A Longitudinal Assessment of Diversity in Indiana's Health Workforce

Indiana Registered Nurses

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
BOWEN CENTER FOR HEALTH
WORKFORCE RESEARCH & POLICY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nurses represent the largest profession in the health workforce and are vital to health care delivery in communities across the United States. Nurses provide health care services to patients of all cultures and backgrounds. Diversity in the health workforce is an important component in ensuring quality of care, access to care, and health equity.[1]
Having a nursing workforce which reflects the diversity of patients is a national priority.

This report is a part of the Indiana Health Workforce Diversity Brief Series which presents historical trends of certain licensed health professionals demographic characteristics and a high-level overview of related policy and programmatic initiatives. This report includes information on the registered nurse (RN) and advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) workforce. Demographic data presented in this report were collected through a review of information captured directly from health professionals between 1997-2021.

Indiana's nursing workforce, comprised of RNs and APRNs, has become increasingly diverse over the last several decades. The percent of RNs that identify as a racial or ethnic minority group more than doubled from 1997 to 2021. A similar increase was observed among APRNs from 2005 to 2021. While the nursing workforce as a whole continues to be primarily female, the proportion of males in Indiana's RN workforce is increasing. However, no changes in male representation among APRNs have been observed since reporting began in 2005.

> **How is Underrepresented Minority Defined**
>
> According to the Bureau of Health Workforce - HRSA, an underrepresented minority is defined as, **"someone from a racial or ethnic group considered inadequately represented in a specific profession realtive to the representation of that racial or ethinic group in the general population."**

There has been a national and local acknowledgement of the importance of nursing workforce diversity throughout the last several decades.[2] This spotlight has resulted in the establishment of several financial incentives and workforce development programs to enhance nursing workforce diversity throughout the country. National associations have also developed several resources in an effort to support workplace diversity, with corresponding initiatives at the local level.[3,4] These targeted initiatives, as well as broader workforce development incentives and opportunities,[5] are likely contributing factors to the increase in diversity of Indiana nurses over the last few decades and will be important to further diversifying this workforce.

DIVERSITY IN INDIANA'S NURSING WORKFORCE

REGISTERED NURSES
LONGITUDINAL TRENDS

The total number of Indiana RNs, including APRNs who reported actively practicing more than doubled between 1997 and 2021, increasing from 38,721 in 1997 to 81,911 in 2021 (Figure 1). Over the years, the strategy used to identify actively practicing RNs and APRNs has been modified to align with changes in medical care delivery and the improvement of questions being asked to Indiana registered nurses in the licensure renewal supplemental survey. More information on these changes can be found in the Diversity Report: Methodology and Introduction[6].

Figure 1. Count of Actively Practicing Nurses, 1997 – 2021
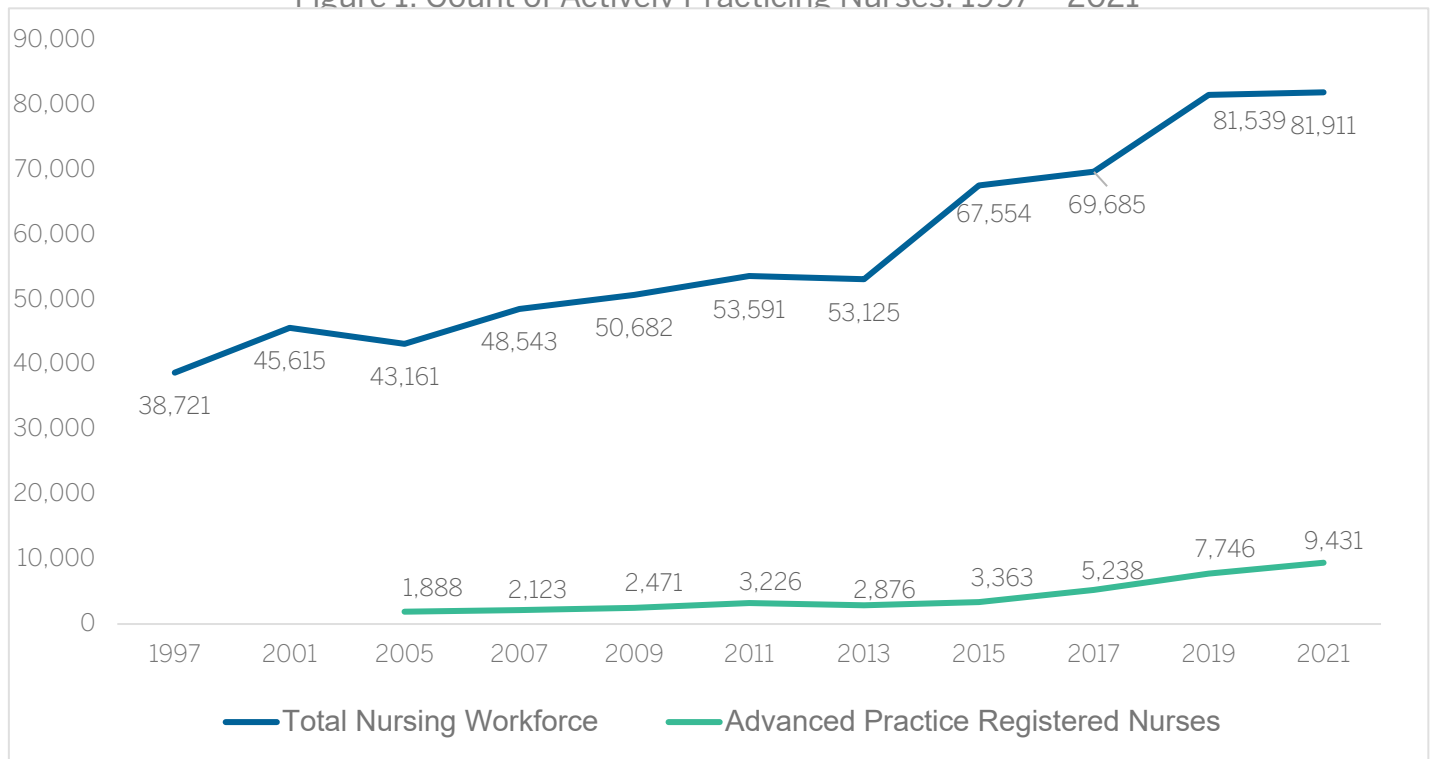
Although the nursing workforce has been and is primarily female, the proportion of male RNs nearly doubled between 1997 and 2021. The age distribution of Indiana RNs has also experienced change. The proportion of RNs under the age of 35 has increased since 2005.

Generally, Indiana RNs are predominantly white and not Hispanic, Latino/a or Spanish. However, changes have been observed since reporting began in 1997. Although the proportion of RNs who identify as Hispanic, Latino/a or Spanish increased is small, the percentage has more than doubled in the last two decades (1.1% in 1997 to 3.6% in 2021). Similar increases are noted from RNs identifying as a racial minority group. RNs who identify as Black or African American nearly doubled since 1997 to 5.1% in 2021. While this increase is of note, RNs representation still lags behind Indiana's population. Although the RN workforce has made significant progress toward diversity, the current frequency of diversity is lower compared to other Indiana health professions (such as primary care physicians).

POLICY CONTEXT

Diversity has been a longstanding priority for the nursing workforce, with early origins sourced from a 2000 report titled "National Agenda for Nursing Workforce: Racial/Ethnic Diversity."[7] This landmark report has been followed by numerous similar reports calling for enhanced nursing workforce diversity, including the latest report, The Future of Nursing 2020-2030, which calls for diversity among nurses to reduce health disparities and achieve health equity.[8,9,10,11]

Various early pipeline programs, workforce development strategies, and incentive opportunities have been created to advance these diversity goals. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has demonstrated a commitment toward enhancing diversity through development or promotion of several diversity-focused initiatives which impact the student pipeline, such as holistic admissions reviews, strategies to create inclusive learning environments, and supporting career ladders in nursing.[12]

The Indiana Center for Nursing has developed similar programming; the "Indiana Needs Initiative" is a toolkit which includes actionable strategies to support these goals, such as holistic nursing school admissions review and a peer-to-peer mentoring toolkit.[13] In addition to providing these resources, the Indiana Center for Nursing serves as a conduit for dispersing federal funding to support diversity in nurse training programs.[14] This initiative, coined the "NEEDS2B Program", is a network of eight (8) Indiana nursing programs that have committed to advancing diversity through awarding scholarships or stipends to students, implementing holistic admissions review, developing mentoring programs, and prioritizing retention of diverse students, staff, and faculty.[15]

Furthermore, there are additional programs that may promote diversity and inclusion, such as STEM Camps, Nursing Salons, and broader health workforce development programming. STEM camps promote knowledge of career opportunities in science and medical careers; some of these camps target diverse students.[16] Nursing salons are convenings where nurses or prospective students connect and share their experiences in nursing. A nursing salon may be an opportunity for promoting conversations around both equity and diversity within the nursing profession.[17,18] These programs, both alongside and in addition to other broader programs,[19,20,21] will be important to continue to advance diversity goals in Indiana's nursing workforce goals.

Indiana RN Demographics Trends

Figure 1.1
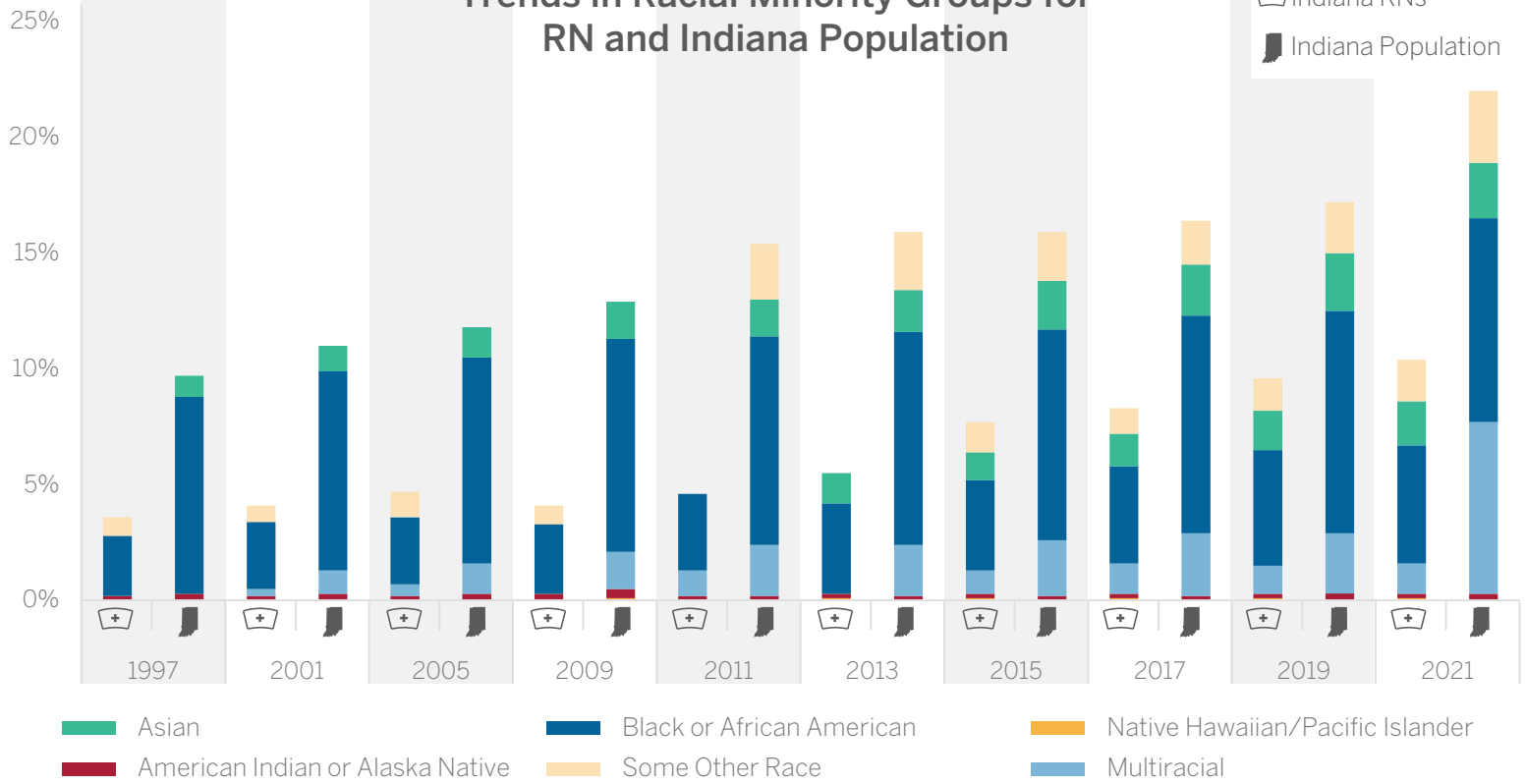### Trends in Racial Minority Groups for RN and Indiana Population

Legend:
- Indiana RNs
- Indiana Population

Y-axis: 25%, 20%, 15%, 10%, 5%, 0%

X-axis years: 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Legend:
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Some Other Race
- Multiracial

Years excluded include 1999, 2003, & 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
Note: For years 2005, 2001 & 1997 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders were combined with Asian population
A breakdown of all racial demographic characteristics are located in the appendix of Longitudinal Assessment of Diversity in Indiana's Health Workforce: Indiana Nurses

Figure 1.2
Trends in Ethnicity for RN and Indiana Population

Y-axis: 10%, 8%, 6%, 4%, 2%, 0%

X-axis years: 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Legend:
- Indiana Population: Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish
- Indiana RNs: Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish

Years excluded include 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
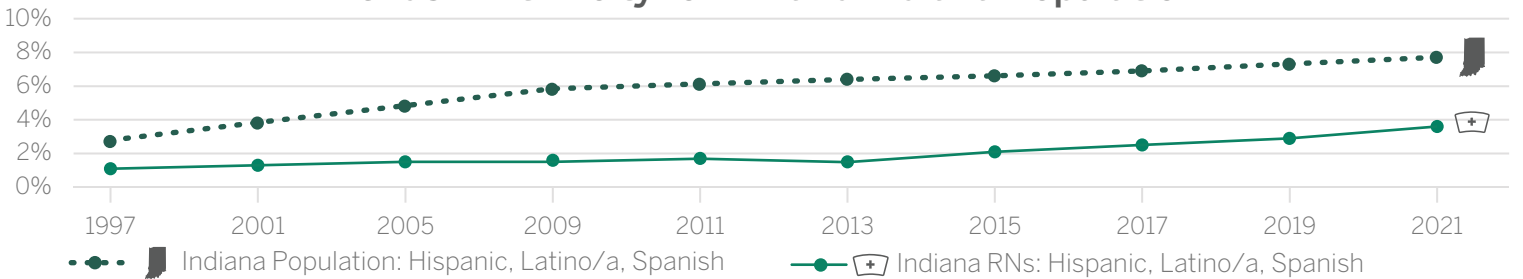
Figure 1.3
Trends in RN Age

Y-axis years: 2021, 2019, 2017, 2015, 2012, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2005

X-axis: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%

Legend:
- Under 35
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and Older
- Age Not Available

Figure 1.4
Trends in RN Gender

Y-axis: 100%, 80%, 60%, 40%, 20%, 0%

X-axis years: 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Legend:
- Female
- Male
- Gender Not Available

Years excluded include 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
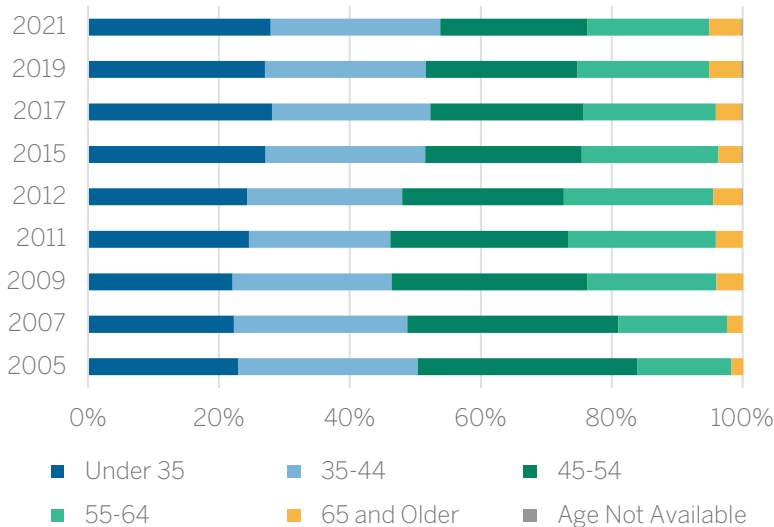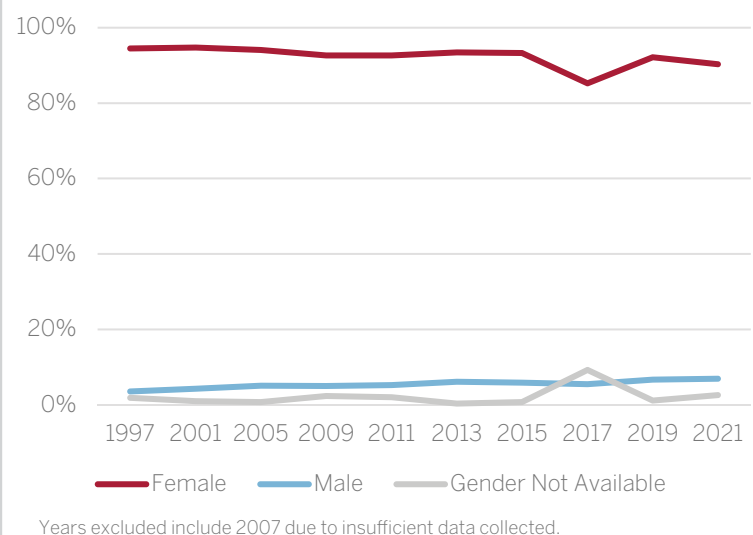
ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES

LONGITUDINAL TRENDS

The number of APRNs who reported actively practicing in Indiana has increased substantially since 2005 (1,888 in 2005 and 9,431 in 2021). During this time, the age distribution of APRNs has gradually decreased over the years, with a little over 40% being under age 45 in 2005 and nearly 57% falling into this same age group in 2021. Similar to the overall RN workforce, the APRN workforce as a whole is predominantly female (90.6% in 2021), and gender distribution has remained stable over the last two decades.

APRNs identifying as a racial and ethnic minority have more than doubled in representation between 2005 and 2021. Regardless of these increases, APRN representation for both race and ethnicity fall behind Indiana's population. This highlights the continued importance and need for strategies to support diversity in Indiana's nursing workforce.

POLICY CONTEXT

Research demonstrates that generally nurses from an underrepresented background are more likely than white nurses to pursue baccalaureate and graduate programs. However, because of the low frequency of registered nurses from these demographic groups within the overall nursing workforce, there is continued low representation of these racial and ethnic minority groups among APRNs.[22]

The same national white papers that cite the need for increased nursing workforce diversity overall also call for specific diversity initiatives related to APRNs, with increasing representation among nurse faculty, researchers, and doctoral graduates.

This can be done through bridge programs and minority fellowship programs to support underrepresented nursing graduate students. There have been initiatives specifically targeting diversity development among APRNs broadly and among specific sub-categories (such as nurse faculty,[23] nurse executives,[24] and APRN role-specific initiatives[25,26,27]). Additionally, given that APRNs are registered nurses, the majority of diversity-focused initiatives that target the RN workforce would also apply to APRNs. APRN-specific initiatives, in addition to broader RN workforce and health workforce development programs, will be important tools and resources to advance diversity in the APRN workforce.

> **How are APRNs Identified and Counted in Indiana?**
>
> There is no license to practice as an APRN in the state of Indiana (beyond the CNM license). Rather, APRNs are licensed RNs with additional education/training and expanded scope of practice. In the absence of a license, a two-step approach is used to identify Indiana APRNs: 1) RN with APRN prescriptive authority license, or 2) RN self-reporting APRN at the time of license renewal.[28]

Indiana APRN Demographics Trends

Figure 2.1
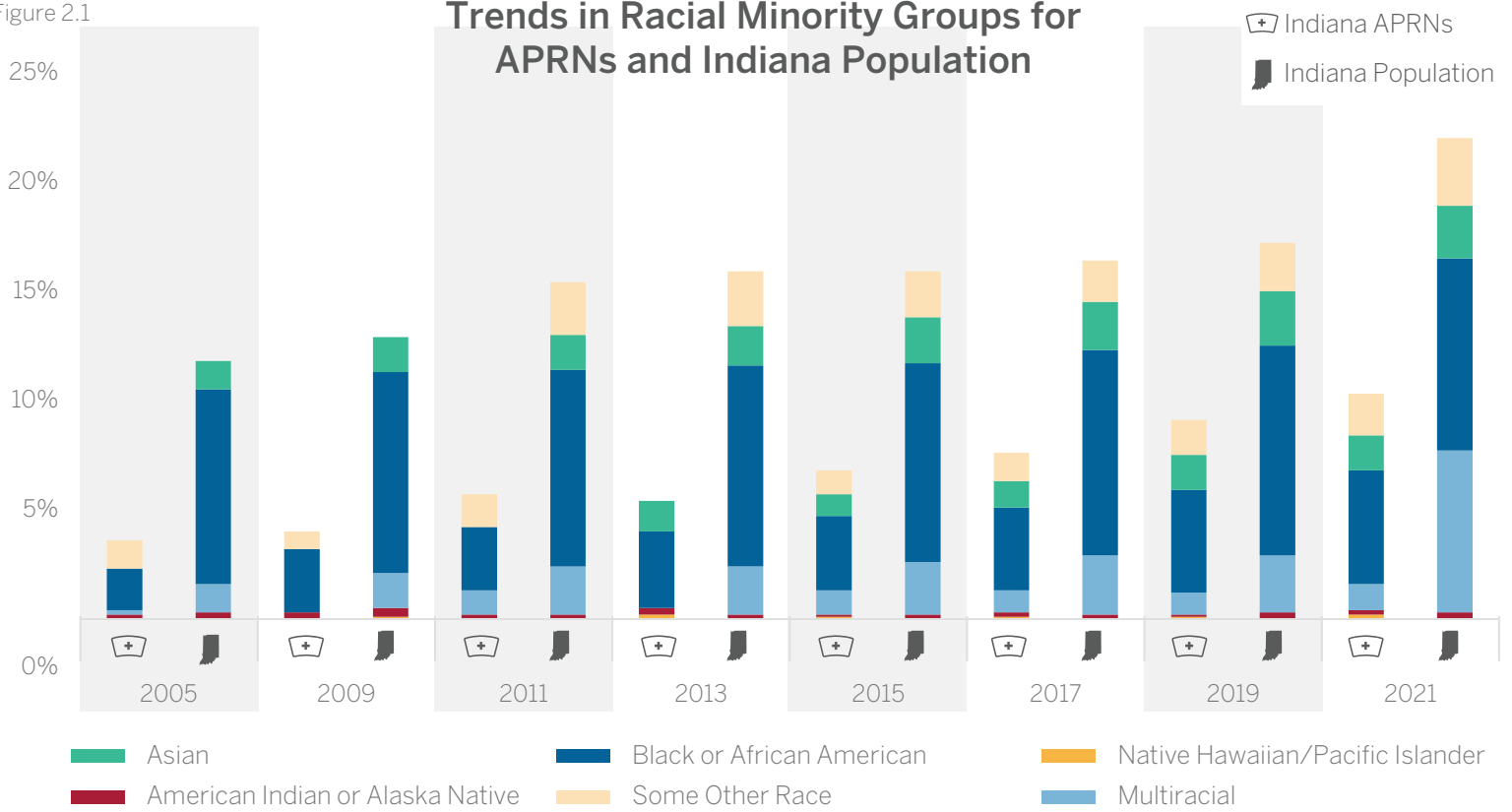### Trends in Racial Minority Groups for APRNs and Indiana Population

Years 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021 shown with paired bars (Indiana APRNs ☩ and Indiana Population ▮).

Legend:
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Some Other Race
- Multiracial

Years excluded 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
Note: For years 2005 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders were combined with Asian population
A breakdown of all racial demographic characteristics are located in the appendix of Longitudinal Assessment of Diversity in Indiana's Health Workforce: Indiana Nurses

Figure 2.2
Trends in Ethnicity for APRNs and Indiana Population

Years: 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Legend:
- ····▮ Indiana Population: Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish
- —●— ☩ Indiana APRNs: Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish

Years excluded include 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
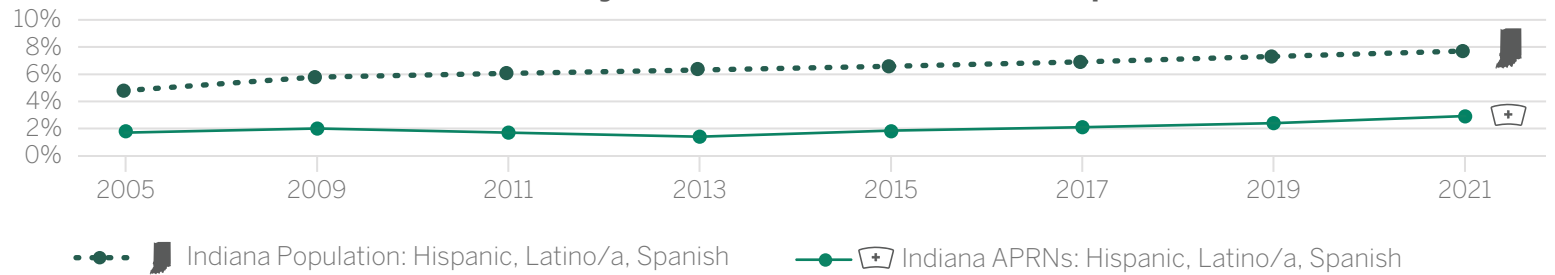
Figure 2.3
Trends in APRN Age

Years (top to bottom): 2021, 2019, 2017, 2015, 2012, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2005

Legend:
- Under 35
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and Older
- Age Not Available

Figure 2.4
Trends in APRN Gender

Years: 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Legend:
- Female
- Male
- Gender Not Available

Years excluded include 2007 due to insufficient data collected.
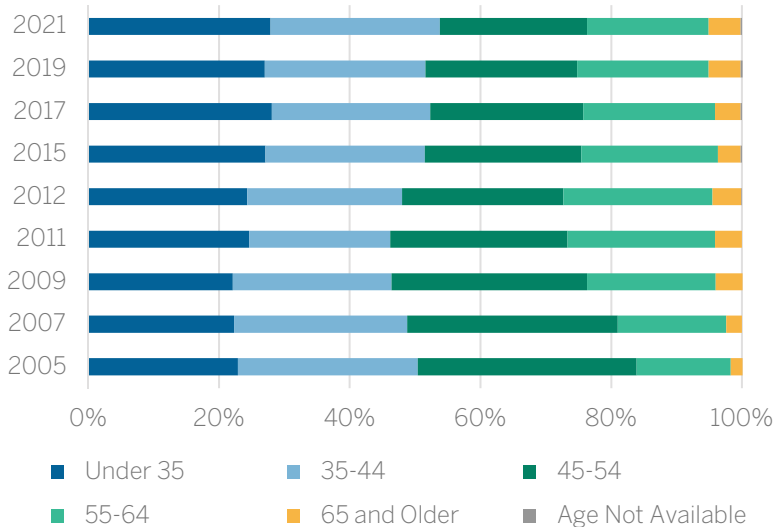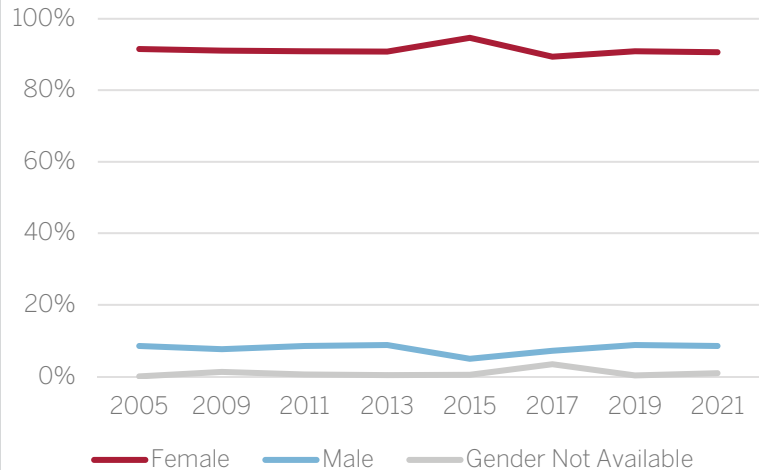
APPENDIX

TOTAL REGISTERED NURSE WORKFORCE

Table 1.1A Registered Nurse Demographic Characteristics

Registered Nurses	1997		2001		2005		2007		2009	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	38,721		45,615		43,161		48,543		50,682	
Sex										
Female	36,572	94.5	43,192	94.7	40,619	94.1	-	-	46,946	92.6
Male	1,403	3.6	1,951	4.3	2,182	5.1	-	-	2,534	5
Gender Not Available	746	1.9	472	1	360	0.8	-	-	1,202	2.4
Age										
Under 35	-	-	-	-	9,782	22.9	10,828	22.3	11,152	22.1
35-44	-	-	-	-	11,761	27.5	12,847	26.5	12,295	24.3
45-54	-	-	-	-	14,312	33.5	15,636	32.2	15,113	29.9
55-64	-	-	-	-	6,150	14.4	8,050	16.6	9.951	19.7
65 and Older	-	-	-	-	766	1.8	1,182	2.4	2,048	4.1
Age Not Available	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethnicity										
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	418	1.1	555	1.3	658	1.5	-	-	739	1.5
Not Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	35,956	92.9	40,723	89.2	42,014	97.3	-	-	44,127	87.1
Non-Respondents	2,347	6	4,337	9.5	4,337	1.2	-	-	5,816	11.4
Race										
White	36,653	94.7	42,650	93.5	40,373	93.5	-	-	46,060	90.9
Asian	378*	1*	453*	1*	492*	1.1*	-	-	681*	1.4*
Black or African American	1,011	2.6	1,344	2.9	1,233	2.9	-	-	1,632	3.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	68	0.2	73	0.2	93	0.2	-	-	146	0.3
Other	326	0.8	319	0.7	476	1.1	-	-	628	1.2
Multiracial	-	-	155	0.3	210	0.5	-	-	-	-
Non-Respondents	285	0.7	621	1.4	284	0.7	-	-	1,535	3

Note: * Asian and Pacific Islander demographics combined

Source: Indiana Registered Nurse License and Supplemental Data Survey, 1997-2009

Table 1.1B Registered Nurse Demographic Characteristics

Registered Nurses	2011		2013		2015		2017		2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	53,591		53,125		67,554		69,685		81,539		81,911	
Sex												
Female	49,628	92.6	49,537	93.4	63,045	93.3	59,337	85.2	75,090	92.1	73,991	90.3
Male	2,838	5.3	3,285	6.2	3,967	5.9	3,826	5.5	5,461	6.7	5,773	7
Gender Not Available	1,125	2.1	313	0.4	542	0.8	6,522	9.3	988	1	2,147	2.6
Age												
Under 35	13,178	24.6	12,932	24.3	18,329	27.1	19,565	28.1	21,997	27	22,823	27.9
35-44	11,556	21.6	12,616	23.7	16,477	24.4	16,898	24.2	20,067	24.6	21,246	25.9
45-54	14,486	27.1	13,139	24.7	16,170	23.9	16,287	23.4	18,883	23.2	18,456	22.5
55-64	12,067	22.6	12,093	22.8	14,097	20.9	14,073	20.2	16,369	20.1	15,203	18.6
65 and Older	2,192	4.1	2,315	4.4	2,379	3.5	2,719	3.9	3,998	4.9	3,993	4.9
Age Not Available	-	-	40	0.1	102	0.2	143	0.2	225	0.3	190	0.2
Ethnicity												
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	889	1.7	787	1.5	1,421	2.1	1,715	2.5	2,343	2.9	2,954	3.6
Not Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	49,700	92.7	52,338**	98.5	65,068	96.3	67,424	96.8	79,196	97.1	78,957	96.4
Non-Respondents	3,002	5.6	-	-	1,065	1.6	546	0.8	-	-	-	-
Race												
White	48,980	91.4	48,479	91.3	61,834	92	63,190	90.7	73,769	90.5	73,180	89.3
Asian	689*	1.3*	683	1.3	804	1.2	951	1.4	1,377	1.7	1,568	1.9
Black or African American	1,758	3.3	2,086	3.9	2,656	3.9	2,925	4.2	4,103	5	4,158	5.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	76	0.1	51	0.1	50	0.1	45	0.1	100	0.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	111	0.2	118	0.2	103	0.2	112	0.2	136	0.2	160	0.2
Other	-	-	-	-	850	1.3	919	1.3	1,154	1.4	1,486	1.8
Multiracial	564	1.1	-	-	668	1	760	1.1	955	1.2	1,041	1.3
Non-Respondents	1,489	2.7	1,683	3.2	588	0.9	778	1.1	-	-	218	0.3

Note: * Asian and Pacific Islander demographics combined ; ** Race and ethnicity were combined in reporting year 2013

Source: Indiana Registered Nurse License and Supplemental Data Survey, 2011-2019

ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES

Table 1.2A Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Demographic Characteristics

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses	2005		2007		2009		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	1,888		2,123		2,471		3,226	
Sex								
Female	1,727	91.5	-	-	2,252	91.1	2,931	90.9
Male	161	8.5	-	-	188	7.6	274	8.5
Gender Not Available	-	-	-	-	31	1.3	21	0.6
Age								
Under 35	239	13.8	301	14.2	290	11.7	522	16.2
35-44	499	28.9	568	26.6	622	25.2	776	24.1
45-54	697	40.4	823	38.8	893	36.1	1,040	32.3
55-64	269	15.6	391	13.7	566	22.9	762	23.6
65 and Older	22	1.3	40	1.9	96	3.9	122	3.8
Age Not Available	-	-	-	-	4	0.2	-	-
Ethnicity								
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	34	1.8	-	-	49	2	53	1.6
Not Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	1,849	98.2	-	-	2,245	90.9	3,090	95.8
Non-Respondents	-	-	-	-	177	7.1	83	2.6
Race								
White	1,805	95.5	-	-	2,265	91.7	2,987	92.6
Asian	17*	0.9*	-	-	32*	1.3*	55*	1.7*
Black or African American	36	1.9	-	-	73	3	94	2.9
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	0.2	-	-	8	0.3	8	0.2
Other	24	1.3	-	-	21	0.8	-	-
Multiracial	3	0.2	-	-	-	-	34	1.1
Non-Respondents	-	-	-	-	72	2.9	48	1.5

Note: * Asian and Pacific Islander demographics combined

Source: Indiana Registered Nurse License and Supplemental Data Survey, 2005-2013

Table 1.2B Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Demographic Characteristics

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses	2013		2015		2017		2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	2,876		3,363		5,238		7,746		9,431	
Sex										
Female	2,610	90.8	3,183	94.6	4,685	89.4	7,039	90.9	8,541	90.6
Male	253	8.8	165	4.9	376	7.2	683	8.8	799	8.5
Gender Not Available	13	0.4	15	0.5	177	3.4	24	0.3	91	0.9
Age										
Under 35	406	14.1	690	20.5	1,184	22.6	1,666	21.5	2,067	21.9
35-44	735	25.6	865	25.7	1,549	29.6	2,479	32	3,303	35
45-54	814	28.3	926	27.5	1,257	24	1,911	24.7	2,268	24
55-64	763	26.5	745	22.2	1,022	19.5	1,349	17.4	1,388	14.7
65 and Older	158	5.5	137	4.1	223	4.3	327	4.2	391	4.1
Age Not Available	-	-	-	-	3	0.1	14	0.2	14	0.1
Ethnicity										
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	40	1.4	60	1.8	109	2.1	189	2.4	276	2.9
Not Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish	2,836*	98.6	3,265	97.1	5,076	96.9	7,557	97.6	9,155	97.1
Non-Respondents	-	-	-	-	53	1	-	-	-	-
Race										
White	2,643	93.1	3,107	92.4	4,760	90.9	7,034	90.8	8,440	89.5
Asian	41	1.4	33	1	65	1.2	125	1.6	151	1.6
Black or African American	99	3.5	114	3.4	200	3.8	367	4.7	491	5.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	6	0.2	2	0.1	4	0.1	9	0.1	15	0.2
American Indian or Alaska Native	9	0.3	2	0.1	9	0.2	9	0.1	16	0.2
Other	-	-	37	1.1	70	1.3	124	1.6	180	1.9
Multiracial	-	-	37	1.1	51	1	78	1	117	1.2
Non-Respondents	78	1.5	31	0.9	79	1.5	-	-	21	0.2

Note: * Race and ethnicity were combined in reporting year 2013

Source: Indiana Registered Nurse License and Supplemental Data Survey, 2015-2019

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

A Longitudinal Assessment of Diversity in Indiana's Health Workforce: Registered Nurses. (2023). Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy. Indiana University School of Medicine.

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