

# Barriers and Facilitators for LPN-to-RN Transitions: Perspectives from Practicing LPNs

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**Objectives:** Examine barriers and facilitators of LPN-to-RN transitions.

**Data/Setting:** Secondary analysis of data gathered in 2015 by the North Carolina Foundation for Nursing Excellence (NCFFNE). Over 3,400 LPNs (18% of licensed LPNs) responded to the survey.

**Design/Methods:** Qualitative content analysis of open-ended questions provided information on LPNs' interest in pursuing an LPN-to-RN transition, the barriers to pursuing a transition, and information about educational goals and transition opportunities. Responses were used to characterize barriers and facilitators.

**Results:** 70% of survey respondents were over the age of 40; 42% worked in home health, hospice, or long-term care/assisted living. About 75% were interested in pursuing a LPN-to-RN transition. The nature of transitions were characterized by LPNs' life stage and their health; barriers reflected LPNs' views of academic programs, employers, and their personal perspectives about the transition and the RN role. "Modifiable" facilitators of LPN-to-RN transitions were identified in these areas.

**Conclusions:** LPNs who become RNs possess human capital from previous work experience, understand the unique pressures that accompany patient care delivery, and are more diverse than RNs. Institutions must recognize the value of LPNs on the care team. Efforts to improve and value the work of both LPNs and RNs may foster LPN-to-RN transitions.

**Key Words:** LPN workforce, LPN-to-RN transition, nursing career ladder, RN workforce

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