

# The Nebraska Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesia (CRNA) Workforce

Kathy Hoebelheinrich, MSN, APRN-NP  
Juan P Ramirez, Ph.D

## Introduction

The Center for Nursing (CFN) was created by the Nebraska legislature in 2000 to monitor the nursing workforce in the state, including supply and demand, recruitment, retention and utilization of nurses. The CFN collects workforce data at the time of nursing licensure renewal. Advanced practice registered nurses hold concomitant RN licensure and complete the RN license renewal survey. The 2020 RN/APRN license renewal and subsequent workforce data collection period was extended through October 2021 following Executive Orders that delayed license renewal in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of this report is Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) that renewed licensure in Nebraska for the renewal period ending October 2021 and answers the following questions:

1. What practice settings are reported by CRNAs?
2. What is the geographic location of CRNA practice settings?
3. What is the geographic location of CRNA primary residences?
4. What is the proximity of CRNA residences to Critical Access Hospitals?

Certified registered nurse anesthetists are one of four groups of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and represented 17% of the APRN workforce that participated in the 2021 survey (Center for Nursing [CFN], 2021). See **Figure 1**. The number of CRNA participants has increased 110% since the Nebraska CFN started collecting and reporting data in 2000. See **Figure 2**. The largest increase (16%) was reported in the 2014-2016 renewal period.

## Practice Settings

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) are educated, certified by the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) and subsequently licensed in Nebraska for anesthesia and pain management services. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of CRNAs report practice in surgical settings including 76% in hospitals, followed by an additional 13% in ambulatory surgical settings (CFN, 2021). Thirty-nine (39) or 11.9% of CRNAs reported practice ownership in the 2021 CFN survey, so that the majority are presumed employed by facilities and other practice owners.

Figure 1: APRN types in percentage

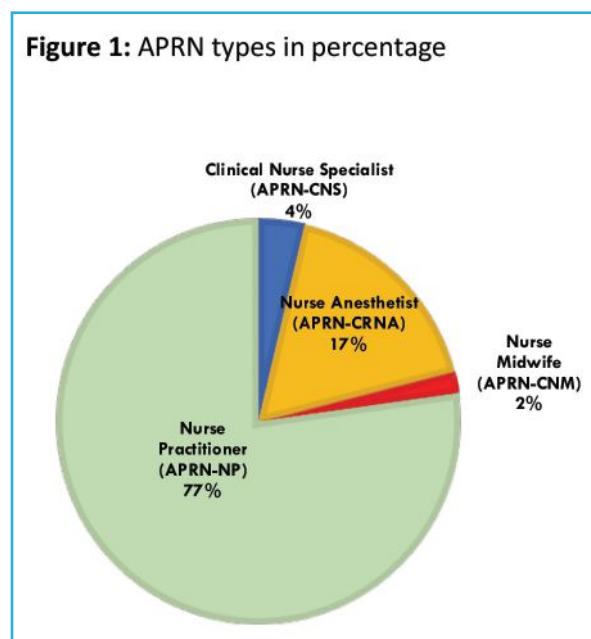
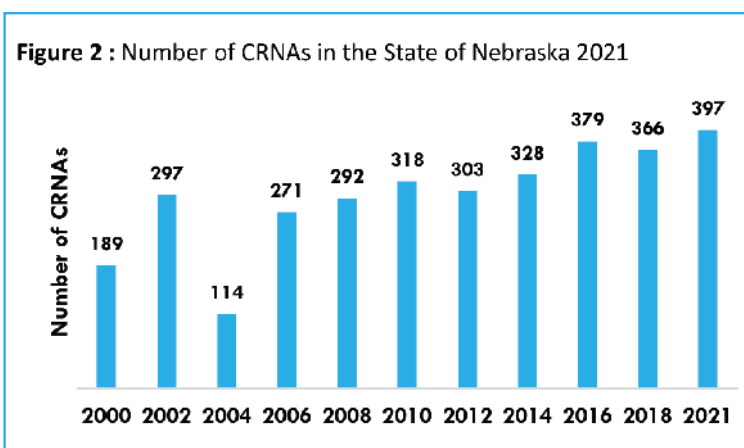


Figure 2 : Number of CRNAs in the State of Nebraska 2021



Source: Nebraska Center for Nursing, RN Renewal Survey.  
Note: Nursing workforce data between 2000 and 2004 was analyzed by a third-party entity.

## Practice Locations

Overall, two-thirds (66%) of CRNAs reported practicing in urban-large counties, 22% in urban-small counties, and 12% in rural counties (CFN 2021). **Figure 3.**

## Location of CRNA Primary Residence

Certified registered nurse anesthetists have the highest presence of APRNs in rural counties of Nebraska with 12% reporting their primary residence in those counties, followed by NPs (10%) as reported to the CFN in 2021. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists are the primary anesthesia providers in critical access hospitals in rural counties in the state (T. Rauner, August 4, 2022. Anesthesiologists Work Locations in Nebraska. UNMC Health Professions Tracking Service).

## Proximity of CRNA Residences to Critical Access Hospitals

Eighty-three per cent (83%) of CRNAs primary residence is within a 25-mile radius of a Critical Access Hospital. See **Figure 4.**

## Summary and Conclusions

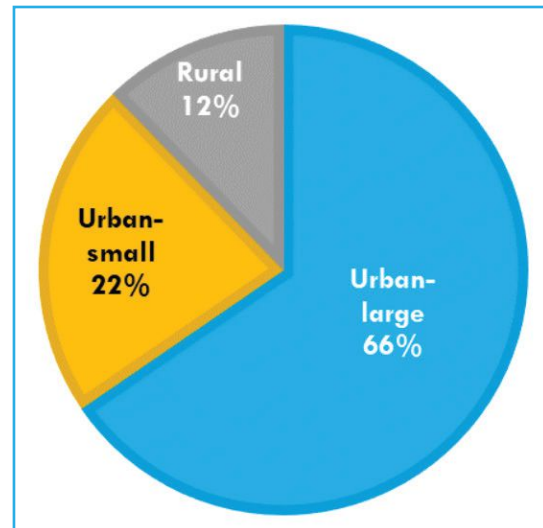
The number of licensed CRNAs in Nebraska have demonstrated 110% growth since the CFN started collecting workforce data in 2000. The majority (89%) report practice in surgical settings. The largest percentage (66%) practice in large urban counties. The relative importance of CRNAs to rural practice in the state as the primary anesthesia providers

in Critical Access Hospitals, however, is not to be overlooked. Certified registered nurse anesthetists have the largest reported presence of APRNs in rural counties with 12% residing in rural areas and 83% overall living within a 25-mile radius of a Critical Access Hospital.

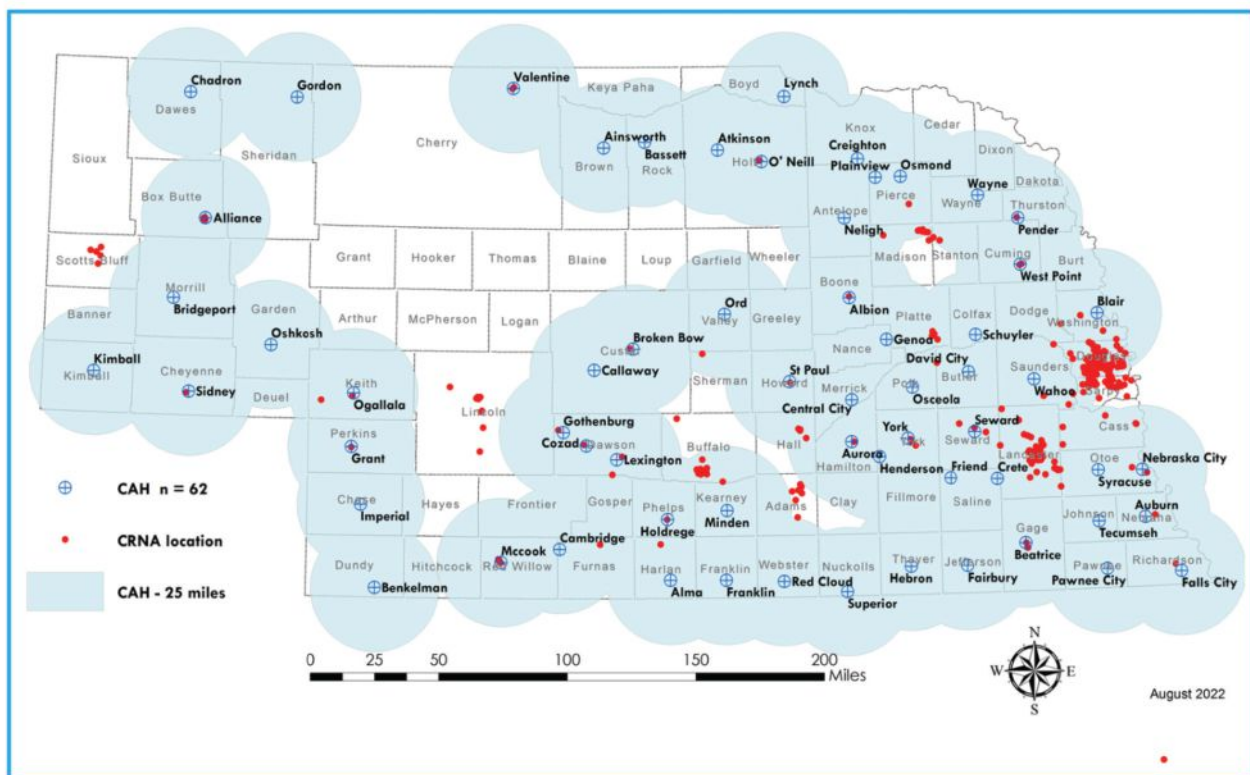
## References

Nebraska Center for Nursing [CFN]. (2021). Data outputs from the 2021 RN Renewal Survey. Nebraska Center for Nursing Data Group.

**Figure 3:** Geographic location of CRNAs practicing in Nebraska



**Figure 4:** Residence of CRNAs and proximity (25 miles) to Critical Access Hospitals



Source: Nebraska Center for Nursing 2021 RN Renewal Survey.