

ADVOCACY & SUPPORT



WHO WE ARE: The Suncoast Nursing Action Coalition (SNAC) is a grassroots advocacy group made up of representatives from health systems, colleges and universities educating nurses and community members in the four-county Suncoast region (Sarasota, Manatee, DeSoto and Charlotte counties). For the past six years, we have been united in a shared mission to advance the nursing profession and ensure our region has access to safe, high-quality healthcare in the Suncoast region and beyond.

WHAT WE STAND FOR: SNAC is neither a political action group nor a lobbying organization. As a regional workgroup of the Florida Action Coalition and Florida Center for Nursing, SNAC is seeking opportunities to inform legislators, policymakers and the public about the unprecedented need in our area for qualified, well-educated registered nurses and share strategies we believe are critical to addressing Florida's nursing crisis.

KEY ISSUES

Florida's nursing shortage is uniquely serious and expected to worsen as demand increases.

- While deficits in our nation's nursing workforce are not new, today's shortage is reaching a critical tipping point in many regions of Florida.
- One of the fastest growing, oldest populations in the country, our state's nursing deficits are compounded by a population that is not only growing, but growing older. With a rising incidence of chronic disease, an aging nursing workforce and limited number of accredited programs, there is insufficient faculty to replace the current and future wave of retiring nurses.
- To date qualified applicants are being declined admission to nursing programs due to limited capacity, leaving very few options to enter programs that are accredited or capable of providing a positive return on investment.

The need for baccalaureate-prepared nurses, and doctorate-prepared nursing faculty to train them, is most acute.

- While nurses are needed with all levels of training, BSN RNs are needed to provide a continuum of care to our communities. Decades of evidence demonstrates hospitals with a higher proportion of nurses with bachelor degrees have the leadership

skills to guide process improvements and the skills to act as positive change agents in future teaching, consulting, research and administrative roles.

- Increased education and advanced training gives nurses critical thinking skills to reduce medical errors, and lower mortality rates among patients.
- The Institute for Healthcare Improvement recommends having an 80% baccalaureate-prepared RN workforce by 2020. Despite increases in recent years, the percentage of working RNs with a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree in Florida remains below 50% (reaching 41% in 2017, according to latest data available).
- Investment in accredited BSN programs or seamless academic programs is needed to promote a viable quality nurse workforce.

BSN programs are educating students most likely to pass the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

- In 2018, Florida's statewide RN NCLEX passage rate (combining Associate and Bachelor degree programs) was 72.74%, compared to 88.29% nationally – ranking Florida the lowest among the 50 states and District of Columbia.
- Within Florida, however, graduates with Bachelor's degrees performed the best (89% passage rate), while those with Associate degrees performed at the lowest level (68% passage rate), as a group. In the region SNAC serves, the three accredited Associate degree programs (State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, Keiser University - Sarasota, and Florida Southwestern State College) averaged an 88.6% NCLEX passage rate in 2018 (appendix attached).
- High-quality nursing programs in Florida that demonstrate a high return on investment are essential to both NCLEX passage rates and producing highly qualified nurses ready to enter the workplace.

SNAC offers support/resources for legislators and leaders seeking insights on pending or new legislation. For more information, visit SNAC4FL.org or contact Jan Mauck at jan.mauck41@gmail.com or Charles Baumann at cbaumann@kgrp.com.



Appendix

2018	Educational Institution	Percentage of Exam Takers Who Passed	Florida Percentage of Exam Takers Who Passed	National Percentage of Exam Takers Who Passed
BSN Programs	FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY	100%	88.2%	91.57%
	UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA [All BSN Programs]	94.44%		
	KEISER UNIVERSITY - SARASOTA	92.50%		
ASN Programs	STATE COLLEGE OF FLORIDA, MANATEE-SARASOTA	96.9%	67.52%	85.11%
	KEISER UNIVERSITY - SARASOTA	86.49%		
	FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE	82.46%		

Data retrieved from Review of Florida Nurse Education Program Graduate Passage Rates on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensure Examination: Calendar Year 2018.