

The Washington Health Workforce Sentinel Network

Spring 2023 Workforce Demand Update
and Trends Since 2016

Health Workforce Council Meeting

June 22, 2023

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Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

Purpose

Since 2016, the Health Workforce Sentinel Network has supported efficient and effective health workforce preparation and deployment by:

- **Identifying emerging signals** of changes in health workforce demand.
- Tracking and identifying **trends over time**.
- **Rapidly disseminating information** to education, training and policy partners who can respond to findings.

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

Data for Health Workforce Planning

Supply

- Size (#), Distribution
 - # per county, # per 100,000 population...
- Demographics
 - age, gender, race, ethnicity...
- Practice
 - in clinical practice Y/N, FTE, satisfaction, ...
- New entrants/exits
 - education: # new grads/trainees
 - In-migrants from other states, countries
 - retirement, outmigration

Demand

- Vacancy & turnover rates
 - #s of persons & FTEs to fill current vacant jobs
- Demand “how” and “why”
 - descriptions of types of vacancies and turnover occurring, and why
 - used to inform policies and practices to improve recruitment & retention

Need

- Population characteristics:
 - health status
 - access to care (e.g., insurance status, income, availability of health care services)

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Demand

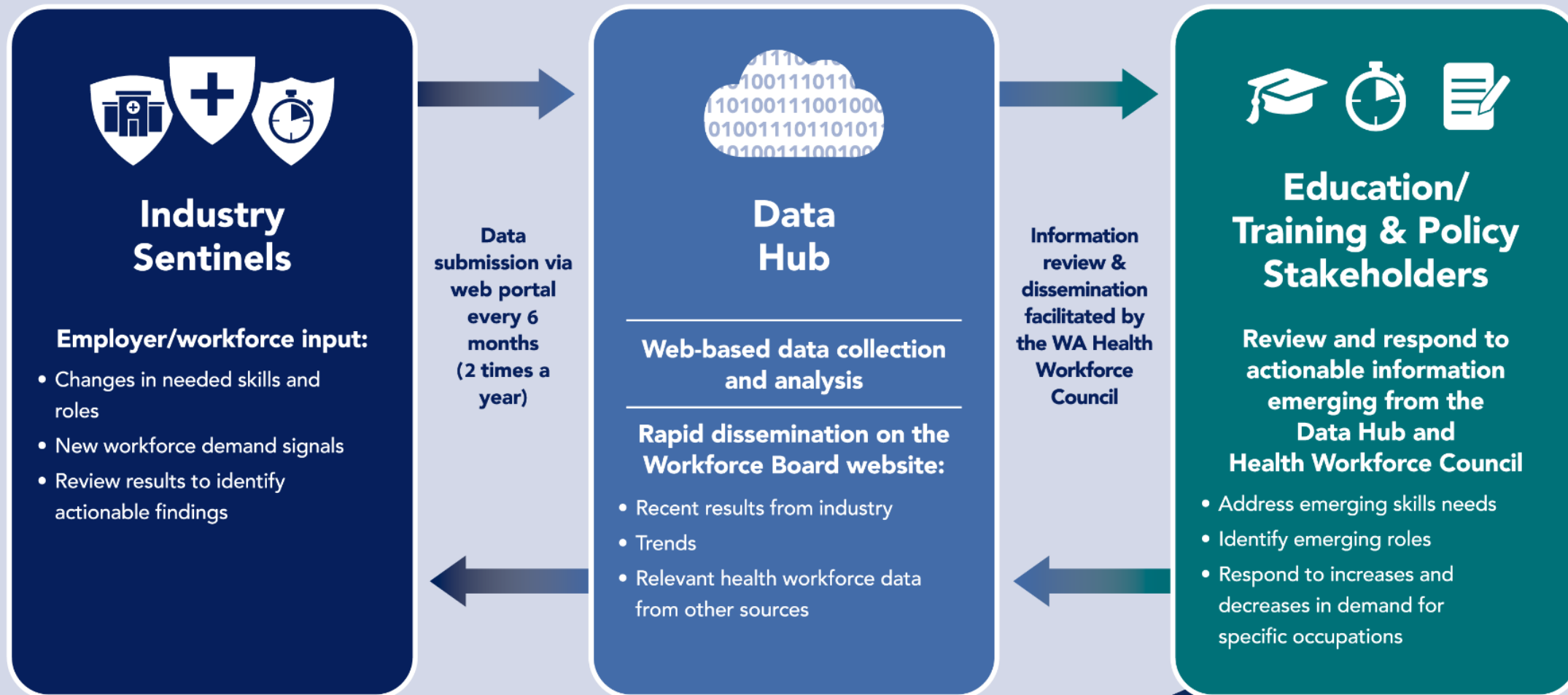
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Sentinel Network

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network



Sentinel Network workforce demand questions

Recently (in the past 6 months):

- Occupations experiencing exceptionally long **vacancies**
- Occupations with exceptional **turnover**
- **New occupations** that they did not previously employ
- **New roles** for existing employees
- Changes in **orientation/onboarding procedures** for new employees
- Changes in **training priorities** for existing employees
- Does your facility serve **urban, rural or a mix** of urban and rural clients?

With a focus on qualitative input about which, how, and reasons why

PLUS several ***timely, overarching questions*** are developed for each round

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network Nursing Homes/Skilled Nursing Facilities (2016-2023)

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting															
Rank	Summer 2016	Winter 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	
1	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	Registered nurse	
							Nursing assistant								
2	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	Licensed practical nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	
											Nursing assistant		Registered nurse	Nursing assistant	
3	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Speech-language therapist	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Occupational therapist	Nursing assistant	Cook / Food services	Cook / Food services	
							Physical therapist								
4	Social worker	Occup. therapy assistant	Occup. therapy assistant	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Dentist	Occup. therapy assistant	Audiologist	Dentist	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Occupational therapist	Occupational therapist	Nursing assistant	Cook / Food services	Dietitian / Nutritionist	Occupational therapy assistant
		Physical therapist					Occup. therapy aide								
		Social worker	Physical therapist			Physician/ Surgeon	Social worker	Occupational therapy assistant		Physical therapist	Speech-language therapist				
							Psychologist	Physical therapy aide							
		Social worker	Physical therapist			Physician/ Surgeon	Psychologist	Physical therapy asst.		Physical Therapy Assistant	Speech-language therapist				

← Most cited

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network Behavioral Health Facilities* (2016-2023)

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting											
Rank	Summer 2016	Winter 2016	Spring 2017	...	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
1	Mental Health Counselor	Chemical Dependency Professional (SUDP)**	Mental Health Counselor	...	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor	Mental Health Counselor
2	Chemical Dependency Professional (SUDP)**	Mental Health Counselor	Chemical Dependency Professional (SUDP)**	...	Chemical dependency professional (SUDP)**	Chemical dependency professional (SUDP)**	SUDP	SUDP	SUDP	SUDP	SUDP
										Registered Nurse	
										Peer Counselor	
3	Social Worker	Social Worker	Social Worker	...	Social Worker	Social Worker (Mental Health/SUDP)	Psychiatrist	Social Worker (Mental Health/SUDP)	Social Worker (Mental Health/SUDP)	Social Worker (Mental Health/SUDP)	Registered Nurse
						Social Worker					
4	Nurse Practitioner	Nurse Practitioner	Nurse Practitioner		Peer counselor	Registered Nurse	Peer Counselor	Peer Counselor	Marriage & Family Therapist	Marriage & Family Therapist	Marriage & Family Therapist
		Psychiatrist									

↑ Most cited

*Behavioral health/mental health and substance use disorder clinics. After 2019 also includes residential treatment facilities, designated crisis responder services, mobile crisis outreach teams, and other residential and out-of-facility behavioral health services.

**Occupation title changed to Substance Use Disorder Professional (SUDP).

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

Small Hospitals (25 beds or fewer) (2016-2023)

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting												
Rank	Winter 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
1	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Physician/ Surgeon	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Registered nurse
			Physical therapist									
2	Occupational therapist	Med/Clin lab technologist	Physical therapy assistant	Physician/ surgeon	Physician/ surgeon	Registered nurse	Medical assistant	Nursing assistant	Medical assistant	Nursing assistant	Cook / Food services	Med/Clin Lab technologist
	Physical therapist											
	Physician/ surgeon	Physical therapist	Nursing assistant			Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant					
3	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Med/Clin lab technologist	Physical therapist	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Medical assistant	Physician/ Surgeon	Cook / Food services	Nursing assistant	Med/Clin Lab technician
				Nursing assistant								
				Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Marriage & family therapist							Nursing assistant

← Most cited

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network Dentist Offices/Dental Clinics (2018-2023)

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting

Rank	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	
1	Dental assistant	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	Dental assistant	Dental assistant	Dental hygienist	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	
					Dental hygienist	Dental hygienist					
2	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	No additional occupations reported	Dentist	Dental hygienist	Dental assistant	Dental assistant	Dental hygienist	
						Office personnel					
3	Dentist	Dentist	Dentist	Dentist		Medicaid navigator	Dentist	Office personnel	Office personnel	Office personnel	Office personnel
				Office personnel							
4	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Office personnel	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency	Multiple occupations cited at same frequency		No additional occupations reported	Office personnel	Dentist	Dentist	Dentist	

← Most cited

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network
Case Study: Nursing Homes/Skilled Nursing Facilities

Pre-Pandemic (Fall 2019):

- Can't match wages from other sectors, especially hospitals
- Regulatory requirements felt to be burdensome

"[We are] offering up to \$43/hour with \$7500 sign-on bonus. Not able to compete with hospital rates and have to meet regulatory requirements."

- Residents with higher acuity problems, including mental health issues, cited as a reason for high staff turnover

"Patient acuity has increased... leading to increased turnover. Staff in this position are immediately exhausted by the demand of the position. Many do not continue in healthcare as a result."

Early Pandemic (Spring and Fall 2020):

“Staffing was the biggest challenge in both nursing and housekeeping. Information about this disease was evolving daily and staff were scared, testing was taking 7 + days. It was a daily challenge to keep adequate PPE available and following CDC recommendations.”

- Obtaining PPE and cleaning supplies is a top priority
- Many facilities reduced census, but still had difficulties fully staffing due to reduced staff pools and illness of workers
- Some organizations are turning to staffing agencies but report high expense and some inexperienced workers. Many new roles for existing staff are reported

Middle of the Pandemic (Spring and Fall 2021):

- Many workers reported to leave for higher-paying agency positions or “safer” jobs outside of health care
- Some turnover reported due to vaccine requirements, but education/incentive campaigns generally effective
- On top of their new care roles, workers provide emotional support to residents due to family visitation restrictions
- Many facilities struggle due to limited staffing options

“Demands on care staff have drastically increased while simultaneously staff resources have been drastically decreasing [leading to] mandatory overtime, high burnout rates, angry staff, [impacting] the amount and level of care [for] residents.”

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network
Case Study: Nursing Homes/Skilled Nursing Facilities

Late Pandemic (Spring and Fall 2022):

- Renewed focus on recruitment and retention strategies, including payment/benefit increases and recognition programs
- Many facilities still rely on agency staffing to fill absences
- Childcare support, housing subsidies and transportation benefits all cited as social supports needed to maintain staffing

“We are offering flexible schedules, we have employee assistance programs, tuition reimbursement. Creating more flexibility with our schedules has shown some improvement [but] other [benefits] have not.”

Overarching Workforce Topics - "Community Factors" Fall 2022

In the past year, has access to childcare, housing, transportation, or other factors affected staffing at your organization?

Percent who answered "Yes" for each enabling factor

	Overall (n = 167)	Dental office/clinic (n = 49)	Long term care (n = 22)	Small hospital (n = 12)	Rural health clinic (n = 16)
Childcare	68%	69%	68%	83%	75%
Housing	50%	35%	50%	83%	69%
Transportation	35%	27%	64%	17%	31%
Other	18%	20%	9%	8%	6%

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

More Findings on Sentinel Network Dashboard

www.wa.sentinelnetwork.org



Washington's Health Workforce
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As a Sentinel, you will make your workforce needs known to decisionmakers and inform policy decisions in our state.

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FINDINGS BRIEFS

View summarized findings for selected facility types

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Value Provided by Sentinel Network Findings

- Described specific workforce impacts of the pandemic in many health care settings
- Guided Washington's Health Workforce Council strategy and legislative recommendations
- Supported initiatives to improve training and regulation of state's behavioral health workforce
- Used by organizations to support funding applications
- Other examples? Please share!

Plans for 2023 and beyond

Sentinel Network Updates and Refresh

Strategic planning sessions are planned for 2023

Some general goals include:

- Improve experience for employer-Sentinels
- Continue to be a valuable tool for workforce planning
- Possibly develop other special focus module (similar to behavioral health question modules)

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

www.wa.sentinelnetwork.org

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