerships and supports strategic workforce planning.

Healthcare Organizations

Hospitals, clinics, and healthcare systems serve as employers, clinical training sites, and workforce demand stakeholders. These organizations provide critical workforce vacancy and retention data while also partnering with educational institutions to train future nurses.

3. Stakeholder Roles

Stakeholder	Primary Role	Influence on Workforce Development
USG	BSN/Graduate Nursing Education	Produces advanced nursing graduates and faculty
TCSG	ADN/LPN Education Pipeline	Expands entry-level workforce pipeline

Stakeholder	Primary Role	Influence on Workforce Development
Georgia Board of Nursing	Regulation/Licensure	Maintains workforce standards and licensing
GBHCW	Workforce Analytics	Identifies shortages/trends for planning
Healthcare Organizations	Employment/Clinical Training	Identify staffing needs and train students
Georgia Nursing Workforce Center	Research/Policy Analysis	Conducts supply-demand modeling
GCNE	Advocacy/Collaboration	Promotes partnerships and workforce initiatives

These stakeholders must collaborate because no single organization can independently resolve Georgia’s workforce shortage. Educational institutions prepare nurses, employers hire and retain nurses, regulators oversee standards, and workforce organizations guide planning efforts.

4. Workforce Challenges Identified

Analysis of Georgia’s nursing workforce landscape reveals several ongoing challenges supported by workforce data:

- Geographic disparities in nurse distribution, particularly in rural and underserved communities, where provider shortages are more pronounced (Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce, 2024).

- Insufficient nursing workforce growth relative to increasing population demand, as Georgia’s population continues to grow and age, increasing healthcare utilization (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).
- Projected worsening shortages through 2030, with estimates suggesting a continued gap between supply and demand for registered nurses (Health Resources and Services Administration [HRSA], 2022).
- Limited nursing faculty capacity, which restricts enrollment in nursing programs despite qualified applicants (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2023).
- Shortages of clinical placement opportunities, limiting hands-on training capacity for nursing students (Georgia Nursing Workforce Center, 2023).
- Fragmentation across workforce planning efforts, resulting in inefficiencies in communication and coordination between stakeholders (Georgia Nursing Workforce Center, 2023).

These challenges highlight the need for stronger stakeholder coordination, improved data integration, and strategic workforce planning initiatives.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

A. Communication Strategy

To improve communication and alignment among stakeholders:

- GBHCW and Georgia Nursing Workforce Center should publish quarterly workforce reports summarizing updated nursing shortage trends, vacancy rates, graduation data, and workforce forecasts. These reports should be distributed to all stakeholder groups.

- Stakeholders should establish a centralized communication platform, such as a statewide nursing workforce newsletter, stakeholder portal, or collaborative web-based forum, to share updates and initiatives.
- Annual statewide nursing workforce meetings should be held to review workforce data, discuss priorities, and evaluate strategic progress.

B. Collaboration Strategy

To strengthen partnerships:

- Expand articulation agreements between USG and TCSG institutions. Articulation agreements allow students to seamlessly transfer credits between ADN/LPN and BSN programs, improving educational mobility and reducing barriers to degree advancement.
- Increase partnerships between healthcare organizations and academic institutions to expand clinical placement opportunities, particularly in underserved and high-need regions.
- Create cross-sector workforce planning committees composed of representatives from all stakeholder groups to collaboratively identify solutions and align workforce initiatives.

C. Data Integration Strategy

To support collaborative planning:

- Integrate licensure, education, and workforce demand data into a centralized statewide workforce planning system, such as an interoperable data platform that combines:
 - Georgia Board of Nursing licensure data
 - USG and TCSG nursing education enrollment and graduation data

- Healthcare employer workforce demand and vacancy data
- This system could function similarly to an interactive workforce dashboard, allowing stakeholders to monitor trends in real time and make data-driven decisions (Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce, 2024).
- Leverage existing Georgia tools, such as the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce Dashboard and the Nursing Workforce Visualization Tool, which already provide insights into workforce supply, distribution, and demand (Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce, 2024).
- Standardize reporting metrics across institutions to improve data consistency and comparability (HRSA, 2022).
- Expand use of predictive analytics tools, including workforce forecasting models and geographic mapping systems, to anticipate future shortages and guide policy decisions (HRSA, 2022).

6. Recommendations for Sustaining Collaboration

To maintain long-term stakeholder engagement:

Establish a Statewide Georgia Nursing Workforce Council responsible for overseeing collaboration and aligning workforce initiatives.

Develop formal data-sharing agreements between stakeholders (e.g., USG, TCSG, healthcare systems, and state agencies) to ensure consistent and secure exchange of workforce data. These agreements should outline:

- Data ownership and governance

- Reporting timelines
- Privacy and security standards (HRSA, 2022)

Secure funding through federal (e.g., HRSA nursing workforce grants) and state workforce development initiatives (HRSA, 2022).

Invest in faculty development initiatives, such as:

- Loan repayment or tuition assistance programs for nurse educators
- Salary incentives to attract clinical nurses into academic roles
- Academic–practice partnerships that allow nurses to split time between teaching and clinical work (AACN, 2023)

Continue expanding predictive workforce planning technologies, including:

- Forecasting models to project supply and demand
- GIS-based tools to identify underserved areas
- Real-time dashboards for workforce monitoring (Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce, 2024)

7. Expected Outcomes

Implementation of this strategy is expected to produce:

- Reduced statewide nursing workforce shortages
- Improved workforce forecasting and planning capabilities
- Increased nursing education capacity
- Better distribution of nurses across underserved regions

- Stronger collaboration among education, regulatory, and healthcare stakeholders
- Enhanced evidence-based policymaking
- Improved patient health outcomes, including reduced wait times, improved care quality, and decreased nurse burnout, which are associated with adequate nurse staffing levels

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality [AHRQ], 2019)

8. Conclusion

Georgia's nursing workforce shortage is a complex issue requiring coordinated action from multiple stakeholders. While Georgia has several organizations dedicated to workforce planning and nursing development, stronger collaboration among the University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia, Georgia Board of Nursing, workforce organizations, and healthcare employers is necessary to effectively address current and projected shortages. By implementing a structured stakeholder engagement strategy focused on communication, collaboration, and workforce planning, Georgia can strengthen its nursing pipeline, reduce workforce shortages, and improve health outcomes across the state.

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