



**STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL
COLLEGES
OCTOBER 2024
STATEMENT OF NEED
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING
TACOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Cover Page — Statement of Need

Program Information

Institution Name: Tacoma Community College

Degree Name: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

CIP Code: 51.3801

Name(s) of existing technical associate degree(s) that will serve as the foundation for this program:

Degree: Associate of Applied Science in Nursing

CIP Code: 51.3801

Year Began: 1965

Proposed Start Implementation Date (i.e. Fall 2014): Fall 2026

Projected Enrollment (FTE) in Year One: 30

Projected Enrollment (FTE) by Year: 60 by 2028

Funding Source: State FTE

Mode of Delivery

Single Campus Delivery: Courses will be delivered at the Tacoma campus.

Off-site: Some classes may be offered in Washington State healthcare and community agencies/facilities who partner with TCC.

Distance Learning: Hybrid-flexible, online, and face-to-face methods of instruction will be utilized

Statement of Need

*Please see criteria and standard sheet. **Page Limit: 20 pages***

Contact Information (Academic Department Representative)

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Chief Academic Officer signature

The Statement of Need must be signed. To sign, double click on the signature line below.

X 

Chief Academic Officer

7/5/2024

Introduction

Over a decade ago, the Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2010) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF, 2011) recommended increasing the number of registered nurses (RN) with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree to 80% by 2020 (Flaubert et al., 2021). Restructuring and renaming the IOM as the “Health and Medical Division” (HMD, 2016) did not diminish the importance of the IOM’s recommendation to advance the education of nurses but led to a renewed effort to move forward in advancing RN-BSN degrees even more (National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine [NASEM], 2024).

Unfortunately, the COVID global pandemic affected the recommended goal to advance RNs to BSNs and further contributed to the challenges of retaining nurses in the field. This has led to an ongoing drastic shortage of RNs with BSN degrees. In 2021, approximately 42% of the nurses surveyed by the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN, 2023) thought about or made plans to leave the field of nursing due to the negative effects of caring for patients during the pandemic (Nguyen, 2021). Post-pandemic, hospitals and other healthcare employers continue to struggle with recruitment and retention to achieve safe staffing levels (Tamata & Mohammadnesahd, 2022). Current trends and local healthcare employers indicate the need for BSN prepared RNs which exceeds the supply unless efforts are improved to increase numbers of BSN prepared RNs.

The Future of Nursing 2020-2030, which NASEM (2021) promotes, asserts that “the decade ahead will demand a stronger, more diversified workforce that is prepared to provide care; promote health and well-being among nurses, individuals, and communities; and address the systemic inequities that have fueled wide and persistent health disparities” (p.355). According to HMD (2016), advancing the education of future nurses is paramount to safety, equity, diversity, and care of populations (NASEM, 2021). Removing institutional and regulatory barriers that “prevent nurses from working to the full extent of their license” is one recommendation the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 continues to support from the IOM (2010) recommendations. Reaching the goal of providing more equitable healthcare to diverse and marginalized populations includes removing barriers through advancing associate degree registered nurses (ADNs) to BSN prepared nurses, which will assist them to work to the full extent of their licenses.

Many hospitals also recognize the importance of advanced education to improve health outcomes in their patient population by requiring the BSN degree nurses to work in their institutions. Consequently, many hospitals encourage ADNs to return to school to complete their BSN within a specific period. Nursing is a high demand field both nationally and locally. However, this field continues to demonstrate a workforce shortage. Multiple barriers outside of the COVID-19 pandemic further limit the availability of diverse BSNs in local and regional communities. Some identified barriers include the lack of affordable BSN programs due to the rising cost of higher education and the limited amount of affordable BSN programs in the South Puget Sound region (WCN, 2023).

Tacoma Community College (TCC) continuously strives to meet the needs of the evolving community and its partners. Therefore, a needs assessment was conducted to determine the demand and feasibility for an affordable RN to BSN program in the South Puget Sound region and to identify barriers that may prevent nurses from obtaining a BSN degree.

Criteria 1

Relationship to institutional role, mission, and program priorities.

Since 1965, Tacoma Community College (TCC) has offered students the opportunity to receive a quality and affordable college education. TCC was founded on the brave notion that all could attain higher education regardless of cost. From the beginning, the school existed to provide an “open door” for any student wanting to learn. In the ensuing five decades, this institution responded to its community's needs, tailoring its programs to meet local employers' needs and provide opportunities for local residents in the area to get a quality education. The school continues to provide a first-rate education at a third of the cost compared to public, four-year universities. TCC promotes a welcoming, supportive environment for all those ready to learn (TCC, n.d).

TCC has educated over 500,000 students since its inception by adding programs, expanding to multiple campuses, and building career pathways to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community (TCC, n.d.). Several years ago, in response to the community's needs, TCC provided equitable access to affordable education through the development of a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree. Currently, TCC builds on the knowledge and skills learned in the completion of an associate degree through offering four distinct BAS degree programs. TCC students obtain bachelor-level credentials in the following specialized career fields: Applied Management, Community Health, Health Information Management, and IT Networking Information Systems & Technology. The college recognizes that Pierce County is a multi-cultural community and the traditional pathway to career advancement and obtaining a bachelor's degree are often filled with barriers for diverse and non-traditional learners. These barriers may have led to racial disparities in healthcare higher degree fields such as nursing (TCC, n.d.).

The implementation of an RN to BSN program at TCC will aim to provide an additional pathway to a BSN degree, attract a more diversified workforce that reflects the diversity of the surrounding population, and remove barriers to admitting potential diverse nursing students. TCC has a solid foundation and reputation through its nursing assistant certification (NAC), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to RN, and Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) programs on which to build a new RN to BSN program. TCC's nursing program has committed faculty and staff who have carried the program to its success today, with national accreditation (National Council Licensure Examination [NCLEX]) pass rates exceeding the national average for at least seven years. Many current tenured faculties continue to advance their education to maintain the standards that HMD (2016) and the Future of Nursing (2020-2030) has recommended. The RN to BSN program will utilize a variety of teaching modalities including online, hybrid flexible (HyFlex), and face-to-face methods to allow students across Washington State and in the South Puget Sound region to have access to an affordable and flexible RN to BSN option.

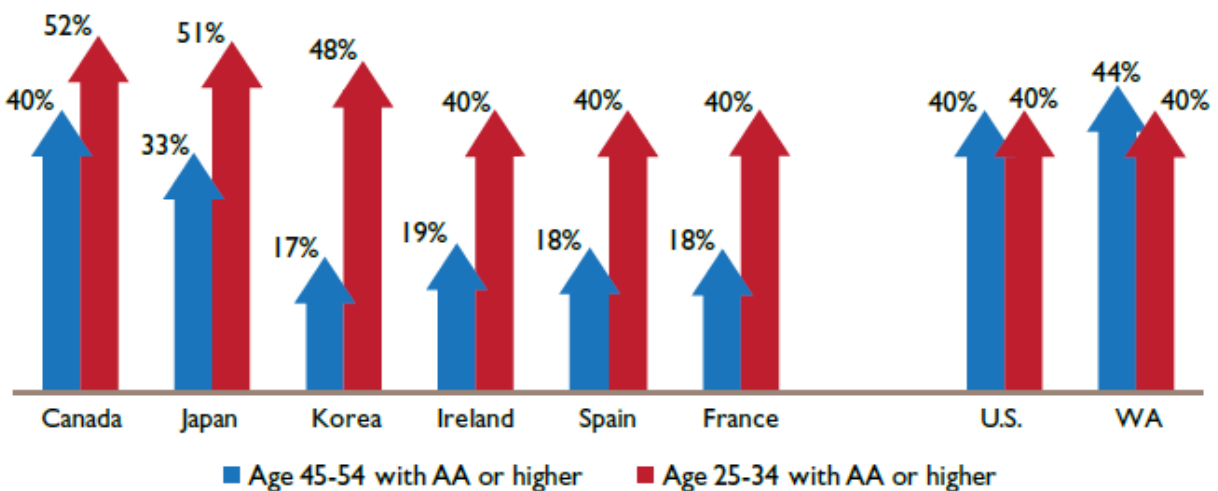
The proposed RN-BSN program directly reflects and supports the role, mission, and priorities of TCC and SBCTC. As the ‘community's college,’ TCC's (2023) mission is “to create meaningful and relevant learning, inspire greater equity, and celebrate success in our lives and our communities” (para.7). The college's vision is to be a premier community college where all students, faculty, staff, and community members are welcomed, appreciated, and valued. SBCTC focus areas include equitable student success and agile, career-relevant learning (Washington State Board, 2023). Engaging students where they are leads to equitable opportunities for success in learning, life, and work (TCC, 2023). The TCC RN-BSN program will not only support the vision, mission, and priorities of the college and SBCTC, but will also collaborate with multiple community partners to increase access and additional educational pathways for nontraditional and diverse learners to advance their career through higher education.

Criteria 2

Support of the statewide strategic plans.

The development of an RN to BSN program at Tacoma Community College (TCC) supports the vision and principles of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the mission and strategic plan of TCC. In 2020, the SBCTC developed a long-term overarching goal “provide flexible career- training options that are responsive to the needs of businesses and industries (and) offer Washingtonians access to well-paying jobs and career mobility” (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges [SBCTC], 2023, p7) . The SBCTC found that other countries have higher rates of citizens attaining higher education and college degrees for younger generations of citizens compared to the United States and Washington State. In fact, the percentage of Washington State residents who have attained a higher education degree is stagnant or declining (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Global comparison of Age-to-Degree Acquisition rates



Source: Higher Education Coordinating Board's Implementing the 2008 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education

The SBCTC plans to serve more people, including groups that have been underserved in the past, to help workers with credentials earn higher degree levels, and expand access to raise the skill level of current workers (SBCTC, 2023). TCC intends to create a new RN-BSN pathway to streamline academic progression by reducing multiple barriers and increasing access to affordable quality education, especially for underserved students. This streamlined approach is supported by legislation, the Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2010), and the Health and Medical Division (HMC, 2016). In 2020, TCC served 11,566 students: 37% were students of color and 51% of them obtained transfer degrees (TCC, 2021). Fifty one percent of TCC's transfer students could have attained a baccalaureate degree at TCC if an affordable program were available on campus. Quality, affordable education would allow Tacoma's diverse urban community to thrive.

The new RN to BSN degree will align with the requirements of the Washington State's DTA/MRP agreement that ensures a smooth transfer of credits and incorporates the long-standing state-wide agreement to award upper division credits for passing the national NCLEX-RN exam. The proposed RN to BSN program will offer ADN nurses and students three options: the ability for licensed nurses

to earn a BSN degree after 1 academic year of completing Bachelors level coursework at TCC; the option to start BSN course work during their ADN program and graduate with a BSN degree in less time; or for nursing students to earn a DTA/MRP ADN degree if obtaining a BSN degree is not a viable option at that time. The development of an RN to BSN program at TCC aligns with SBCTC's mission and goals to reduce barriers and expand opportunities for Washington State citizens.

Criteria 3

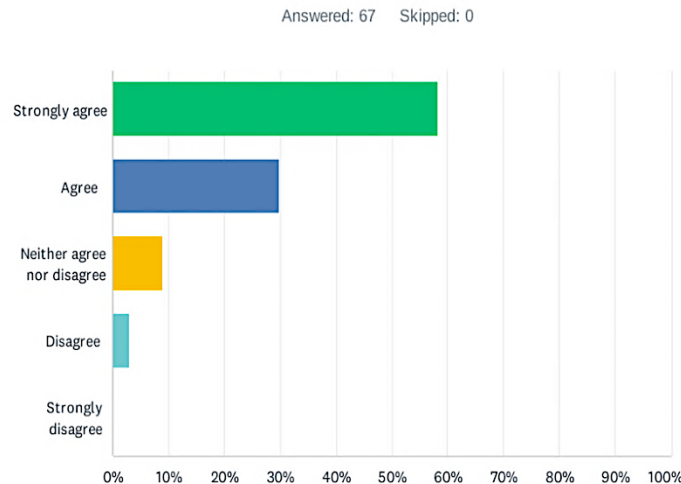
Employer/community demand for graduates with baccalaureate level of education proposed in the program.

According to the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN, 2023), as of 2021, approximately 65% of the registered nurses in Washington State held a bachelor's (BSN) degree or higher. This fell short of the goal to have 80% BSN-prepared nurses by 2020 (IOM, 2010; NASEM, 2024b). Multiple factors are motivating local and national healthcare employers to increase the number of BSN prepared registered nurses (RN). Evidence supports improved patient safety and outcomes with employment of BSN-RNs in healthcare facilities (Aiken, 2014; Aiken et al., 2009, 2011). Magnet Status Recognition is awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) to hospitals that have developed an organizational system and culture that strengthens and improves the quality of nursing. Magnet Status directly correlates to improved patient safety and outcomes. Employing BSN-prepared RNs strengthens the potential for Magnet Status (UC Davis, 2024). Currently, there are only three hospitals in Washington that have received Magnet Status Recognition (Washington Hospital Healthcare System [WHHS], 2024). Employers use the Magnet Status recognition to recruit more qualified nurses and improve nursing retention (Trent et al., 2017). A key factor to obtaining and renewing Magnet Status is that 100% of the organization's nurse managers and leaders hold a BSN or graduate degree in nursing (AACN, 2024).

The Future of Nursing 2020-2030 continues to advocate for an increase in BSN nurses for all practice arenas and concluded that nurses with at least a four-year degree would be better prepared to provide leadership, implement evidence-based practices, and respond to a healthcare environment that continues to increase in complexity (NASEM, 2021). The development of an RN to BSN program at TCC will provide affordable BSN nursing programs and meet the increasing need and demand for BSN nursing workforce which will improve quality of care and patient outcomes. TCC surveyed nursing directors (33%), managers/supervisors (44%), and educators (22%) at a variety of healthcare organizations and settings to determine employers' perceptions about BSN needs. Nearly 90% of respondents agreed that patient safety and outcomes would improve with an increase in BSN prepared nurses in the workforce (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Survey results showing whether local employers believed that an increase in BSN representation would improve patient care

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Increasing the number of BSN prepared nurses improves patient outcomes and safety.



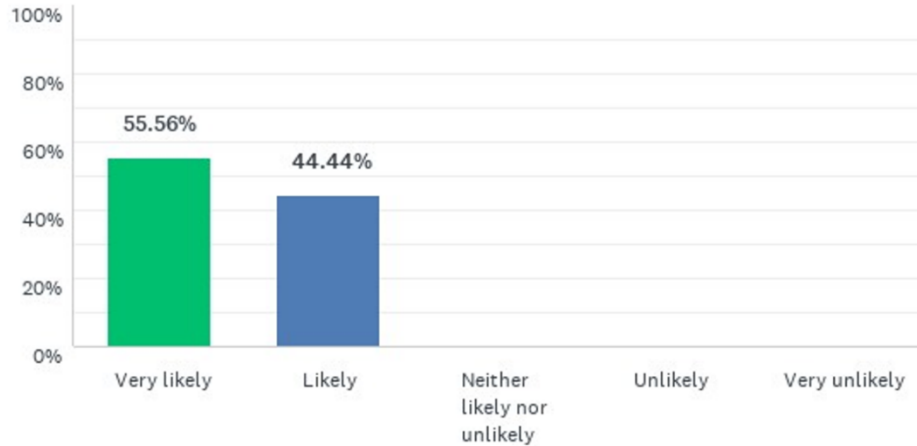
Current data, however, reveals a continued low percentage of BSN prepared RNs in the South Puget Sound workforce compared with King County. In 2019, 70% of practicing RNs in King County had a BSN or higher degree (Stubbs & Skillman, 2020). In comparison, approximately 59.4% of RNs in Pierce County had a BSN degree or higher. Patient care, both within and outside the hospital setting, continues to grow more complex, with nurses having to make critical decisions associated with caring for sicker and more complex patients (ACNN, 2016; IOM, 2010; NASEM, 2024). Projected shortages of primary care providers add to the dire need of advanced education and training of future RNs (AACN, 2016, p.11). Care in these settings often depends on the use of sophisticated, life-saving technology that requires nurses to have a developed skill set in the analysis and synthesis of critical information.

Aiken et al., (2011) projected that the odds of 30-day mortality and ‘failure to rescue’ (AKA “complications”) would be 19% lower in hospitals where 60% of the nurses had BSN or higher degrees compared to hospitals where only 20% of nurses had BSN or higher degrees. Predictive analysis of the data also suggests that there would be 3.6 per 1000 fewer deaths and 14.2 per 1,000 fewer patient complications in hospitals when there are 60% of RN-BSNs employed compared to employing only 20% of nurses holding BSN degrees (p.6). Hospitals with a “10% increase in the proportion of BSN prepared RNs resulted in a 5% decrease in patients dying within 30-days of admission (Aiken et al., 2014, p.861). Additionally, the odds of “failure to rescue” after considering the sickness of the patients and other hospital characteristics was reduced with more BSN prepared nurses (Aiken et al., 2014). As public scrutiny of the quality of healthcare increases, educational institutions must ensure they are participating in preparing and promoting the most qualified workforce possible to improve quality and patient outcomes. This evidence further supports hiring BSN prepared nurses to achieve Magnet Status recognition. Healthcare systems in the area have indicated a desire to improve the quality and safety of their delivery of healthcare to the public. Employers are increasing their use of BSN prepared nurses through hiring preferences, salary incentives, preferred scheduling, and career advancement to reach these outcomes.

Figure 3: Survey results depicting employers' predictions of BSN demand increase within 5 years

Q5: How likely does your organization anticipate an increased demand for BSN prepared nurses within the next 3-5 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



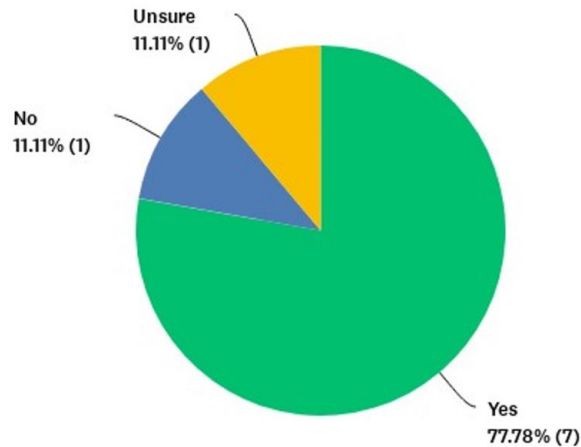
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Data from TCCs survey of nursing directors, managers, and educators showed that 100% of employers surveyed anticipate an increased need for BSN prepared nurses within the next 3 to 5 years (Figure 3 & 5). More than 75% of those surveyed prefer BSN prepared nurses to improve patient satisfaction and outcomes (Figure 4 & 6).

Figure 4: Survey results of local employers' requirements for BSN degree for newly hired registered nurses

Q2: Does your organization currently require (or will in the future) or prefer a BSN degree for newly hired registered nurses?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

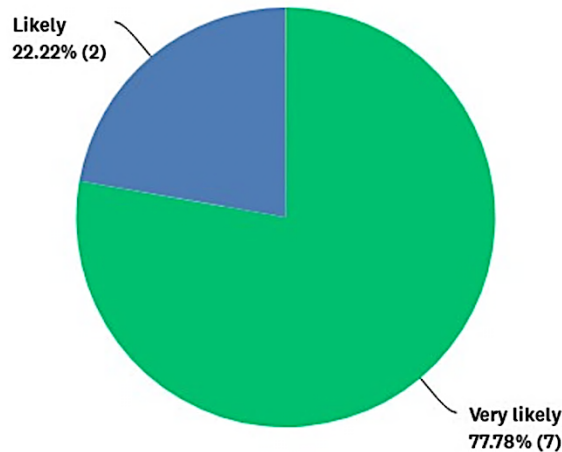


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Figure 5: Survey data indicating local healthcare systems' prediction for an increase in demand for BSN prepared nurses within the next 5 years

Q6: How likely does your organization anticipate an increased demand for BSN prepared nurses within the next 5-10 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

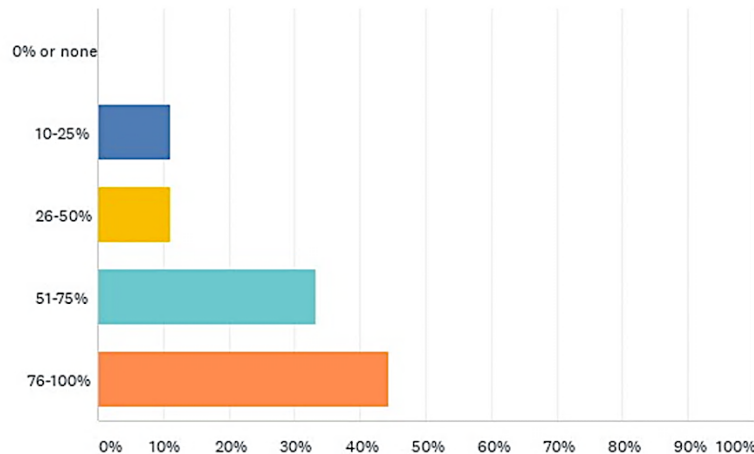


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Figure 6: Survey data of local employers anticipated/expected increase in the number of BSN prepared nurses within the next 5 years

Q7: By what percentage would your organization anticipate or would like to increase the number of BSN prepared nurses within the next 3 to 5 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



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Current evidence and survey data from local healthcare employers strongly support advancing the education of RNs obtaining a BSN degree.

Criteria 4

The Baccalaureate program is built from existing professional and technical degree programs offered by the institution.

The Associate in Nursing (ADN) program at TCC began in 1972 and has had a highly regarded reputation in the community ever since. TCC's ADN program is designed for the success of students. Students meet program objectives and acquire the skills, values, and competencies necessary for entry into nursing practice and attainment of the associate in nursing DTA/MRP degree. This degree creates a pathway for a streamlined academic progression to BSN after completion of the associate degree program. The RN to BSN degree is consistent with the requirements of the DTA/MRP agreement and follows the standard practice of awarding credits toward a BSN degree for successful completion of the national NCLEX-RN exam. This will allow TCC's RN to BSN program to directly build from the existing ADN program in a manner that is beneficial to students. TCC's ADN program admits students multiple times per year. At any given time, there are 3 first year cohorts and 4 second year cohorts enrolled in the program. Admission and completion numbers are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Admission and completion numbers for TCC's ADN Program from 2018 - 2023

Year	Newly Admitted Students (4 cohorts)	Total Yearly Enrollment	Graduated Students (4 cohorts)
2018-2019	70	215	65
2019-2020	99	222	103
2020-2021	89	236	94
2021-2022	80	213	88
2022-2023	77	198	74

The associate in nursing DTA/MRP degree responds to past legislation and current goals that encourage the development of pathways to BSN degrees in nursing, improvement of articulation for transfer students, and increased percentage of registered nurses who hold a BSN degree as recommended by the Future of Nursing 2020-2030.

Criteria 5

Student demand for programs within the region.

The Washington State Board of Nursing [formerly the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC)] requires all nursing education programs to provide information annually [WAC 246-840-520(3)] (Washington Department of Health [WADOH], 2021, p.3; Washington State Legislature [WSL], 2023). There are seven universities and four community colleges in Washington that offer RN to BSN programs. The number of RN to BSN enrollment in Washington schools started to rise sharply in the 2013-2014 academic year. This trend continued to rise, with 2582 students enrolled in RN to BSN programs during 2017-18 academic year. Enrollment and graduation numbers have declined and have not recovered since 2017-18. In 2021-2022 there were only 2157 students enrolled in RN to BSN programs in Washington. There exists an urgency to accelerate the education of diverse

nurses for safe and quality care in Washington. The complex multiple education pathways in nursing are challenging but can provide multiple opportunities to increase the overall advanced education of nurses (The Washington State Board of Nursing [WABON], 2023).

Washington State has seen a higher demand for BSN-RNs in many colleges and universities. In response to the demand, in 2022, the state Legislature funded \$6.1 million over two years for Eastern Washington University (EWU) to expand from a two-year to a four-year BSN program due to this increased demand. Legislators cited the need to train more nurses as the COVID-19 pandemic worsened health care worker shortages. Schools with entry-level BSN programs are experiencing a higher demand than they can accommodate. For example, EWU’s new four-year nursing program started upper-division classes in fall 2023 and more than 100 students applied for 40 seats in EWU’s nursing program (EWU, 2024). A second EWU class of 40 will be admitted in spring 2024. Similarly, for fall 2023, 257 students applied to Washington State University (WSU)’s BSN program, but space was available for only about 120. There are over 700 nursing applicants annually for about 85 spots available at Gonzaga University (Lind, 2023). These numbers indicate a high demand for BSN degrees that cannot be met by the traditional four-year bachelor’s programs available in the state. The ADN to BSN pathway can help meet the current demand.

Industry trends are showing that the current population of BSN prepared nurses is increasing. Recent research shows that the number of BSN prepared RNs has grown from 578,000 full time employees (FTEs) in 2001 to 945,000 FTEs in 2015 (Buerhaus, et al., 2017). In contrast, the number of ADN RNs employed by hospitals has decreased from 645,000 in 2008 to 629,000 in 2015 (Buerhaus, et al., 2017). Projected annual employment openings for BSN prepared RNs in Washington are expected to continue to grow over the coming years (Nguyen et al. 2021).

Table 2 Annual employment openings for BSN prepared RNs in the state of Washington

Occupation Title	Education Required	2013 Employment	Projected Annual Openings due to Growth 2023-28	Projected annual Openings 2023-28	Turnover Rate	Avg. Years on the Job
Registered Nurses	Bachelor’s degree	59645	1179	5947	25.3%	4.0

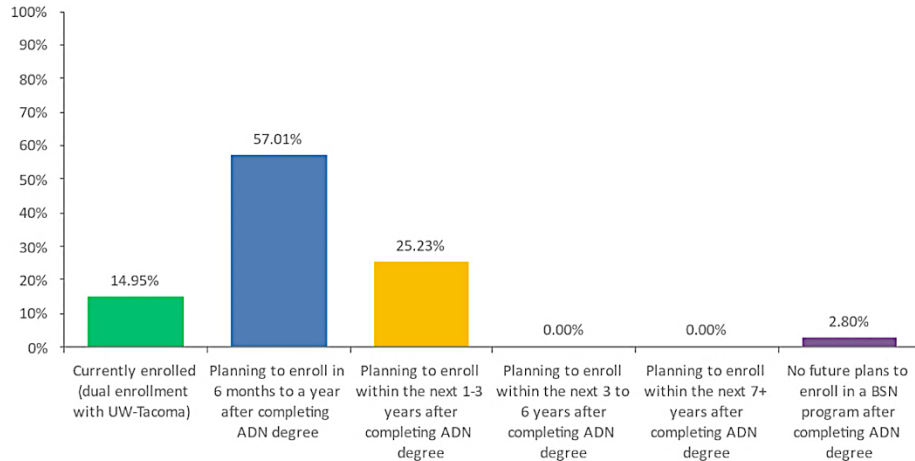
Citation 1: (Nguyen et al., 2021)

The increase in BSN program demand is associated with greater access to employment and leadership opportunities. In a survey conducted in 2020, ADN respondents reported seeking a BSN due to increased job options (51%), access to leadership opportunities (25.1%), and to satisfy an employer requirement (33.4%) (Wilson, Lockhart, & Carter, 2020, p. 15). Also, completion of a BSN allows access to higher levels of education at the master’s and doctoral levels, which are required for nurses to serve as primary care providers, nurse researchers, and nurse faculty, positions currently in great demand across Washington (Moulton& Flores-Montoya, 2022; WCN, 2022b). TCC conducted surveys of students in 2021 and 2023 (n=174) in the ADN program to further ascertain demand for the RN to BSN program. More than 97% of students indicated an intention to complete a BSN degree with nearly 15% in process to obtaining a BSN through the TCC nursing program at the time of the survey. Sixty seven out of 90 or 74% of the nurses stated they planned to pursue a BSN degree within six months to three years (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Graph of ADN student plans to enroll in a BSN program at TCC post ADN

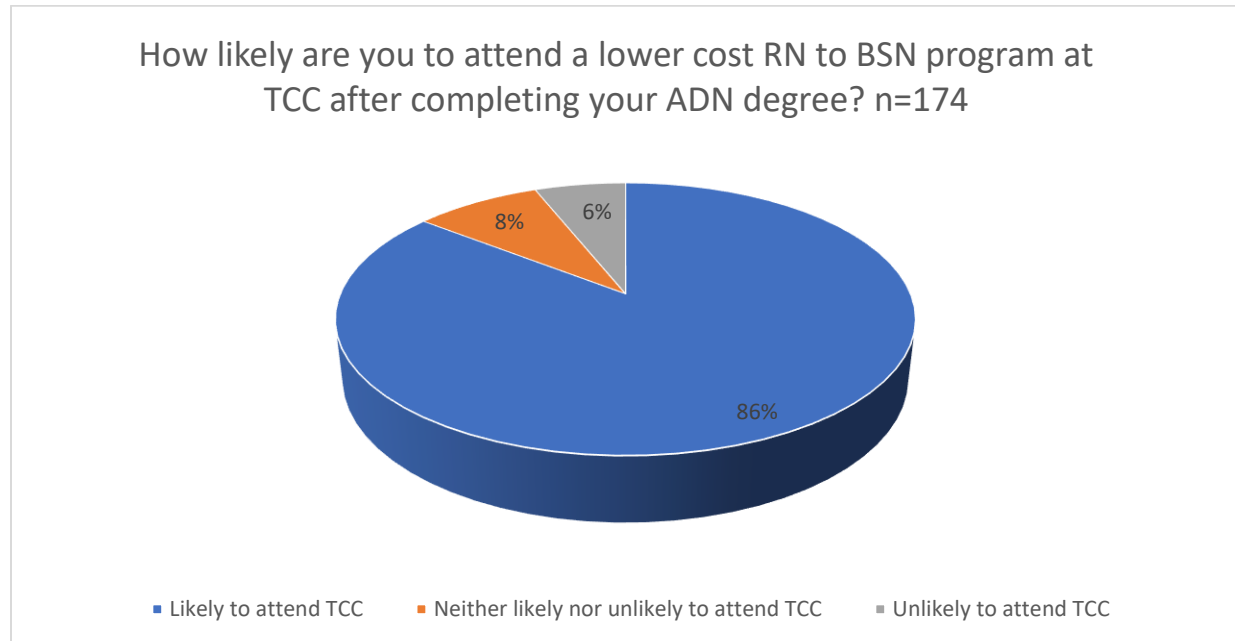
Q2: What are your future plans to enroll in a BSN degree program after completing the ADN program at TCC?

Answered: 107 Skipped: 0



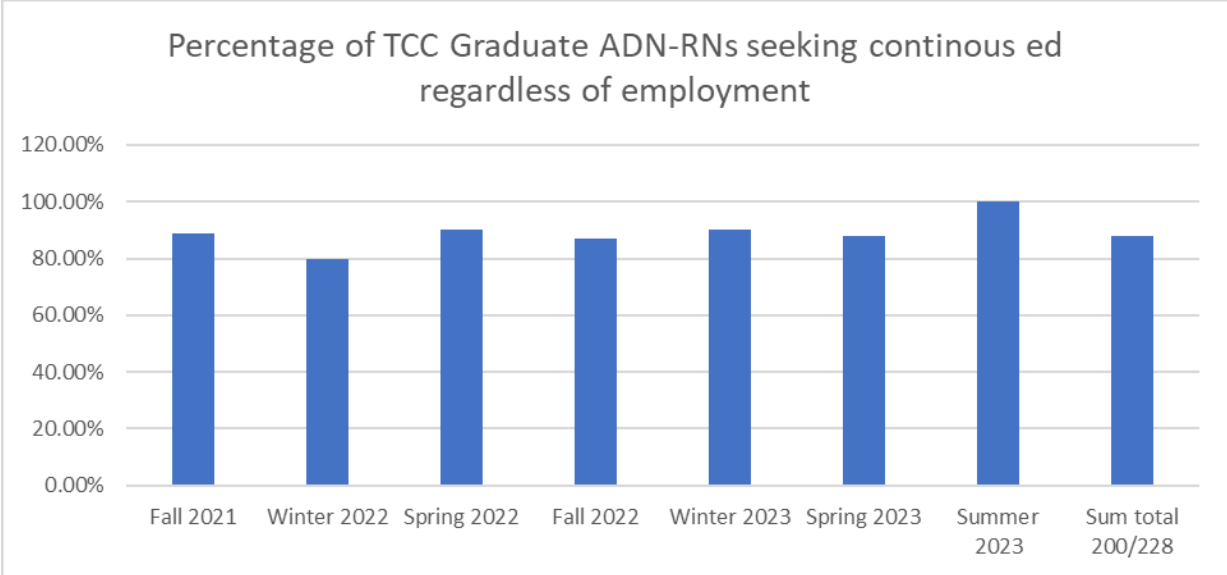
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Figure 8: Survey data depicting student willingness to attend lower cost RN to BSN programs at TCC post ADN degree



The majority of students strongly supported a BSN program at TCC, with 86% indicating they would choose TCC's program if one was offered (Figure 8). The TCC nursing program surveyed both enrolled ADN students and graduated/working RNs in 2021 through 2023. Regardless of being employed, 200/228 (88%) of TCC graduate RNs stated they planned to pursue continuing education within five years of graduation from TCC's ADN program (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Percentage of TCC grad ADN-RNs seeking BSN degree within the next 5 years

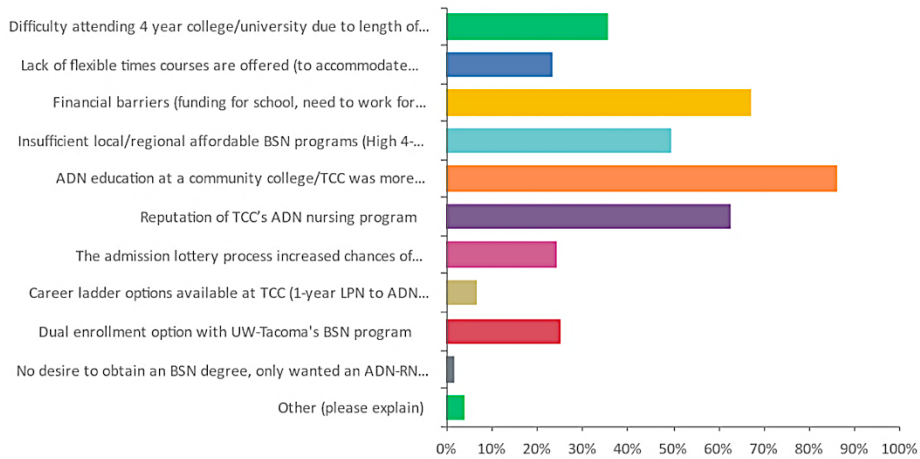


Survey results demonstrated multiple barriers students faced in pursuing a nursing degree with financial barriers as one of the most significant for the enrollment of future nursing students. Fifty percent of current ADN students stated they enrolled in TCC’s nursing program due to the lack of affordable 4-year colleges in the South Puget Sound region (Figure 10). In 2021, almost 70% of the 107 enrolled ADN students cited financial resources as a burden in pursuit of an advanced degree outside of TCC (Figure 10). Evidence supports the barriers of financial burden on potentially returning students (Anbari, 2015). Overwhelmingly, 86% of the students stated they attended TCC’s nursing ADN program because it was affordable (Figure 10). In addition to affordability, TCC’s reputation was noted as important when choosing to attend TCC for a BSN degree. The survey data clearly illustrates the large student need and demand for an affordable BSN program in the South Puget Sound Region, one that TCC could accommodate if approved.

Figure 10: Graph of reasons students gave for enrolling/applying to TCC's ADN program

Q3: Please select below all possible reasons you decided to enroll/apply to TCC's ADN nursing program:

Answered: 107 Skipped: 0



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Completion of a BSN allows access to higher levels of education at the master's and doctoral levels. Figure 11 shows that 53.2% of the students were "extremely interested" in pursuing their Master of Nursing (MN) degree in collaboration with other local universities. Projected enrollment in an RN to BSN program at TCC is estimated based on cohort size and most students entering after completing the TCC ADN program, with additional students from the community (Table 3).

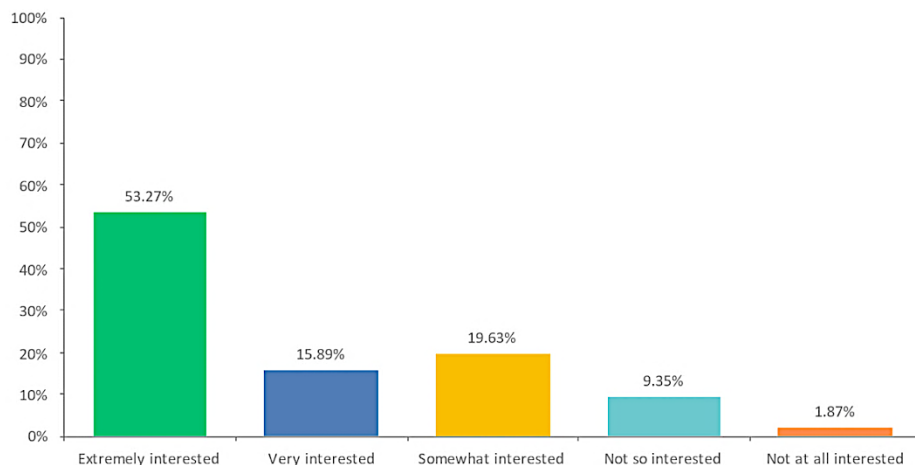
Table 3: Projected enrollment in a RN to BSN program at TCC

	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Enrollment	0	24-30	24-30	30-60	60

Figure 71: Graph of student interest in attending ADN to BSN programs at TCC that collaborate with local universities

Q6: How interested are you in attending an ADN to BSN program at TCC, that collaborates with a local university to offer courses for dual enrollment in a Masters of Nursing (MN) program?

Answered: 107 Skipped: 0



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Criteria 6

Efforts to maximize state resources to serve place-bound students.

TCC's vision as 'the community's college' has encouraged students to serve in its surrounding area while meeting the needs of the diverse population in the community. As the urban heart of Pierce County, it is a key educational access point between Seattle and Olympia. Opportunities for RN to BSN programs are available in both of those locations to the north and south, but travelling to those locations is excessively burdensome to place-bound working adults in Pierce County. The only local option for Pierce County students is the University of Washington, Tacoma (UWT) or Tacoma Community College.

TCC has longstanding early and dual enrollment agreements with UWT's nursing program, and many former TCC graduates have completed a BSN through this partnership with UWT. UWT is the only state funded school in the region currently offering an RN to BSN program. This has been a phenomenally successful pathway for achieving a BSN for many of TCC's nursing students. Many TCC nursing students who enroll in the dual enrollment option can complete their BSN degree at UWT in one or two quarters after completing TCC's ADN program. Additionally, TCC and UWT have begun conversations to develop a collaboration for a BSN to MN dual enrollment option if TCC's BSN program is approved.

Providing an additional, cost-effective, quality option for local students will open options for increased quality of care and outcomes at area hospitals and healthcare facilities. As many RNs are employed in Tacoma and Pierce County, providing an educational option close to where they live and work makes completion of a degree more likely, less expensive, and less burdensome to individuals and families. If approved, TCC's RN to BSN program will be structured and offered in various formats

to allow place bound students and students across Washington State to obtain their BSN degree. Courses will be offered in the online, hybrid flexible (Hyflex), and limited face-to-face sessions with community-based field-work arranged closer to the distance students' home location.

Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) is a private institution in Pierce County offering an entry level BSN program in both traditional and accelerated formats. This differs from the proposed ADN to BSN program at TCC as it does not provide an option for practicing RNs with a diploma or associate degree to obtain a BSN degree. While the program does increase the available BSN workforce, it draws from an entirely different candidate pool than an ADN to BSN program. Also, the cost of this entry-level BSN program is dramatically more expensive than that offered at TCC. As the demand for BSN prepared nurses increases, additional opportunities and a faster rate of transition from ADN to BSN is needed. The IOM's goal of 80% of the RN workforce having a BSN degree by 2020 has already been missed and it is projected to be achieved around 2045 at the current pace, a 25-year gap from the initial goal (Anbari, 2015, p. 1) With patient mortality and quality of care at stake, this delay is not acceptable.

TCC has a BAS in community health program that has also committed to collaborating with the BSN program to provide shared learning experiences and classes for both the TCC community health and BSN students. This collaboration will strengthen both programs and strategically reduce both program costs for the college and SBCTC. The nursing program has developed collaborations with multiple community partners and colleges that provide the community with options and additional pathways to earning a nursing degree. TCC has partnered with Bates Technical College (BTC) for many years. For instance, the current collaboration between both nursing programs allows TCC to refer qualified applicants that did not receive admission to TCC's ADN to start BTC's LPN program. TCC will hold a spot in a future cohort for the student to return to TCC to complete the LPN to RN bridge program after completing the NCLEX-PN test. This collaboration creates an additional pathway and reduces barriers for students to seamlessly earn an RN degree. In addition, the TCC Nursing Navigator collaborates with BTC's LPN program to actively recruit graduating LPNs during their last quarter of LPN coursework.

TCC's Nursing Navigator provides an onsite information session and advising for each graduating cohort of BTC LPN students. Both schools' nursing administrators have started discussions to collaborate and offer an LPN to BSN option if TCC is approved for a BSN program. In addition, TCC and Virginia Mason Franciscan Health (VMFH) are collaborating to build CNA/NAC partnership to increase the availability of qualified CNAs in the community. VMFH is also open to building a partnership to streamline their employed RNs obtaining a BSN degree at TCC if approved. Kaiser Permanente (KP) and TCC have also started discussions to build a collaborative effort for KP medical assistants (MA) and LPNs to earn an RN degree at TCC. KP is also open to collaborating, if TCC's BSN program is approved, together to develop a pathway for their RNs to earn a BSN degree. Some of these individuals and other healthcare and higher education institutions serve on TCC's nursing advisory board, and are invaluable resources for collaboration and growth.

The end goal of establishing an RN to BSN program at TCC is to increase the availability of BSN prepared nurses in the healthcare workforce for Pierce County and Washington State. With additional low-cost access to an RN to BSN program, TCC ADN graduates and practicing nurses in Washington State will have an opportunity to reach higher levels of professional education, qualify for graduate programs in nursing, and provide healthcare employers with a diverse workforce that provides higher quality care.

Criteria 7

Promoting equitable opportunities for students, including historically marginalized students.

Tacoma Community College (TCC) is located in the third largest city in Washington State with a thriving and diverse community of over 220,000 residents. The college has a strong representation of the different races in the community. Table 4 shows the college race and need-based data. TCC's student population is below the county in representation of American Indian/Alaskan Native but has identified a commitment to increasing Native visibility by developing more culturally responsive curriculum. Black/African American campus representation is higher than the county but lower than the city of Tacoma by 1.8%. The Hispanic student population for 2022-2023 was 7.5%, which has increased from 2020-2021 of 7.2%, and continues to be an area of growth. The Asian representation of students exceeds both the county and city data. The category of mixed race is at 20.7% which exceeds both the city and the county.

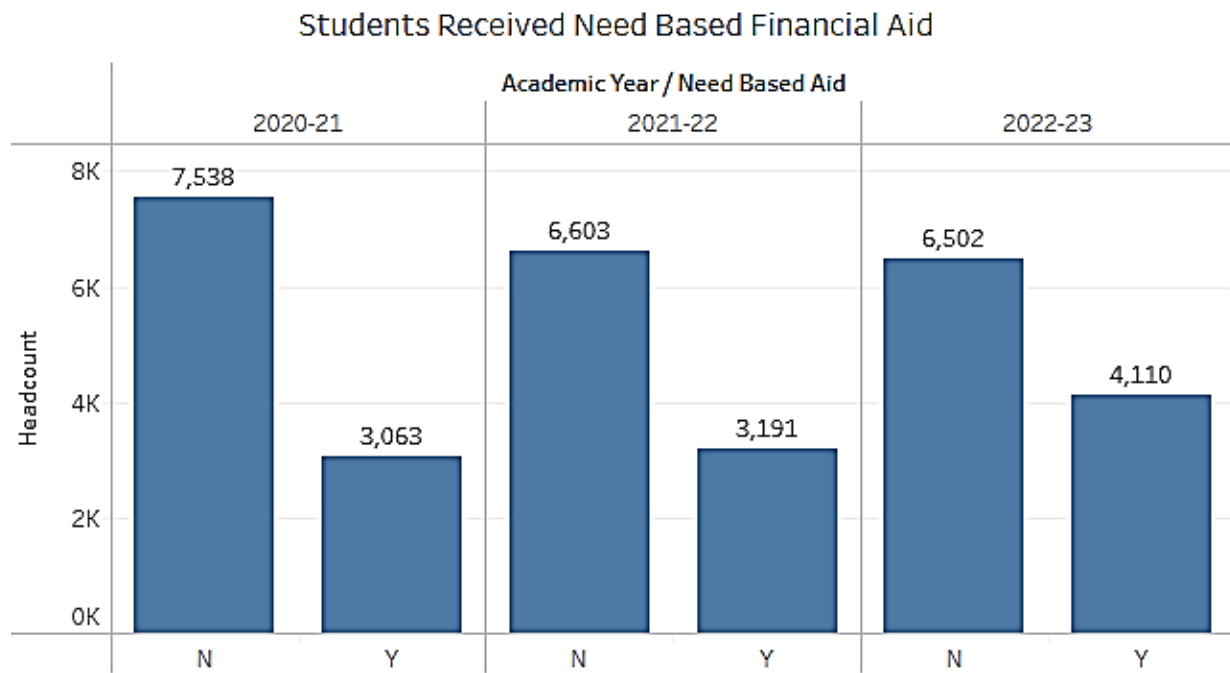
TCC's economically marginalized students are identified by those that received need-based financial aid. See Figure 12, which shows the increase in need-based financial aid awarded to TCC students. This has increased from 29% in 2020-2021 to 39% in 2022-2023. This is a 10% increase in just two years. Per the United States Census Bureau (n.d.) the city of Tacoma has a 12.7% poverty rate, which is 4.5% above Pierce County, WA.

Table 4: Race and needs based data for TCC, the city of Tacoma and Pierce County 2022-23

	Tacoma Community College-22-23 Data (Tacoma Community College, n.d)	Tacoma WA (City) as of 7/1/2022 (United States Census Bureau, n.d.)	Pierce County WA as of 7/1/2022 (United States Census Bureau, n.d.)
Population	9912	221,776	927,380
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.9%	1.9%	1.8%
Asian	10%	8.8%	7.6%
Black/African American	9%	10.8%	8.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.1%	1.0%	1.9%
White Caucasian	41.4%	61.9%	72.5%
Hispanic/Latino	7.5%	12.2%	12.6%
Mixed Race	20.7%	11.7%	8.0%
Unidentified	11.7%	No data	No data

Low Income (Need Based)	TCC 2022-2023	City of Tacoma 2022-2023	Pierce County 2022-2023
Median Household Income (2021 dollars)	Not available-federal law prohibits gathering this data	\$69,956	\$82,574
Per Capita Income in past 12 months	Not collected by TCC	\$37,263	\$39,036
Persons in Poverty	2.55% (receive need-based financial assistance)	12.7%	8.2%

Figure 82: Students receiving (Y) or not receiving (N) need based aid

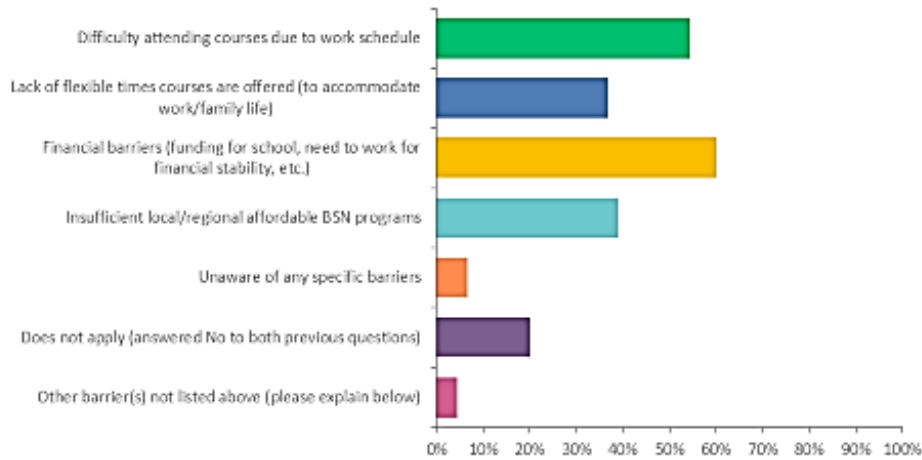


A survey of TCC ADN students and recent graduates indicated several potential barriers to starting and/or completion of a BSN degree. The program plans to address each barrier in various ways.

Figure 13: Barriers to starting and/or finishing a BSN degree

Q7: Please select all possible identified barriers Have you had any difficulty starting and/or finishing a BSN degree since obtaining your ADN degree ?:

Answered: 90 Skipped: 0



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Some identified barriers cited by students were academic. RN to BSN students have proven themselves academically by completing their ADN program and passing the NCLEX-RN exam. However, bachelor's level coursework is more challenging and rigorous. Students applying to TCC's RN to BSN program who have graduated quite some time ago, such as those from marginalized groups who could not afford BSN completion programs previously, may need additional academic support. The program will recommend to all students the Writing and Tutoring Center (including the Healthcare tutor), the Math Advising Research Lab (MARC), the TCC Librarian dedicated to Nursing, and General Education Faculty Mentors. TCC Nursing faculty will also provide academic support in office hours and culturally appropriate mentoring specifically for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students.

Other barriers were related to student engagement. It is likely that most students applying to TCC's RN to BSN program will be TCC ADN graduates, so they will have some familiarity with the TCC's culture, environment, policies, and resources. However, students new to TCC or from marginalized communities may feel disengaged. The Office of Student Engagement is dedicated to helping students gain the most out of their college experience. They host [events](#) that foster a sense of belonging, provide food for finals week, bring in nationally known speakers that address current issues, and provide opportunity for students to volunteer in the community and function as student leaders. Lastly, the TCC Student Nurses' Organization provides socialization, peer mentoring, support, and enrichment activities for all students in TCC nursing programs.

In addition, scheduling can be a barrier for some students. Most RN to BSN students will be working RN's but as indicated on the TCC ADN graduate survey above (Figure 13), students, including those from marginalized groups, may struggle with attending classes while working full-time due to lack of flexibility with class schedules. To address this, TCC's RN to BSN program plans to offer Hybrid and Hy-Flex courses that support asynchronous and distance learning while still maintaining a connection to the college community and available resources.

Many students identified finances as a significant barrier. Some RN to BSN students will be working in settings that provide tuition reimbursement or loan forgiveness. However, students from marginalized groups may struggle financially due to inadequate tuition support from their employer,

being single heads of households that are supporting many family members, and lack of reliable childcare, transportation, or stable housing. Resources available include TCC’s Financial Aid Department, where students can apply for State/Federal grants and loans as well as [TCC Foundation Scholarships](#) (in 2023, 77 awards to 94 students). TCC Nursing has established connections with community partners that offer scholarships to minority students, such as the Mary Mahoney Organization, Ebony Nurses Association of Tacoma, and Rainier Olympic Nurses Association. Additional sources of financial support are available to nurses advancing their education such as employer tuition reimbursement or funding from Washington Health Corps programs, TCC also offers on-campus subsidized childcare (Early Learning Center), bus vouchers, a Food Pantry, and emergency funds for students in crisis through the TCC Foundation. Students struggling with life stressors or mental health issues have access to TCC’s free counseling services. A [full list of these resources](#) is on the public facing webpage. In addition to various financial supports, TCC can offer the BSN degree to practicing RNs at a lower cost than other institutions.

Table 5: BSN Program cost comparison

Institution	Nursing Pre-requisites	ADN courses	RN to BSN courses	Total cost of BSN degree
Tacoma Community College	\$7785	\$8897	\$10,804	\$ 27,486
University of Washington, Tacoma	Not offered	Not offered	\$26,336	\$34,121 to \$39,924 (includes pre-requisite courses cost for local community college)
University of Washington, Seattle	Incorporated into the BSN program	Not offered	Not offered	\$103,784
St. Martin’s University	\$130,000	Not offered	\$65,000	\$195,000
Pacific Lutheran University	\$137,594	Not offered	Not offered	\$275,188

Another area of concern is bias barriers. Students from marginalized groups may experience bias related to their racial/ethnic origin, sexual preference, or gender identity. TCC has a dedicated strategic plan for [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#) (EDI). The college EDI office includes support for faculty, students, and staff, with a standardized glossary of terms. Initiatives include [TCC Board of Trustees: Statement of Commitment to Black Lives Matter and the Black Community, TCC Stands with AAPI Communities, and LGBTQ resources.](#) To support the mission of advancing learning and equity, the college is hiring employees that are committed to educating socioeconomically diverse students who reflect the diversity of the community and care about student success of historically underserved populations. In addition, TCC regularly examines and revises policies and procedures with a goal of becoming an anti-racist institution.

Finally, in the pursuit to improve the diversity of the nursing workforce, reduce barriers, and implement a more equitable admission process, the TCC ADN program launched a new holistic

admissions process on June 1, 2024. The new holistic admissions will increase opportunities for marginalized students while maintaining standards that predict success. As a result, graduates from the ADN program, and therefore potential RN to BSN applicants, will include more students from marginalized groups. TCC's holistic admissions incorporates a broad range of criteria beyond traditional academic metrics that includes the following:

- Elimination of the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam requirement. Students who may excel in practical and compassionate care but struggle with standardized tests are given a fair chance.
- Recognition of Diverse Experiences: Granting application scoring points for first-generation college students, bilingual or multilingual abilities, and volunteer work with marginalized populations acknowledges the value of diverse life experiences and perspectives.
- Support for Academic Growth: Removing penalties for retaking prerequisite courses encourages students to persevere through academic challenges without fear of penalization, fostering a growth mindset.
- Inclusivity: Granting application scoring points for veterans, current military members, and students from low-income or low socioeconomic households ensures that the nursing program is inclusive of individuals from various backgrounds.
- Flexibility: Offering multiple modes of delivery, such as online and hybrid courses, accommodates place-bound students and working professionals, making nursing education more accessible.
- Diversity: A more diverse student body leads to a nursing workforce that better represents the patient population, improving cultural humility and patient care outcomes. Nurses who are bilingual or have experience working with marginalized populations bring invaluable skills and insights, enhancing communication and care for diverse patient groups. Graduates who have overcome barriers and are deeply connected to their communities are more likely to work in underserved areas, addressing critical healthcare gaps.

Recruiting efforts in the community will include use of the TCC's Outreach department and Navigators to ensure RNs working in local healthcare facilities are aware of the program and have support to access information and application materials. By committing to a holistic admissions process, TCC's ADN nursing program is dedicated to reducing barriers to education, promoting diversity, and preparing a workforce capable of meeting the evolving needs of the healthcare field.

Conclusion

Nurses with an ADN degree provide critical and necessary care to patients. However, there are some distinctions in their education and training compared to a BSN prepared nurse that can impact patient outcomes and the delivery of equitable care. As previously discussed, studies have shown that hospitals with a higher proportion of BSN-prepared nurses have lower mortality and failure-to-rescue rates. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of affordable BSN programs in the Puget and South Sound Regions. While both BSN and ADN nurses are essential to the healthcare workforce and provide high-quality care, BSN-prepared nurses bring additional skills and knowledge that can enhance patient safety and promote equitable care. The proposed RN-BSN program not only directly reflects and supports the role, mission, and strategic priorities of TCC and SBCTC, but will also collaborate with multiple community partners to increase access and additional educational pathways for nontraditional, place-bound, and diverse learners to advance their career through higher education.

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Appendix A: Applied Baccalaureate Degree Supply/Demand Gap Rubric for Colleges

The goal of this rubric is to help you build a program that will meet the needs of your community. We have given you options about the information you can use to support the need for your new program. Also, the guidelines for estimating the supply/demand gap are similar to the ones we use for other program applications. We hope this makes the rubric more familiar to you. If not, contact the Director of Transfer Education at SBCTC for further information.

The application needs to show the information below for program approval:

- employers demand* the level of technical training proposed within the program, making it cost-effective for students to seek the degree;
- lead to high wage-earning jobs; and
- the proposed program fills a gap in options available for students because it is not offered by a public four-year institution of higher education in the college's geographic area.

College Name: Tacoma Community College
Program Name: Nursing
Select one: Existing Occupation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or Emerging Occupation <input type="checkbox"/>
If local demand/supply information is available for the specified degree program and target occupation(s),**

For demand: Provide local/regional demand data for the targeted occupation job title(s) from traditional labor market data, industry data, trade association data, or other transactional data. (*Provide absolute numbers, not just percentages*)

Nationally, BSN employment is expected to increase 6% from 2021-2031. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Registered Nurses) Annually there are approximately 16,000 job openings for RNs in Washington (*Washington STEM's [Labor Market Credential Data Dashboard](#)*). An online review of job postings conducted in July 2023 identified 2,089 open listings in Washington specifically requiring a BSN degree, and 201 jobs of similar criteria in Pierce County. It is widely known that a plethora of additional employers with RN vacancies prefer those with BSN degrees, but will hire RNs with ADN degrees due to a shortage of BSN prepared nurses. This is easily verified by looking at job postings. In the same search, an additional 1,950 RN vacancies were found in Pierce County with a preference, but not requirement, for BSN.

A BSN degree is nearly always required prior to obtaining advanced degrees in nursing such as MSN (Master of Science in Nursing) or DNP (Doctor of Nursing Practice). While labor demand data for the wide range of advanced degrees can be difficult to identify, ARNPs provide a snapshot of this, as it is one segment of this group. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics estimates a 40% growth in demand for nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and nurse anesthetists from 2021-2031. Enrollment in nursing graduate degree programs has steadily declined in Washington over the past 5 years. Providing an additional supply of BSN prepared nurses will increase the number of individuals qualified for these programs, thereby also impacting the supply of nurses with advanced degrees.

<p>For supply gap: Provide data on the number of programs and the number of annual program graduates for all four-year colleges that supply your region. Is the number of current annual graduates insufficient to meet current and projected demand? (The result of demand minus supply).</p>	<p>In our highly urban region, the major suppliers of BSN degrees are Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) and University of Washington, Tacoma (UWT). The nearest institutions after those are Bellevue College, Olympic College, and St. Martin's University. However, in our urban area the distance to these locations is prohibitive to many of our student population, and therefore are not being considered in the 'region'. Of the institutions listed, only University of Washington Tacoma offers the RN to BSN degree.</p> <p>BSN degrees from PLU over the past 5 years (2018-2022) ranged from 73-97 per year; note that these were entry BSN degrees, not RN to BSN. Data for BSN degrees from the RN to BSN program at UWT during the last 5 years were not accessible during development of the statement of need. It can be difficult to measure local effect of RN to BSN degrees completed through online-only institutions, but employment and job posting data doesn't suggest this has a significant impact on addressing the local or regional supply gap. Healthcare employers in the region currently rely heavily on RN supply from associate degree nurses graduating from the several area community colleges, including TCC. In order to meet the demand, employer desire, and national goals for BSN prepared nurses, the current supply does not meet the need.</p> <p>It is worth noting that enrollment across the state in RN to BSN programs dropped after a high in 2017-2018 (2582 enrolled, 1319 graduated) and has still not recovered to that enrollment level (2021-2022 enrollment 2157, graduated 1025), indicating a need for available programs. This data is assumed to include all options including online degree programs. Indeed, the number of students graduating from RN to BSN programs in 2022 was the lowest in 5 years.</p>
<p align="center">OR, if demand information is not available or it is a new/emerging/changing occupation, **</p>	

<p>For demand: Provide employer survey results for local demand for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support the demand and education level for the program. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	
<p>For supply gap: Provide employer survey results for local supply for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support that there is a gap in the number of qualified applicants available to fill jobs. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	
<p>OR, if based on a statutory or accreditation requirement, **</p>	
<p>Select one: Statutory Requirement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or Accreditation Requirement <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>For demand: Provide labor market information on the current education requirements for the job, including evidence of recent openings for requiring or preferring bachelor's degrees or above. Cite the statute or certifying body, your proposed program is based upon that has specified a bachelor's or above in the field is needed.</p>	
<p>For supply gap: Provide employer survey results for local supply for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support that there is a gap or that employers anticipate a gap in the number of qualified applicants that will be available to fill jobs with the new requirements. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	<p>SEE APPENDIX B</p>
<p>* Demand is defined by state law as <i>“an occupation with a <u>substantial</u> number of current or projected employment opportunities.”</i> **Applications may include information related to more than one option (i.e., labor market data to support the local demand for the occupation and a local employer survey to support that there is a gap in the number of qualified applicants available to fill jobs).</p>	

Survey Requirements:

To verify/support supply demand your survey should include at least 25 individual employer responses. If there are not 25 employers in the area, you should cover the employers who comprise at least 75% of the identified employment base. Provide a copy of the survey with the aggregated results as an appendix. The survey must address the following general questions (you may edit the wording to suit your survey):

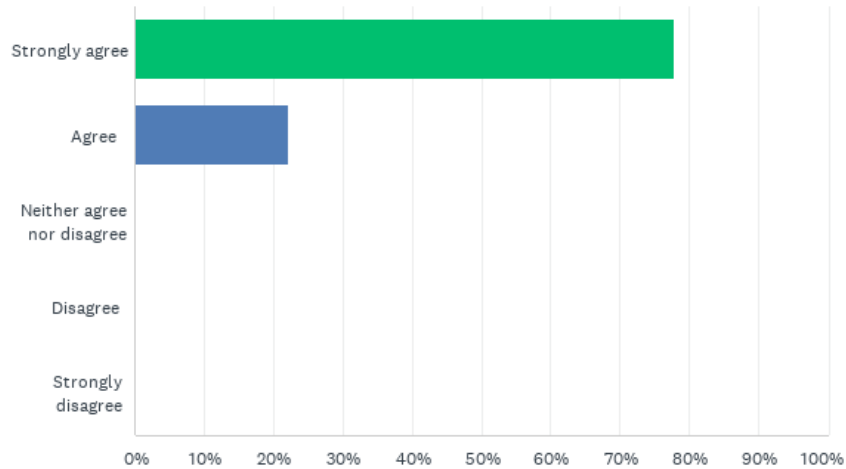
- (1) Do you have anticipated demand for application job title(s)? (If this is a new or emerging job title, include a brief description of specific job duties.)

- (2) If there is demand, how many positions do you currently have open? How many do you anticipate having open in the next 3 years?
- (3) Is a bachelor's degree a requirement or preference for this position? Requirement: Y or N Preference: Y or N
- (4) Do you have difficulty finding Bachelor's degree level applicants for this position? (If yes- explain)
- (5) Will the proposed program assist you in finding qualified applicants to fill the position(s)?

Appendix B: BSN Needs Assessment-Employer

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Increasing the number of BSN prepared nurses improves patient outcomes and safety.

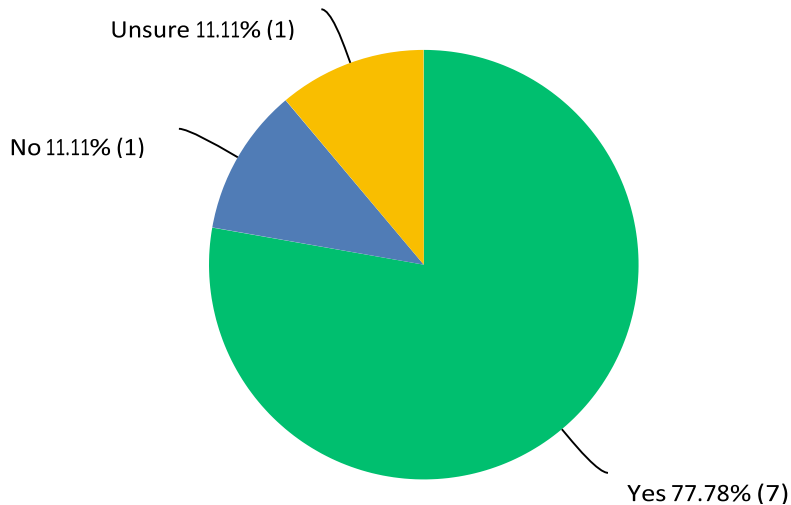


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	77.78%
Agree	22.22%
Neither agree nor disagree	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0.00%
TOTAL	

Q2 Does your organization currently require (or will in the future) or prefer a BSN degree for newly hired registered nurses?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

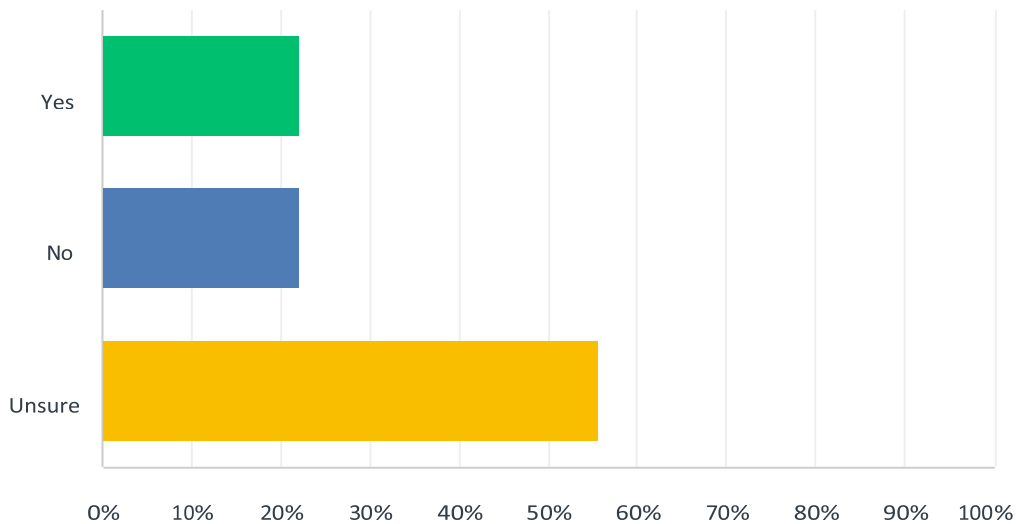
BSN Needs Assessment-Employer



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	77.78%
No	11.11%
Unsure	11.11%
TOTAL	

Q3 If your organization hires an ADN prepared nurse, is there a requirement (or will in the future) that the ADN nurse obtain a BSN degree within a specific timeframe?

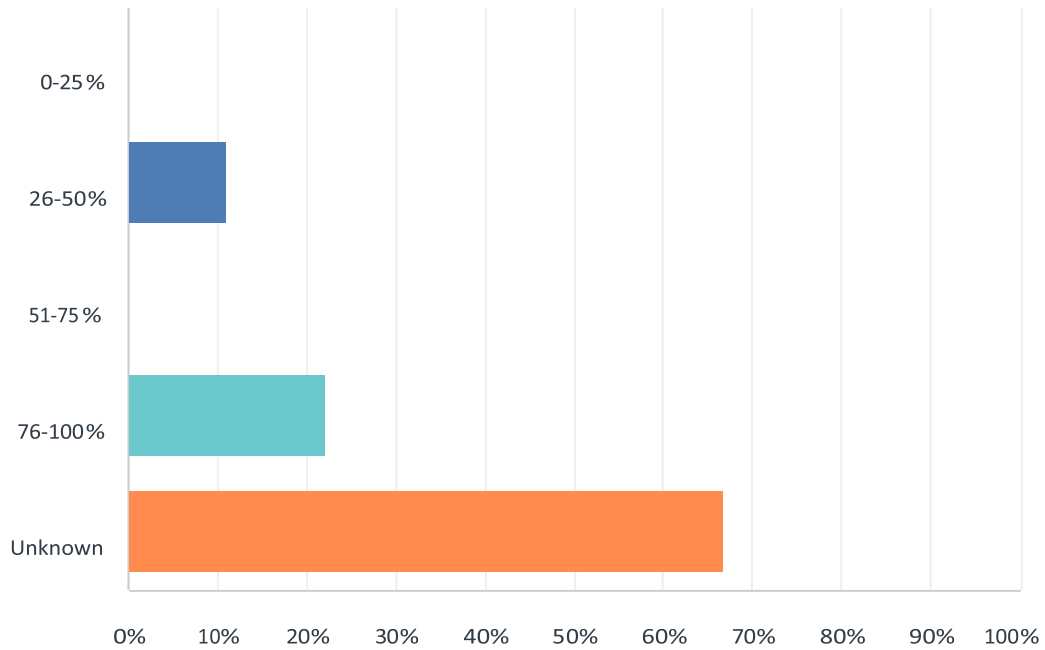
Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	22.22%
No	22.22%
Unsure	55.56%
TOTAL	

Q4 Approximately what percent of your currently employed registered nurses have earned a BSN degree?

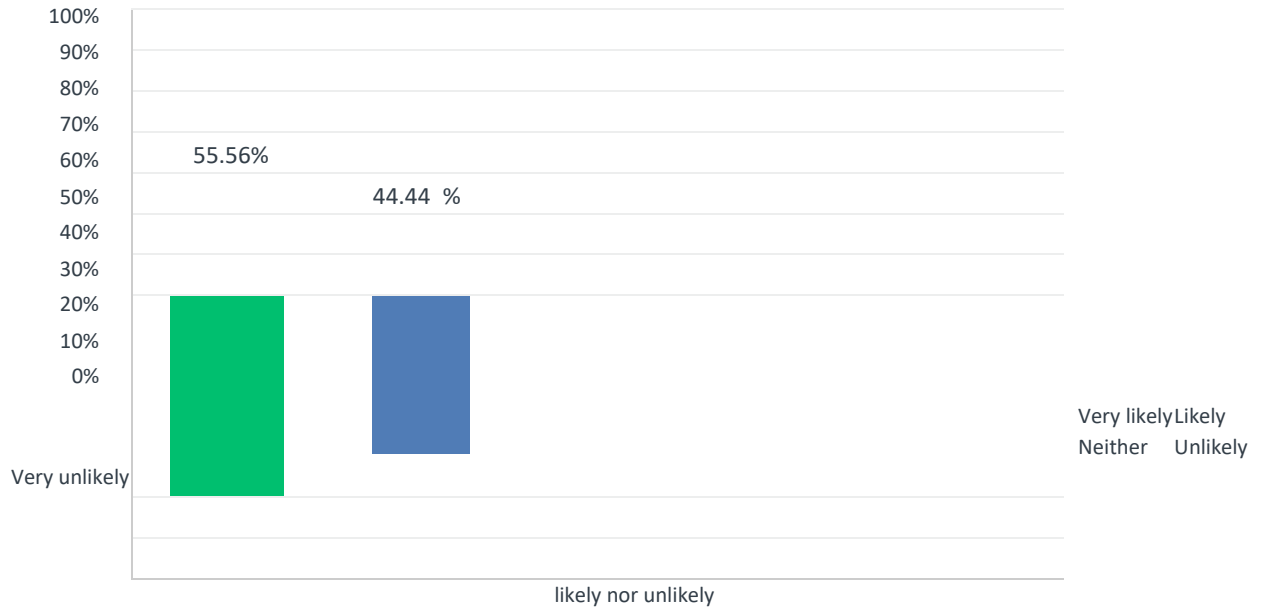
Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0-25%	0.00%
26-50%	11.11%
51-75%	0.00%
76-100%	22.22%
Unknown	66.67%
TOTAL	

Q5 How likely does your organization anticipate an increased demand for BSN prepared nurses within the next 3-5 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

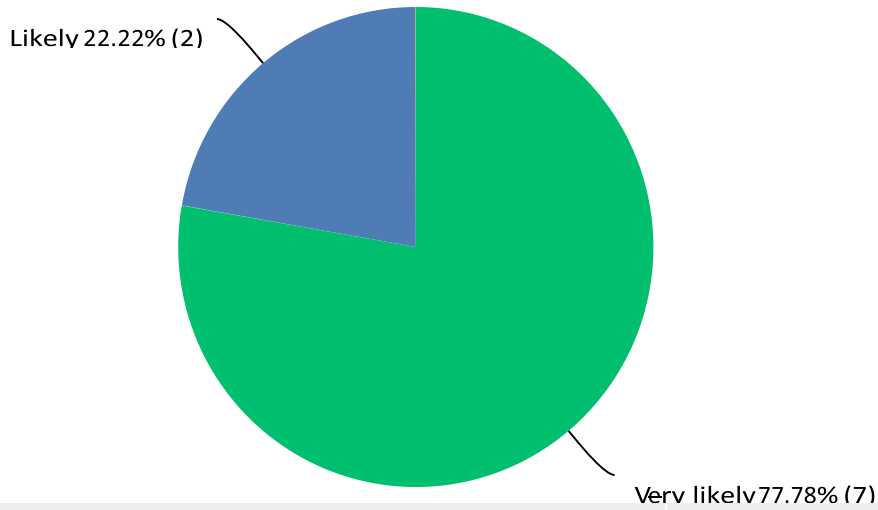


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very likely	55.56%
Likely	44.44%
Neither likely nor unlikely	0.00%
Unlikely	0.00%
Very unlikely	0.00%
TOTAL	

Q6 How likely does your organization anticipate an increased demand for BSN prepared nurses within the next 5-10 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

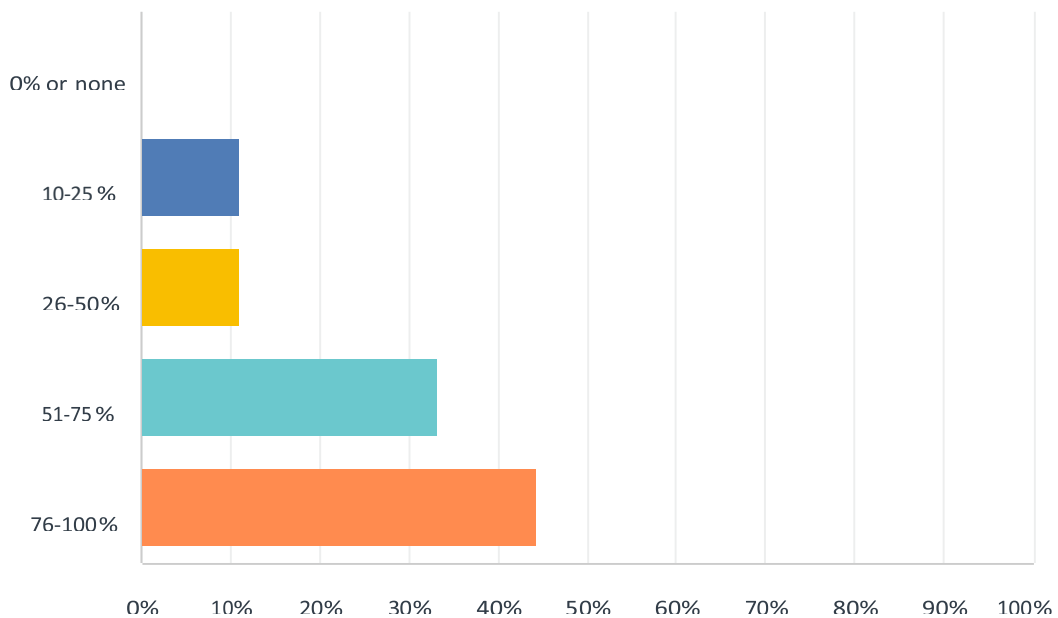
BSN Needs Assessment-Employer



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very likely	77.78%
Likely	22.22%
Neither likely nor unlikely	0.00%
Unlikely	0.00%
Very unlikely	0.00%
TOTAL	

Q7 By what percentage would your organization anticipate or would like to increase the number of BSN prepared nurses within the next 3 to 5 years

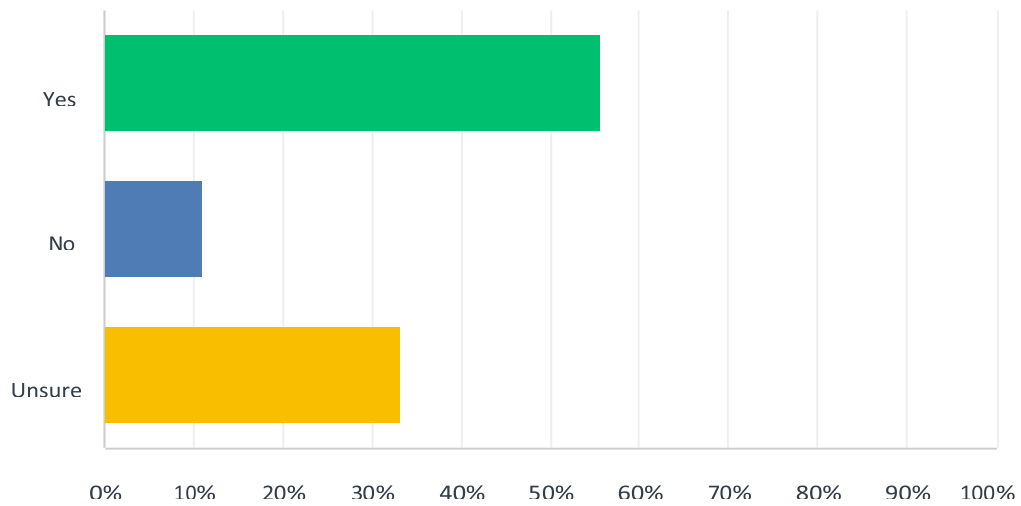
Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0% or none	0.00%
10-25%	11.11%
26-50%	11.11%
51-75%	33.33%
76-100%	44.44%
TOTAL	

Q8 Do you or the organization have difficulty finding BSN prepared nursing applicants to fill vacant positions?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

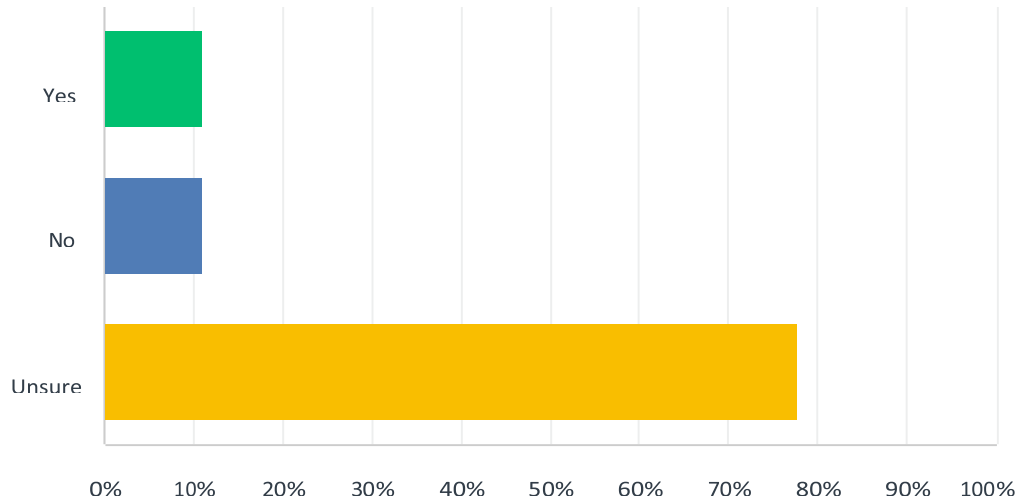


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	55.56%
No	11.11%
Unsure	33.33%
TOTAL	

Q9 Do currently employed ADN nurses have difficulty obtaining a BSN degree?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

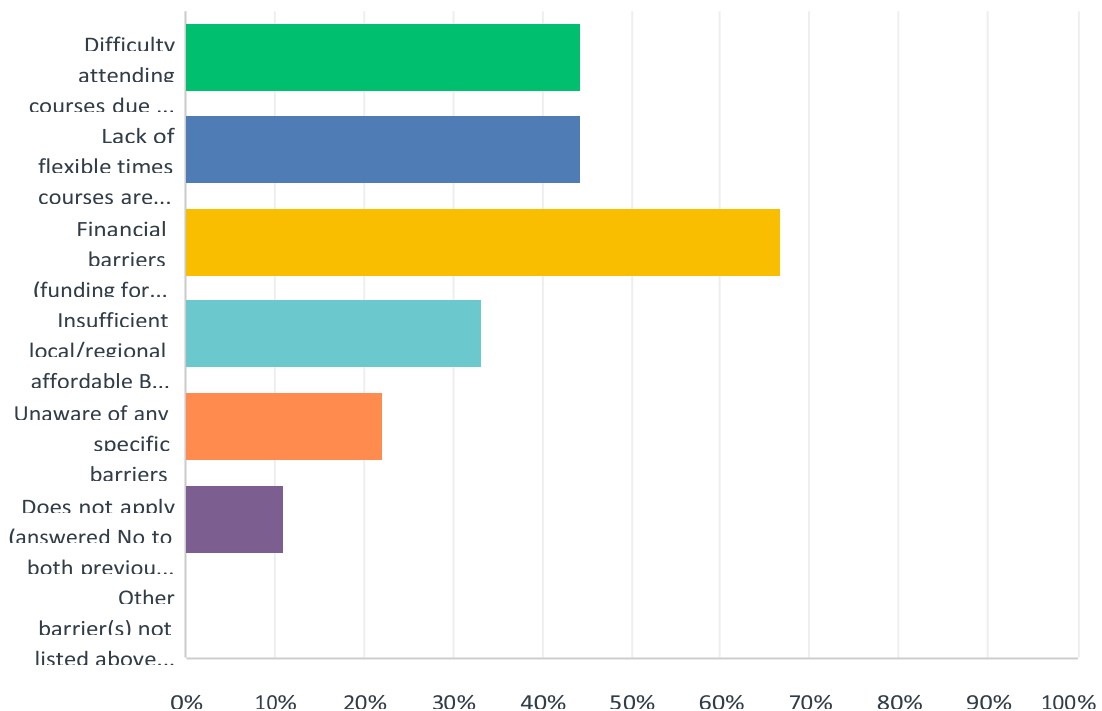
BSN Needs Assessment-Employer



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	11.11%
No	11.11%
Unsure	77.78%
TOTAL	

Q10 If answered yes to either questions above: Please select all possible identified barriers:

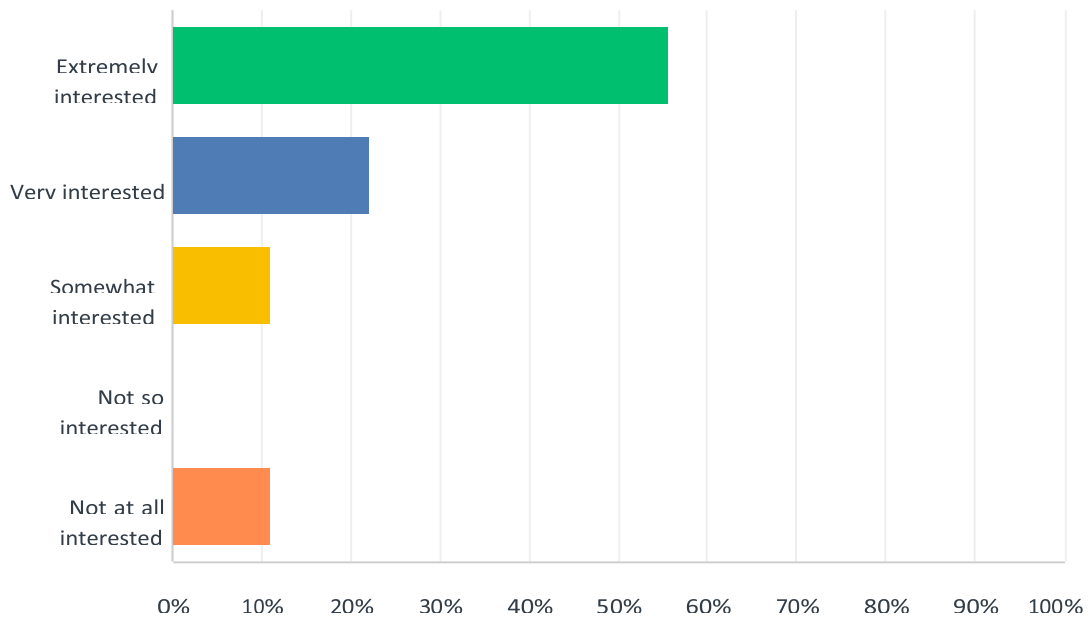
Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Difficulty attending courses due to work schedule	44.44%
Lack of flexible times courses are offered (to accommodate work/family life)	44.44%
Financial barriers (funding for school, need to work for financial stability, etc.)	66.67%
Insufficient local/regional affordable BSN programs	33.33%
Unaware of any specific barriers	22.22%
Does not apply (answered No to both previous questions)	11.11%
Other barrier(s) not listed above (please explain below)	0.00%
Total Respondents: 9	

Q11 How interested is your organization in collaborating with TCC's nursing program to recruit potential BSN students or developing a collaboration to increase your BSN workforce?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

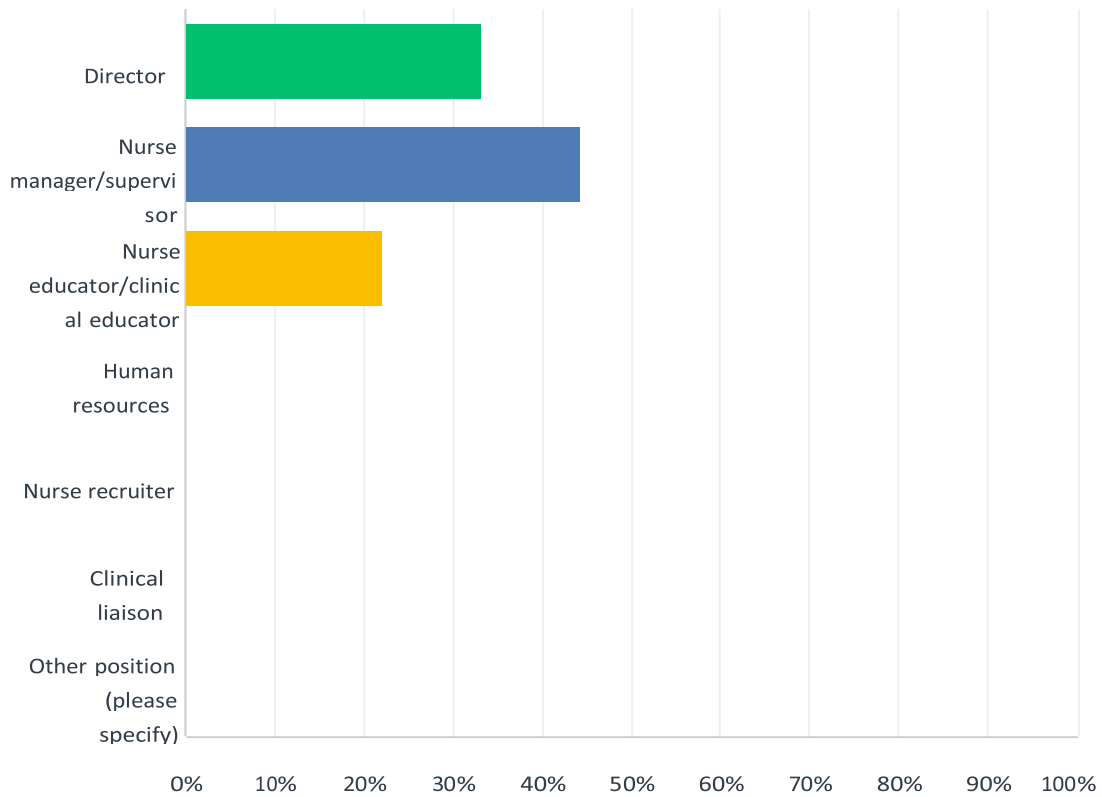


BSN Needs Assessment-Employer

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely interested	55.56%
Very interested	22.22%
Somewhat interested	11.11%
Not so interested	0.00%
Not at all interested	11.11%
TOTAL	

Q12 What is your current position/title at your organization?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Director	33.33%
Nurse manager/supervisor	44.44%
Nurse educator/clinical educator	22.22%
Human resources	0.00%
Nurse recruiter	0.00%
Clinical liaison	0.00%
Other position (please specify)	0.00%
TOTAL	

Q13 What is the name of your organization?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

Q14 Although the survey is anonymous, please list your voluntary contact information below (name & email) ONLY if you would like to be contacted in the future with program information if TCC develops and starts a BSN program.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 6