



Nursing Faculty Shortages in the West: Examining Faculty Pay

This [series of briefs](#) highlights the key issues that postsecondary institutions and states in the West are facing in developing a nursing workforce that meets current and future needs. One key strategy for addressing the nursing workforce shortages is to grow the pipeline of well-prepared graduates entering the field, yet a major constraint to growing nursing programs is the availability of qualified faculty. In 2023, WICHE held roundtable discussions with a range of stakeholders from across the region, including nursing school faculty and administrators, state nursing workforce center directors, hospital administrators, and directors of boards of nursing and nursing associations, to learn more about what states and institutions are doing to address this issue.

 Visit wiche.edu/nursingworkforce for more information and resources on the nursing workforce in the West.

The Issue

Faculty pay is a key driver for the shortage of qualified nursing faculty.

Roundtable participants shared that faculty salaries have not kept pace with staff nurse's salaries, which makes it difficult to attract and retain expert clinicians from the practice arena. This issue, coupled with an expected wave of retirement of nursing faculty and high vacancy rates, has made it difficult for nursing schools to recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty. Additionally, there is a shortage of clinical preceptors to ensure nursing students have access to necessary clinical education experiences. States, institutions, the federal government, and other organizations are taking steps to invest in the resources to recruit and retain nursing educators.

Approaches in the West

States, institutions, and the federal government are seeking to address these pay disparities and invest in scalable solutions.

Nurse Run Clinics (NRC)

These clinics serve as community health centers that fill critical community health needs and provide clinical and financial resources for nursing educators.

- ▶ Academic-based NRC clinical faculty are able to fulfill clinical duties and support the clinical education of future nurses and other health occupations.
- ▶ NRC have the potential to generate additional revenue via patient visits to help sustain or increase faculty salaries.
- ▶ The [University of Colorado – Anschutz](#) and the [University of California System](#) have several NRC serving their local communities.

(continued)



In 2022, the **median annual salary** for nursing educators is **\$45,200 less** than the median annual salary for advance practice nurses such as nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and nurse anesthetists.

Source: U.S. Labor Bureau of Statistics

Approaches in the West *(continued)*

Faculty Practice Partnerships

These partnerships are formal arrangements between a nursing program/academic health center and a clinical facility that are potentially cost-effective for both parties.

- ▶ [Faculty practice partnerships](#) are beneficial to the clinical practice site by providing clinical faculty expertise to the workforce and beneficial to clinical faculty in meeting practice requirements and offering opportunities for community engagement for nursing faculty.
- ▶ The [University of Utah College of Nursing](#) engages in a wide range of academic practice partnerships that support communities across the state.

Funding and Investment

States have made considerable direct investments in the past several years to increase nursing faculty salaries and hiring:

- ▶ In 2022, [New Mexico](#) awarded \$15 million to expand nursing across the state, including enhancing faculty recruitment and retention through competitive salaries, stipends, or other compensation.
- ▶ In 2022, [Hawai'i](#) invested \$1.75 million for 39 faculty positions across the University of Hawai'i system.
- ▶ The [Washington](#) legislature passed HB 2158 (2019) which provided \$40 million to the state's community and technical colleges to increase nursing faculty salaries and reflected an overall increase of 26.5% for these salaries.
- ▶ In 2022, the [Washington](#) legislature passed HB 2007, which established a nurse educator loan repayment under the [Washington Health Corps](#).
- ▶ Some states like [Hawai'i](#) and [Colorado](#) offer tax rebates to eligible preceptors as a way to compensate and incentivize preceptors, while [Washington](#) developed a preceptor grant program.

State budgets have benefited from an influx in federal funds in the past several years and it is imperative that there are sustainable fundings streams to support nursing faculty recruitment and retention. If states face budget challenges, it will be imperative for policymakers and health leaders to sustain these investments.

Federal Policy

State policymakers should be aware of federal programs that might have important interactions with state-level initiatives in order to design complementary approaches that can help to stretch the impact of limited resources.

- ▶ **Proposed legislation:** [The Future Advancement of Academic Nursing \(FAAN\) Act](#) would support nursing programs and specifies funds to retain current faculty and hire new faculty.
- ▶ **Federal Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program:** This [federal program](#) offers a non-salary financial incentive through loan repayment for health professions faculty from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- ▶ **Expansion of Federal Graduate Nursing Education (GNE) Funding:** Some have proposed expanding federal GNE funding based on the positive results of a [pilot program](#), which included funds for faculty hiring.



Further Reading

- ▶ [Leveraging a Successful Faculty Practice Model to Recruit and Retain Early-Career Nurse Faculty](#)
- ▶ [The Graduate Nurse Education Demonstration Project: Final Evaluation Report](#)
- ▶ [Nurse-Managed Health Centers: Financial Stability, Community Benefit, and Stakeholders](#)
- ▶ [Benefits of Faculty Practice Partnerships](#)

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