

New survey unveils significant impact of COVID-19 on the future of nursing

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Cross Country Healthcare, Inc., a leading provider of advisory and workforce solutions, including contingent staffing, permanent placement and other consultative services for healthcare clients, today announced the results from a nationally represented survey of nurses and nursing students showing that the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced long-lasting negative perceptions of their future careers. The survey, conducted in partnership with Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, identifies root causes of the current stressors among healthcare professionals and provides actionable areas to help improve nursing satisfaction, career outlook and mental well-being.

The survey reports that nearly 37 percent of nurses identify as being burned out, stressed and/or overworked. The [poll results](#) further reveal that only 32 percent of nurses are very/completely satisfied with their occupation, compared to 52 percent prior to the pandemic. Moreover, 29 percent of nurses say their desire to leave the profession is dramatically higher now versus pre-pandemic, noting the nursing shortage and inadequate staffing levels as top contributors to the low satisfaction. 66 percent of nurses expressed some level of consideration to leave the profession, signaling long-term impacts on our health system post-pandemic.

"On one hand, this research shows us that the pressures for nurses under COVID-19 are significant and likely long-lasting," said Henry 'Hank' Drummond, Ph.D., MDiv, BA, RN, senior vice president, chief clinical officer at Cross Country Healthcare. "On the other hand, the data is very clear in outlining specific areas that we can improve, and Cross Country Healthcare is making every effort to support our nurses by addressing these challenges."

The survey also pinpointed areas of change that nurses believe would positively affect the profession. These include incorporating new staffing approaches and increasing wages. For instance, 97 percent of polled participants agree, and 81 percent completely agree, that increases to pay rates and other incentives would attract and retain nurses. More than half (58 percent) agree that telehealth should be a cornerstone of care delivery and 85 percent believe that we must improve cross training to adapt to crisis events. Additionally, the majority of nurses (85 percent) strongly believe national licensure, a multistate license that would allow nurses to practice across state lines, would have greatly benefited the country during the pandemic.

"Our nurses are the backbone of the healthcare system and if too many leave or decide not to pursue a career in nursing, the consequences would be catastrophic," said Safiya George, Ph.D., APRN-BC, FAANP, dean & professor at Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing. "Our nurses need solutions, many of them outlined in this research, that will ease burnout and reduce stress, as well as help them enjoy long-term and satisfying careers."

Cross Country Healthcare has long provided mental health outlets to its [healthcare professionals](#). Specifically, during the pandemic Cross Country Healthcare launched a dedicated mental health hotline and offered a licensed clinical social worker so that employees and clinicians can safely and openly express their emotions and have an immediate resource for assistance.

"Having recently worked in the hospital setting, I can tell you how difficult this time has been for nurses and other [healthcare](#) staff," said Michael Skovira, MBA, MPAS, PA-C, chief medical officer, Locums Operations at Cross Country Healthcare. "These findings reinforce the importance of our existing resources and will help our organization design novel and informed long-term support solutions for our valued

nurses."

More about the survey

The survey, conducted in partnership between Cross Country Healthcare and Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, collected 570 responses between May and June of 2021. The results showcase a robust and comprehensive audit of the new post-pandemic landscape of nursing from the perspective of current nurses and nursing students.

Provided by Florida Atlantic University

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