

Effects of COVID-19 on newly licensed registered nurses

Comparative assessment and resources for guiding change

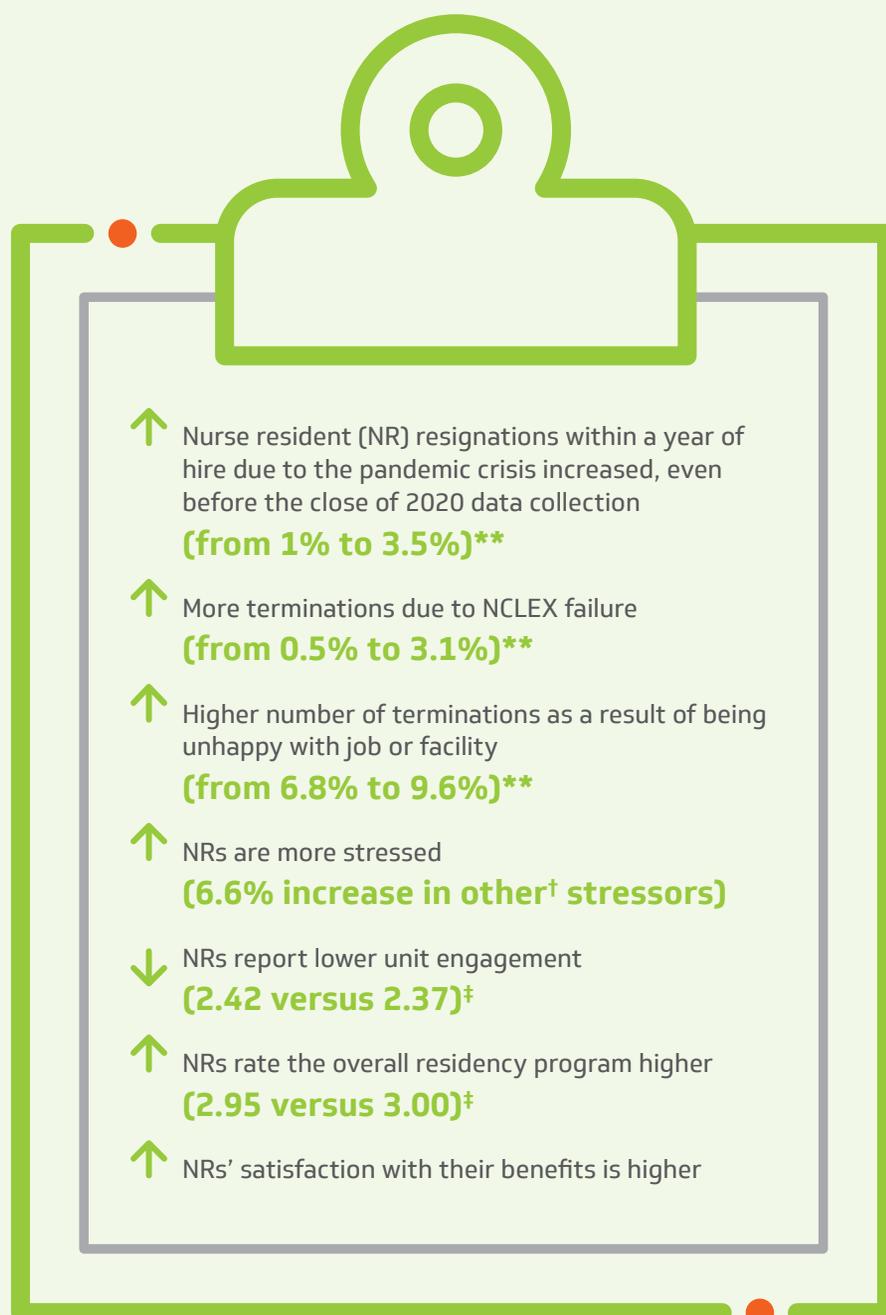
Background

While the full effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nursing workforce remain to be seen, we know newly licensed registered nurses are a particularly vulnerable portion of the nursing workforce.

Newly licensed registered nurses (NLRNs) have experienced significant changes in their preparation for the professional setting; including reduced clinical hours and shifting to virtual education and events. Even in normal circumstances, the first year of practice for a NLRN can be challenging and results in a high level of turnover.

This is evident in a rate of about 17.5% of new nurses leaving their first job within one year of starting their jobs.¹ The full impact of the pandemic on NLRNs remains to be seen; however, data from Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program™ participants sheds some light on their experiences.

Key findings – 2019 compared to 2020*



Observations and next steps

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 - Examine data at your organization level and leverage national benchmark data from Vizient/AACN program to assess differences in job satisfaction and stress among NRs beginning their career during the pandemic.
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 - Share data, findings and observations with nursing leadership.
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 - Continue to have NR program seminars. Support and connection are critical for NRs. Emphasize curriculum content areas to respond to resident needs. (e.g., stress management, interprofessional communication)
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 - Support NRs and promote engagement and satisfaction in their careers.
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 - Engage NRs at the unit level to address decreasing engagement. (e.g., committees, listening sessions, huddles) and monitor engagement.

¹ Kovner C, Brewer C, Fatehi F, Jun J. What does nurse turnover mean and what is the rate?. Policy Polit Nurs Pract. epub abstract. August 25, 2014. Accessed Nov. 16, 2020. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25156041/>

* All numbers are statistically significant at a P < 0.05. Data reflect registered nurses in 2019 compared to 2020 at the 12-month period.

** Percent of total terminations

[†] Other is an option in addition to: finances, childcare, student loans, living situation or personal relationship

[‡] Based on a Likert scale, 1-4

NCLEX = National Council Licensure Examination