



ABN E-NEWS

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter \(@AlBoardNsg\)](#)

November 2016

Volume 3, Number 4

Alabama Board of Nursing
770 Washington Avenue
Suite 250
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
(334) 293-5200
(800) 656-5318
Fax: (334) 293-5201
www.abn.alabama.gov

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 303900
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-3900

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Peggy Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC
Executive Officer

Honor L. Ingels
Chief Government and Public Affairs Officer

BOARD MEMBERS:

Francine Parker, EdD, MSN, RN
President

E. Laura Wright, PhD, MNA, CRNA
Vice-President

Gladys Hill, MSN, RN
Secretary

Cheryl Bailey, RN, MBA

Natalie Baker, DNP, CRNP

Marie Melissa Bullard, LPN

Peggie Carpenter, BA, LPN

Valorie Dearmon, DNP, MSN, BSN

Jill B. Hightower, RN, MSN

Chrystabell King, LPN

Helen T. McAlpine, EdD

LaDonna McDonnell, LPN, WCC, DWC

2016 RN Regular Renewal is Coming to a Close

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC
ABN Executive Officer

Regular Renewal for RNs ends November 30 and our numbers are a bit ahead of the usual pace. However, I want to share a few reminders for those of us who haven't found the time to renew our licenses.

1—License cards have been discontinued and replaced with permanent continuing education (CE) cards for each RN and LPN with a valid license in the state. As the CE cards never expire, ABN will not be issuing new cards upon renewal. Just hold onto the card you received from us during the transition away from license cards. It will remain in force.

2 – Effective March 24, 2016, evidence of all CE hours earned from sources other than ABN-approved providers (ABNPs) must be uploaded and recorded in the Individual CE Record under My Profile on the ABN website. ABNPs will continue to record your CE hours for you; you should NEVER attempt to add CE hours earned from ABNPs to My Profile, as this will produce duplicate and corrupted records.

3—A number of changes were made to the Chapter 10 of the ABN Administrative Code, which governs the way that you earn and record CE. We encourage all nurses to review Chapter 10 to ensure that you are in compliance and prepared for Renewal.

Please note that, while Renewal remains open until midnight on November 30, the Board offices close at 4:30 p.m. Central Time. Staff will not be available to assist you after that time.

Late Renewal will be available through the month of December, **but incurs a \$150.00 Late Renewal fee**, in addition to your license fee of \$75.00 and transaction fee of \$3.50. We strongly encourage you to complete your renewal during the Regular Renewal period, in order to avoid the unnecessary expense to you.

RENEWAL 2015 LPN DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

Mary Ed Davis, DNP, MSN, RN

Director—Research

The following is excerpted from a report presented to the Alabama Board of Nursing.

Examining demographic information about nurses is necessary for determining future workforce needs. The Alabama Board of Nursing has incorporated questions into renewal applications for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Registered Nurses (RNs), collaborating with the Alabama Health Action Coalition (AL-HAC) in determining content. The demographic questions included on LPN renewal applications in 2015 incorporate the questions from the National Nursing Workforce Survey of Registered Nurses, a collaboration between the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and the Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers (FSNWC).

The original National Workforce Survey of Registered Nurses contained some questions not applicable to LPNs. Additionally, the format for answers in the original survey is not appropriate for an on-line format and were labor intensive to analyze.

In 2015, 15,300 LPNs submitted renewal applications. Not all LPNs answered all the questions in the demographics section, however.

Gender: As expected, the overwhelming majority of LPNs in Alabama are female.

| Gender | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| Male | 745 | 5.02 |
| Female | 14,108 | 92.2 |
| No response | 447 | 2.9 |

Ethnicity: The largest ethnic group represented in Alabama is White/Caucasian, with 61.2%. Black/African American is the second largest represented ethnic group, with 32.2%. Other ethnic groups comprised 2.2% of the LPNs responding, with 4.5% providing no answer.

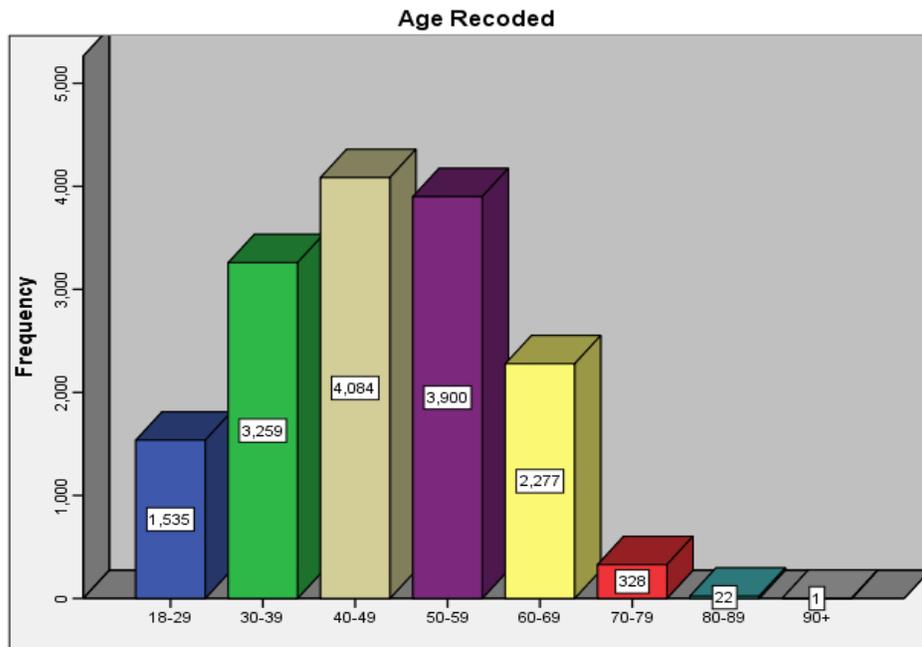
| Category | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 91 | 0.6 |
| Asian | 60 | 0.4 |
| Black/African American | 4924 | 32.2 |
| Native Hawai'ian/Pacific Islander | 8 | 0.1 |
| White/Caucasian | 9357 | 61.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 92 | 0.6 |
| Other | 85 | 0.6 |
| No response | 683 | 4.5 |

Continued on Page 3

RENEWAL 2015 LPN DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

(continued from Page 2)

Age: The nurse was asked to fill in a text box with the year of birth. The information was grouped into eight ranges.



The group for 40 through 49 years of age has the largest number of LPNs, with 4,084. Excluding nurses 70 years old or older, the group for 18 through 29 years of age is the smallest, with 1,535.

Free CE Offerings Available Through the Alabama Nursing Resource Center

LaDonna Patton, MSN, RN, CEN
Director—ANRC

In October 2016, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) made two (2) of its most popular courses on Substance Use Disorder free to nurses and nursing students. These courses provide valuable and timely continuing education for the nursing profession during this time of Opioid Crisis in Alabama as well as nationally. These courses are available here:

[Understanding Substance Use Disorder](#)

[Nurse Manager Guidelines for Substance Use Disorder](#)

Also in response to the increased awareness of opioid use and abuse in and among the healthcare professions, the ABN welcomed Dr. Jerry Harrison, MD, President-Elect of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA) to its July Meeting. Dr. Harrison's presentation was recorded and is also available for nursing CE on the ABN website. To access the presentation for CE, please see the ABN course, [Opioid Pearls and Pitfalls](#).

Continued on Page 5

Easing Regulatory Burdens for Alabama Nurses

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC

When the Alabama Board of Nursing first adopted its New Direction nearly two years ago, one of our principle goals was to identify and eliminate as many unnecessary obstacles to nursing practice as possible, while staying true to the Board's primary mission—protection of the public. I am pleased to report that we have made tremendous progress in this area and the results have been fantastic. A brief recap of some of our accomplishments:

Licensure: Several years ago, the Board elected to go to 100% online licensing. While we have had some growing pains over the years, I can say with confidence that our Licensing Management System (LMS) is second to none. We now maintain a 1.2-day average turnaround on new licensees, provided that the applications are complete and in order (no "Yes" answers on regulatory questions, which require further analysis by Board staff).

Continuing Education (CE): Roughly coinciding with the launch of the Board's new website in March of this year, we began allowing CE documentation to be uploaded directly to each nurse's online CE record in the LMS database. This process not only eases the audit process for nurses; it also speeds up licensure by endorsement and renewal for every licensee.

In addition, we continue to work on new and updated free CE courses, which are available through the Alabama Nursing Resource Center (ANRC) on the Board's website, with the ultimate goal of offering over 24 hours of free CE to every Alabama nurse.

Streamlining the Standard Formulary for CRNPs and CNMs: In concert with the Joint Committee for Advanced Practice Nursing and the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners, we have consolidated to a single Standard Formulary for legend drugs, regardless of the specialty of the nurse. Controlled substances remain under the purview of the ALBME, which issues the Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate (QACSC) for CRNPs and CNMs.

A Sensible Approach to Discipline: Over the past few years, the Board has analyzed its guidelines for discipline, which frame the penalties and fines which are imposed when a nurse is found to have violated Board rules. I feel that we have made tremendous progress in ensuring that we uphold the highest standards for public protection and for a system that is just and fair to licensees. While only a very small percentage of Alabama's nursing population ever encounters the Board's disciplinary process, we feel that it is one of our most crucial functions and should be conducted in the most efficient and least burdensome manner possible. Toward this end, the Board continues to explore new approaches to both the disciplinary process and to the way that older discipline is reported on a nurse's public record.

For all the progress we've made on the regulatory front, there is always room for improvement and maintaining open and inviting avenues of engagement with licensees and the public is vital to continued growth and development for everyone. As we move forward, we welcome everyone's feedback. Please follow us on social media and feel free to contact the Board office with any questions or concerns.



KRATOM Use on the Rise

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC

The Alabama Legislature passed a law in May of this year making this drug a Schedule I controlled substance. Abuse of this substance is rising throughout the US and the ABN has begun to identify the abuse of Kratom in licensees currently under monitoring.

Addiction may be accompanied by loss of sexual desire, weight loss, and darkening of the skin on the face and, of course, strong cravings that compel more use of the drug. Effects set in quickly after the drug has been taken and may last for five or more hours. A higher dose may last longer. The drug can be ingested, drunk as a tea, or smoked. The dried or undried leaves may be chewed.

There are also more serious signs and symptoms of Kratom abuse. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) notes that some people have suffered from periods of psychosis, including hallucinations, aggression, hostility, and confusion.

The DEA has seen enough of the drug to issue an official drug data sheet to educate law enforcement personnel. Signs and symptoms of Kratom abuse are as follows:

| Low Doses of Kratom | Higher Doses of Kratom | Overdoses of Kratom |
|---|---|---|
| Increased Alertness Higher Energy Levels Talkativeness Increased Sociability Ability to tolerate tedious tasks Some people may get edgy or nervous | Insensitivity to Physical Pain Insensitivity to Emotional Pain Constricted Pupils Nausea Vomiting Itching Sweating Dreaminess Sudden Sleepiness | Delusions Lethargy Respiratory Depression Shakiness Aggressive or Combative Behavior Paranoia Severe Nausea |

Free CE Offerings Available Through the Alabama Nursing Resource Center (Continued from Page 3)

Additional CE courses added to the ABN website on the ANRC webpage in the recent months include:

[A Century of Nursing in Alabama](#)

[MedEd Free CE compliments of Alabama Eye Bank](#)

[CDC: Health Literacy](#)

[NIH Safe to Sleep Curriculum](#)

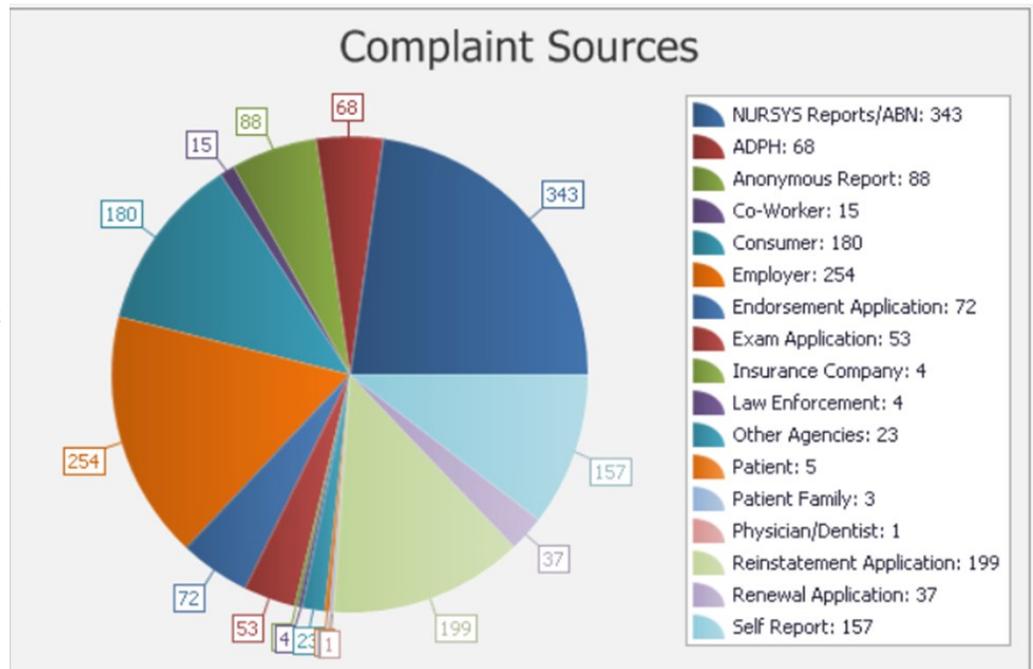
[Advanced Regional Response Training Center Courses](#)

The ABN Discipline Process

Honor L. Ingels

Chief Public Affairs Officer

A central component of the Board's New Direction is our continuing effort to educate licensees, the public, and other public officials about the investigation and discipline processes for Alabama nurses. The figure at right reflects the sources of complaints received by ABN during Fiscal Year 2016. It should be noted that FY 2016 statistics reflect a large number of new cases as a result of ABN's joining Nursys®.



A Nurse's Life Song

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC

I recently was listening to a song and realized that the life and work of a nurse is so much of a "Life Song." Everyday nurses sing a song woven into the intricacies of daily life through their work. So I ask these Questions: are you in tune with your life song? Does it resonate healing, care, and compassion? Does it provide peace and understanding to others? Does it build harmony when others do not? Nursing is a giving profession and our oath calls for us to be more than common and we are more than common based on the very nature of our profession. The pledge below was penned by Florence Nightingale all those years ago, to remind us and guide us in the life song we sing.

The Nightingale Pledge

I solemnly pledge myself before God and presence of this assembly;

To pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully.

*I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous
and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.*

*I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard
of my profession and will hold in confidence all personal matters
committed to my keeping and family affairs coming to my
knowledge in the practice of my calling.*

*With loyalty will I endeavor to aid the physician in his work,
and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care.*