



**BC Care
Providers**
ASSOCIATION



Health Care Worker Recruitment Survey Results

October 2018

OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

BCCPA developed a survey for frontline continuing care workers in order to inform the development of an awareness building campaign for employment in the continuing care sector. The survey inquired about the reasons why health care workers decided to pursue careers in continuing care, what they value about their occupation, and if they would recommend it to others.

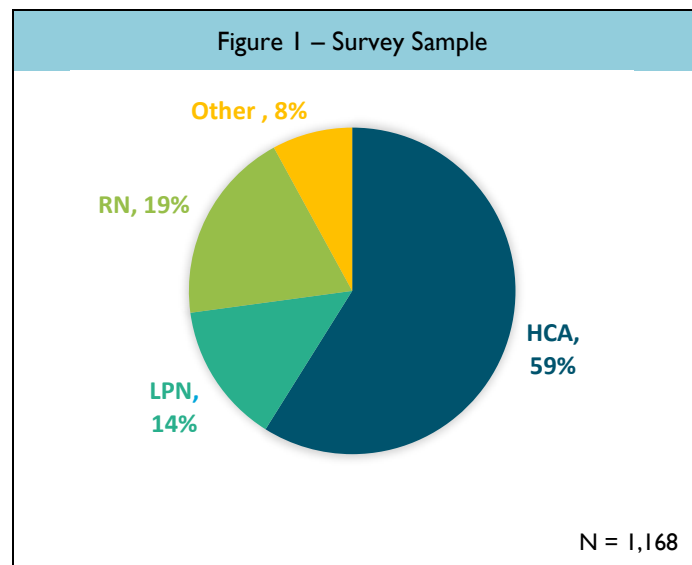
The survey was developed with input from an informal working group of unions and labour, government, post-secondary institutions, care providers and frontline workers.

The online survey was launched on August 1st and distributed to workers electronically. The survey was closed on August 31, 2018.

This report has been developed by the BCCPA’s Health Human Resource Analyst.

ABOUT THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

- There were a total of 1,168 survey respondents, collected over four weeks in August 2018.
- 59% of the survey respondents were Health Care Assistants (HCAs) or Community Health Workers (CHWs), 14% were Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), 19% were Registered Nurses (RNs), and 2% were Allied Health Care workers. The remaining 6% were Administrative and Support workers (3%) or outside of the survey sample (3%).
- The survey was largely reflective of workers representing the Long Term Care Sector (50%), and the Home and Community Support Sector (39%). Other survey respondents were from Acute Care (14%), Assisted Living (13%), Independent Living (5%) and Other (7%). Note that these categories are not mutually exclusive.
- The majority of survey respondents were from the Lower Mainland (43%) and Vancouver Island (36%) regions, while the remaining respondents were from the Interior (18%), and the North (3%).
- The vast majority of survey respondents were female (86%), which reflects the gender make-up of the sector. The remaining respondents identified that they were male (8%), preferred not to say (4%), or preferred a different self-description (2%).



KEY FINDINGS—JOB AND PERSONAL FACTORS

Survey respondents indicated that the factors that most influenced them to pursue careers in the continuing care sector were:

- job security and stability (81%)
- their ability to find work locally (73%)
- wages and benefits (73%)
- abundant job opportunities (72%)

Survey respondents were also asked about the personal factors that contributed to their decision to become a health care worker.

Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that their perception of the sector as an honourable career influenced their decision (94%). Other personal factors included the flexibility that the occupation provides to attend to other family responsibilities (56%), and personal experiences caring for other friends or family members (51%)

When asked how they had learned about opportunities to work in caregiver occupations, most respondents indicated that they had been referred by a friend or a family member (41%), or a school/career counsellor (20%).

“I would never choose any other profession. Helping those in need was my calling.”

HCA, Long Term Care and Home Support

KEY FINDINGS—CAREER SATISFACTION

When asked about job satisfaction, the majority of respondents indicated that they find their occupation intrinsically rewarding, citing their ability to make a difference (76%), and their relationships with residents and clients (71%). Survey respondents also indicated that they valued wages and benefits (43%).

Though indicated less strongly, some survey respondents also indicated that they value a flexible work schedule (26%), relationships with co-workers (25%), and being able to work full time (22%). Those working in the community care and home support sector were more likely to indicate that they value a flexible schedule than those in the long term care sector (36% versus 20% respectively).

Respondents also indicated which aspects of the occupation that they find challenging. The most common response (56%) among survey respondents was that they find the lack of time to complete care and/or feeling rushed to be a challenging aspect of their job. Survey respondents also indicated that they find the emotional (40%) and physical (35%) demands of the occupation challenging.

“Being an LPN, there is a great deal of work, I highly recommend this career because I believe being given a chance to help and caring for others especially the elderly will make a huge difference!”

LPN, Long Term Care

KEY FINDINGS—RECOMMENDATION TO OTHERS

The vast majority (86%) of survey respondents indicated that they would be willing to recommend their occupation to others as a career, including 89% among HCAs, 86% among LPNs, and 78% among RNs. When asked to elaborate further, many respondents noted that it would depend on the personality of the individual.

When asked what personality types best fits these occupations, respondents identified qualities such as:

- compassion and empathy (79%)
- good communication skills (66%)
- patience (57%)
- flexibility (54%)
- strong work ethic (49%)

“This is a great job and I love it, but you need to be a caring person to do this job it’s not for everyone.”

HCA, in Home Support

Of those unwilling to recommend their occupations to others, many cited the current challenges of working in the seniors’ care sector, including staffing shortages, feeling as though they must rush through care, and the increasing acuity levels of residents/clients. Experienced workers indicated that they felt that working in the sector has become significantly more challenging over the past two decades, both physically and emotionally.

Furthermore, only 26% of survey respondents indicated that their occupation is extremely well-understood (9%) or very well-understood (17%) by the public. This may indicate a need to address myths and misconceptions about care worker occupations in the seniors’ care sector.

IMPLICATIONS FOR AWARENESS BUILDING CAMPAIGN

The results of the Health Care Worker Recruitment Survey have implications for any awareness building and promotion campaign undertaken by BCCPA and its partners.

- Materials should emphasize job security and stability, flexible schedules, opportunities to work locally, wages and benefits
- Target applicants should be people-orientated, compassionate, and flexible.
- Public awareness of these occupations may be low. Campaign should address myths and misconceptions, as well as raise awareness of job opportunities.
- Most people are referred by friends or family. Peer-to-peer marketing and/or worker testimonials may be significant opportunities.

BCCPA must also continue to work with government, industry, union and other stakeholders to address challenges identified by continuing care workers in order to ensure that the sector is a great place to work. For example, issues to address include:

- Lack of time to complete care and heavy workloads
- Staffing shortages
- Mental wellness
- Physical wellness and preventing injuries