2015 NEBRASKA LPN WORKFORCE SURVEY REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES - LICENSURE UNIT
November 2016
Since November 2000, the Licensed Practical Nurse Workforce Survey has been included with the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) renewal application. In 2000, the Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Center for Nursing to address the nursing shortage. In August of 2015, Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) were surveyed in conjunction with LPN renewal notices.

A total of 6,366 Workforce Surveys were collected and entered for data analysis. From this total, 5,782 were completed on-line, and 584 on paper. In order to merge the Workforce Survey responses with the database information, the license number, which was stamped on the survey prior to mailing or was typed by an online survey participant, was used to merge the survey responses with the information from the database. This information was used to calculate demographic characteristics of the sample, such as age and gender. Of the 6,366 surveys collected, 5,747 identified themselves as being principally employed in Nebraska (90.2%). A copy of the survey form can be found in Appendix.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The demographic characteristics of LPNs in Nebraska indicate that nearly 91% are White (%) and 97% female. Similar results were found with the 2013 LPN Renewal Survey. Race/ethnicity among LPNs are more diverse at the national level, where only 63.2 are White, and the percentage of males is higher compared to the state level in Nebraska (7.6% vs. 3.1%, respectively). The average age of LPNs in Nebraska has increased from 44.9 years in 2013 to 46.1 years in 2015. Average age of LPNs in Nebraska is higher compared to the national average age of 43.6 years (U.S. DHHS, 2013).

In considering the geographic distribution of LPNs in Nebraska, there are 1.6 more LPNs per capita in rural areas when compared to urban areas (444 LPNs per capita in rural areas, vs. 272 LPNs per capita in urban areas). Similar results are found at the national level (U.S. DHHS, 2013).

The percentage of LPNs certified for IV therapy decreased from 13.8% in 2013 to 13% in 2015. Currently, nine percent of LPNs are enrolled in a nursing education program, mostly for Associate Degree Programs, followed by Baccalaureate Degree Programs.

Nearly four out of ten LPNs work in a Nursing Home/Extended Care/Assisted Living Facility. That percentage is similar compared to the national statistics (U.S. DHHS, 2013). Over 30 percent of LPNs are specialized in Geriatrics/Gerontology as part of their nursing practice position. One-third of LPNs earned a salary of between $25,000 and less than $35,000.

The most liked aspect of nursing was “patients” and the least liked aspect was “salary”. The large majority of LPNs who would choose nursing again, were very unlikely to leave nursing as their principal employment, and would encourage others to choose nursing as a career.
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Gender

In Nebraska, 3.1% of LPNs identified themselves as male and 96.9% as female, which shows no increment in male nursing participation in comparison to previous data. Figure 1 shows the percentage of male and female nurses in Nebraska for the current 2015 LPN survey.

Figure 1: Distribution of Nebraska Licensed Practical Nurses by Gender in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>96.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age

Figure 2 depicts the distribution of Nebraska LPNs by age. In Nebraska the average age of LPNs is 46.1 (max = 82; min = 20; s.d. = 13). The average age for male LPNs is 41.9 and for female LPNs is 46.2. Eleven percent of LPNs are under 30 years of age. On average, LPNs are four years older than ten years ago. A similar trend has occurred at the national level.
Racial/Ethnic Background

Figure 3 shows the distribution of LPNs in Nebraska according to self-reported racial/ethnic categories. The preponderance of nurses were Caucasian, 91.3%. Minorities represented 8.7% of the total LPN population. The highest percentage of minorities is represented by African Americans (4.6%), followed by Hispanic/Latinos (3.6%). At the national level, only 63.2% of LPNs are White (U.S. DHHS, 2013). In the general population of Nebraska (2015 estimates), 89.1% are Caucasian, 5% are African American, 1.4% are American Indian/Alaska Native, 2.3% are Asian, and 10.4% are Hispanic/Latino (http://www.census.gov/quickfacts).
**Figure 3: Distribution of Nebraska LPNs by Racial/Ethnic Background**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial/Ethnic Background</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EDUCATION**

Most LPNs (88.5%) graduated from a Nebraska LPN program, 11.2% were educated in other states, and 0.3% were foreign educated. This information is depicted in Figure 4. Over 1 out of ten LPNs are certified for IV therapy (13%, LPN-C).

**Figure 4: Geographic Location of Education**
Enrolled in a nursing education program

LPNs were asked if they were currently enrolled in a nursing education program leading to a degree or certificate. Nearly 9 out of ten LPNs responded that they were not enrolled in a nursing education program, followed by those who mentioned being enrolled in an Associate Degree Program (6.1%), then followed by a Baccalaureate Degree Program (1.8%). See Figure 5. LPNs reporting that they had a non-nursing degree before they entered the LPN program were 10.6%.

Figure 5: LPNs Currently Enrolled in Nursing Education Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolled in Program</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not currently enrolled</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree Program</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate Degree Program</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Program</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree Program</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SALARY

LPNs were asked to describe their salary ranges. Figure 6 displays the reported salary information. The highest percentage (33.1%) of LPNs earned $25,000 - $35,000 followed by 31% earning $35,000 - $45,000. Nearly two out of ten LPNs reported earning more than $45,000. According to the Nebraska Department of Labor, the estimated mean annual wage for LPNs is $40,478 (https://neworks.nebraska.gov).
**Figure 6: Salaries of Nebraska LPNs**

![Salary Distribution Graph](image)

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

**Hours Worked per Week**

Figure 7 shows the amount of time Nebraska LPNs work each week. In 2015, 92.0% of Nebraska LPNs were working over 20 hours per week. Overall, nearly five out of ten LPNs work 40 hours a week or more. The highest percentage of LPNs reported working at least 40 but less than 50 hours per week (52.7%), followed by 27.2% working at least 30 but less than 40 hours per week. Just nearly 4% of LPNs work more than 50 hours per week.
Figure 7: Average Work Hours Per Week for Nebraska LPNs

Work Situation

The majority of LPNs (94.4%) was working in nursing positions that required a LPN license. The percentage of LPNs working in non-nursing positions was 1.7%. Three point five percent were not employed, and of these non-employed licensees, 2.2% were looking for positions in nursing.

Employers of Nurses

Nebraska LPNs identified how many employers they worked for at the time of the survey. In 2015, 86.2% of LPNS worked for one employer, 12.1% for two, and 1.6 % for three or more. Figure 8 is based on these numbers.

Figure 8: Number of Employers
**Setting**

The 2015 Renewal Survey lists 13 working nurse practice positions. Nursing Home/Extended Care/Assisted Living Facility is the major employer of LPNs with 40.8% of LPNs, followed by “Other” (16.4%), Hospital (13%), and Ambulatory Care Setting (10.7%). See Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Work Settings**

![Figure 9: Work Settings](image_url)

**Primary LPN Practice Position**

Eight out of ten LPNs work as “Staff Nurse” (82.3%), followed by “Other-Health Related” (7.5%), and then by “Nurse Manager” position (6.4%). See Figure 10. Four out of ten Staff Nurse work in Nursing Home/Extended Care/Assisted Living Facility.
Employment Specialty

Twenty-one different specialties were listed for LPNs to choose from. Geriatric/Gerontology was the primary specialty chosen by LPNs (34.8%), followed by “Other” (12.5%), and then by “Adult Health/Family Health” (10.4%). Those who selected “Other” as specialty, 70% work as “Staff Nurse”. See Figure 11 for a complete list of specialties.
Figure 11: LPN Specialties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geriatric/Gerontology</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Health/Family Health</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Care</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Care/Critical Care</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Health</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Surgical</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics/Neonatal</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric/Mental Health/Substance Abuse</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Health</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womens Health</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal-Child Health</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Health</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palliative Care</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oncology</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tele-health</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesia</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satisfaction Levels with Employment

Half of LPNs indicated that what they like the most about their job is to provide services to patients (49.1%), followed by Hours/schedule (19.4%), and then by the Work itself (12%). See Figure 12.
When LPNs were asked about what they like the least, nearly three out of ten indicated that there is nothing they do not like (28.2%), followed by Salary (23.3%), and then by Benefits (13.1%). See Figure 13.
LPNs were asked how satisfied they are with their current job. One out of two nurses indicate that they are “Very satisfied” with their jobs (53.7%). Only 0.9% of nurses indicated that they were “Very dissatisfied” with their current job. When merging positive remarks about their jobs (i.e., “Very satisfied” and “Somewhat satisfied”), a total of 96.3% of LPNs feel satisfied with their current jobs. See Figure 14.

**Figure 14: How Satisfied Are You With Your Current Job?**

![Pie chart showing satisfaction levels: Very satisfied 53.7%, Somewhat satisfied 42.5%, Dissatisfied 2.8%, Very dissatisfied 0.9%.]

LPNs were also asked how satisfied they are with nursing as a career. Over two thirds of LPNs answered that they were “Very satisfied” (68.1%), followed by “Somewhat satisfied” (29.7%). Overall, 2.3% of LPNs answered that they were not satisfied with their career. See Figure 15.
A high proportion of LPNs indicate that they would encourage others to choose nursing as a career (89.2%), and 86.8% of LPNs would do it over if they had the opportunity to choose nursing as a career again. These high levels of satisfaction with nursing jobs and the nursing career are consistent with previous years. See Figures 16 and 17.
Leaving principal employment

Over two-thirds of LPNs (67.3%) found it very unlikely that they would leave nursing as their principal employment in the next twelve months. Only five percent of LPNs are considering leaving their employment. Overall, eight out of ten LPNs consider “Somewhat unlikely” or “Very unlikely” leaving the profession. See Figure 18.

Figure 18: How Likely Are You To Leave Your Principal Employment In The Next 12 Months?

Reasons for leaving

LPNs who plan to leave their principal employment as nurses identified the following reasons: Two out of ten LPNs (21.1%) selected “Other” as main reason. Another 16.6% chose “Dissatisfied with their salary”, followed by “Obtaining RN License” (13.0%), and then by “Retirement” (12.3%). Figure 19.
GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF LPNS IN NEBRASKA

Figure 20 shows the number of LPNs by County according to the 2015 LPN Renewal Survey. Nine counties did not report any LPN working in them: Sioux, Banner, Arthur, McPherson, Logan, Thomas, Blaine, Loup, and Keya Paha. The highest number of LPNs was reported in Douglas County (n = 1,145), followed by Lancaster County (n = 911). Three counties reported having just one LPN working in them: Grant, Wheeler, and Frontier.

When analyzing LPN geographic distribution by rural and urban (Metro and Micropolitan) counties, it is found that three-fourths of LPNs work in urban areas (74.8%) and one-fourth work in rural areas (25.2%). Similar geographic distributions are found at the national level (U.S. DHHS, 2013). See Figure 20 and Table 1.
Table 1: Total Number & Percentage of LPNs by Geographic Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th>Urban (%)</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>Rural (%)</th>
<th>Total (Urban + Rural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micropolitan</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>2,757</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>1,425</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>5,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,237</strong></td>
<td><strong>74.8</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National data shows that there are 225 LPNs per 100,000 people (per capita) (U.S. DHHS, 2013). In Nebraska, there are 303 LPNs per 100,000 people. On average, there are 171 more LPNs per capita in Rural Nebraska than in urban areas (Metro and Micropolitan areas). See Figure 21.
Figure 22 shows the number of LPNs per 100,000 people by county. Rock County shows the highest number of LPNs per capita (1,014 LPNs per 100,000), followed by Boone County (865 LPNs per 100,000), and then by Hooker County (820 LPNs per 100,000). Frontier County shows the lowest number of LPNs per capita (38 LPNs per 100,000), followed by Dakota (43 LPNs per 100,000), and then by Sarpy County (105 LPNs per 100,000).
REFERENCES

# Practical Nursing Workforce Survey 2015

1. What is your license #?  

2. What is your race?  
   - White/Caucasian  
   - Black/African American  
   - Asian  
   - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
   - American Indian or Alaska Native  
   - Other  

   2.a. Hispanic origin or descent?  
   - Yes  
   - No

2.b. If you speak another language other than English, please indicate.  
   - Spanish  
   - German  
   - French

2.c. Are you fluent in sign language?  
   - Yes  
   - No

3. Where was the location of the basic nursing education program that prepared you to take the LPN licensing examination?  
   - Nebraska  
   - Other State or US territory  
   - Foreign country

4. Which nursing education programs have you completed? (Mark all that apply)  
   - Practical Nursing Program Diploma  
   - Practical Nursing Program – Associate Degree

5. Are you currently enrolled in a nursing education program leading degree/certificate?  
   - Not currently enrolled  
   - Associate Degree Program  
   - Associate degree-other field  
   - Diploma Program  
   - Baccalaureate Degree Program  
   - Baccalaureate degree-other field

6. If you have a non-nursing degree(s), did you earn this degree before entering your basic nursing education program that prepared you for LPN licensure?  
   - Yes  
   - No

7. Are you currently an LPN-C? (LPN certified for IV therapy)  
   - Yes  
   - No

8. If yes, are you currently working in that role?  
   - Yes  
   - No

9. Which of the following best describes your current primary work situation? (Select one).  
   - Actively employed in nursing:  
     - Full-time  
     - Part-time  
     - Per diem  
   - Working in nursing only as a volunteer

10. If unemployed, please indicate the reasons:  
    - Taking care of home and family  
    - Inadequate Salary  
    - Difficulty in finding a nursing position  
    - Other, please specify

Please answer questions 11 - 29 only if you are actively employed in nursing.
11. In how many positions are you currently employed as a nurse?  

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. How many hours do you work during a typical week in all your nursing positions?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOURS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Please indicate the zip code, county and state of your PRIMARY EMPLOYER:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZIP CODE</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. How many miles do you travel one way to get to work at your principal nursing employment?  

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 5 miles</td>
<td>21 – 30 miles</td>
<td>6 – 10 miles</td>
<td>31 – 50 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 20 miles</td>
<td>&gt; 50 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. What is your current annual salary for all nursing employment?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than $5,000</th>
<th>At least $45,000 but less than $55,000</th>
<th>At least $55,000 but less than $65,000</th>
<th>At least $65,000 but less than $85,000</th>
<th>At least $85,000, but less than $105,000</th>
<th>At least $105,000 and more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16.a. Please identify the type of setting that most closely corresponds to your PRIMARY nursing practice position:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Community Health</th>
<th>Nursing Home/Extended Care</th>
<th>School Health Service</th>
<th>Home Health</th>
<th>Occupational Health</th>
<th>Correctional Facility</th>
<th>Ambulatory Care Setting</th>
<th>Academic Setting</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>Public Health</th>
<th>Policy/Planning/Regulatory/Licensing Agency</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16.b. Please identify the position title that most closely corresponds to your PRIMARY nursing practice position:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Nurse</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Nurse</th>
<th>Nurse Researcher</th>
<th>Other-Health Related</th>
<th>Nurse Executive</th>
<th>Other-Not Health Related</th>
<th>Nurse Manager</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Nurse Faculty</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16.c. Please identify the employment specialty that most closely corresponds to your PRIMARY nursing practice position:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acute Care/Critical Care</th>
<th>Medical Surgical</th>
<th>Psychiatric/Mental Health/ Substance Abuse</th>
<th>Adult Health/Family Health</th>
<th>Occupational Health</th>
<th>Anesthesia</th>
<th>Oncology</th>
<th>School Health</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Palliative Care</th>
<th>Tele-health</th>
<th>Geriatric/Gerontology</th>
<th>Pediatrics/Neonatal Care</th>
<th>Trauma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Health</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>Women's Health</td>
<td>Maternal-Child Health</td>
<td>Primary Care</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17.a. Please identify the type of setting that most closely corresponds to your SECONDARY nursing practice position:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Community Health</th>
<th>Nursing Home/Extended Care</th>
<th>School Health Service</th>
<th>Home Health</th>
<th>Occupational Health</th>
<th>Correctional Facility</th>
<th>Ambulatory Care Setting</th>
<th>Academic Setting</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>Public Health</th>
<th>Policy/Planning/Regulatory/Licensing Agency</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

17.b. Please identify the position title that most closely corresponds to your SECONDARY nursing practice position:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Nurse</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Nurse</th>
<th>Nurse Researcher</th>
<th>Other-Health Related</th>
<th>Nurse Executive</th>
<th>Other-Not Health Related</th>
<th>Nurse Manager</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Nurse Faculty</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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17.c. Please identify the employment specialty that most closely corresponds to your **SECONDARY** nursing practice position:

- Acute Care/Critical Care
- Medical Surgical
- Psychiatric/Mental Health/Substance Abuse
- Adult Health/Family Health
- Anesthesia
- Community Palliative Care
- Geriatric/Gerontology Pediatrics/Neonatal
- Home Health
- Maternal-Child Health
- Primary Care
- Other

Questions #18 through #25 ask about your satisfaction level with your nursing career.

18. What do you like **MOST** about your principal nursing employment? (Select one)
- Benefits (insurance, paid vacation, retirement, etc.)
- Hours/schedule
- Location
- People for whom I provide service (patients)
- People with whom I work (co-workers)
- Work itself
- Other

19. What do you like **LEAST** about your principal nursing employment? (Select one)
- Benefits (insurance, paid vacation, retirement, etc.)
- Hours/schedule
- Location
- People for whom I provide service (patients)
- People with whom I work (co-workers)
- Salary
- Work itself
- Nothing, there isn’t anything I don’t like
- Other

20. How likely are you to leave your principal employment in the next 12 months?
- Very unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Somewhat likely
- Very likely

21. If very likely or somewhat likely that you will leave your principal employment in the next 12 months, what is the main reason? (Select one)
- Dissatisfaction with job
- Retirement
- Dissatisfaction with salary
- Returning to school
- Family/personal
- Other
- Lack of opportunity for upward mobility in the organization
- Does not apply to me

22. How satisfied are you with your current job?
- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

23. If you had to do it over, would you choose nursing as a career?
- Yes
- No

24. Would you encourage others to choose nursing as a career?
- Yes
- No

25. How satisfied are you with nursing as a career?
- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

26. Please list all states in which you hold an active license to practice as an LPN:

27. Please list all states in which you are currently practicing:

28. Do you utilize tele-health in your primary or secondary positions?
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

29. If yes, when utilizing tele-health, are patients ever located in a different state?
- Yes
- No
- Unsure