
AMN Survey Shows Nurses' Pessimism for 2024



AMN Healthcare is a prominent figure in healthcare talent solutions in the US, dedicated to enhancing workforce capabilities for healthcare institutions. Their initiatives aim to improve patient care by addressing pressing workforce challenges. They offer various services, including access to quality healthcare professionals and customisable workforce technologies. The organisation conducts surveys, such as the biennial Survey of Registered Nurses. In 2023, this survey collected data from over 16,000 nurses nationwide, revealing concerning trends in nurse retention and job satisfaction, exacerbated by challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Many nurses expressed intentions to explore alternative career paths. To provide ongoing insights into the evolving landscape, AMN Healthcare conducted the Nurses in 2024 survey, reaching out to over 10,000 nurses nationwide. The survey, which garnered responses from 1,155 nurses, offered updated perspectives on nurses' outlook, priorities, and career plans. The findings provide valuable information for healthcare organisations and policymakers to address workforce issues effectively.

Mixed Expectations and Persistent Concerns

The Nurses in 2024 survey revealed that nurses have mixed expectations for the year ahead compared to 2023. While 42% anticipate 2024 to be similar to 2023, a more significant proportion (38%) express pessimism, believing it will be worse. Conversely, only 20% are optimistic about improvements in 2024. These findings suggest that most nurses haven't observed significant enhancements in their work environment, despite heightened awareness of burnout and dissatisfaction during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite efforts by healthcare facilities to address nurse support and job satisfaction, reflected in some nurses' more positive outlook for 2024, the majority remain unconvinced, indicating either stagnation or further decline in the coming year.

Priorities for Nurse Well-being

The Nurses in 2024 survey highlights key factors that are crucial to improving nurses' outlooks in their workplaces. Better pay rates are identified as the primary concern, with 75% of nurses rating it as "extremely important" and 86% considering it either "extremely important" or "somewhat important." Despite recent adjustments in nurse compensation by many healthcare facilities, the survey indicates that enhanced pay remains a significant issue for nurses.

Secondly, nurses prioritise staffing levels, with 68% rating "more nurses per patient" as "extremely important" and 80% considering it either "extremely important" or "somewhat important." Insufficient staffing can lead to physical and moral strain on nurses, affecting their ability to provide quality patient care.

Thirdly, nurses highly value better schedules and hours, with 58% rating them as "extremely important." The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a reassessment of work dynamics, with nurses seeking increased flexibility in scheduling to accommodate their needs and preferences. Flexible work options, including part-time roles, telemedicine, travel nursing, and per diem work, are becoming increasingly important for nurses.

Addressing these concerns—better pay rates, adequate staffing, and improved scheduling—can significantly enhance the work environment for nurses and contribute to their overall job satisfaction and well-being.

Recognition, Wellness and Diversity

The Nurses in 2024 survey highlights additional workplace factors important to nurses, although they aren't considered as critical as pay rates, staffing, and scheduling. Recognition is valued, with 47% rating "more recognition for nurses" as "extremely important" and 70% considering it either "extremely important" or "somewhat important."

Wellness programmes are also significant, with 42% rating "more wellness programmes for nurses" as "extremely important" and 65% considering them either "extremely important" or "somewhat important." Diversity is recognised as important by 26% of nurses, with 46% considering it either "extremely important" or "somewhat important." However, it's noted that these factors may be perceived as less crucial compared to tangible rewards like pay, staffing levels, and scheduling flexibility.

High Turnover Rates, More Personal Focus

The Nurses in 2024 survey explores nurses' intentions regarding workplace and personal choices for the upcoming year. Findings reveal that 35% of nurses are very likely to change jobs in 2024, with 55% likely to do so to some extent, indicating ongoing job dissatisfaction and anticipating high turnover rates. Similarly, 35% are likely to change their hours or schedules, emphasising the importance of schedule flexibility.

Regarding self-healing and well-being, 88% of nurses plan to prioritise their health and well-being in 2024, with 56% stating it as extremely likely. This proactive approach suggests acknowledging the physical and mental demands of their jobs.

Personal enrichment is also a priority, with 45% intending to enrich their mental and cultural lives through activities like reading and watching movies, while 79% plan to work on their personal relationships. These findings highlight the importance of maintaining a balance between work and personal life, with employers having an opportunity to support this balance and enhance job satisfaction by promoting a better work/life equilibrium.

Impact on Patients

The Nurses in 2024 survey reveals that the vast majority of nurses (91%) report positively impacting patients' health and well-being this year. While this indicates a high level of job satisfaction derived from patient care, external factors such as limited resources and staffing challenges may sometimes diminish this impact. Comparatively, only 37% of nurses express being extremely proud to be a nurse. This discrepancy suggests that while nurses value their profession and their impact on patients, challenges in delivering quality care may affect their professional pride. This highlights the importance of addressing systemic issues to enhance job satisfaction and retention rates among nurses.

AMN Healthcare's Nurses in 2024 survey provides insights into nurses' career plans and perspectives for the current year, highlighting ongoing volatility and challenges in the nursing workforce. With more nurses expressing pessimism (38%) than optimism (20%) about 2024, and a significant proportion considering job changes and schedule adjustments, the survey indicates continued turbulence in the profession. The survey underscores the importance of addressing factors like compensation, staffing levels, and scheduling to enhance nurse job satisfaction and retention. Employers who prioritise these factors in their work environments have the opportunity to improve nurse satisfaction, retention rates, and position themselves as preferred employers in the nursing field.

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