EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Among ANA’s top goals are promoting a safe and ethical work environment, ensuring optimal nurse staffing for safe and high-quality patient care, and improving the health and wellness of nurses. The HRA helps establish a baseline to determine whether these goals are being achieved and where improvements are needed.

Overall, the majority of participants said they feel positive about their workplace health and safety conditions. Yet they indicated there is room for improvement. Participants’ top perceived risk was overwhelmingly workplace stress. They expressed concern about the risk of injury from lifting and repositioning patients or equipment. Bullying and incivility in the workplace are prevalent, as are physical assaults by patients or their family members. Many participants reported heavy workloads that often necessitate working outside scheduled work hours to complete tasks, such as arriving early to work and/or staying late.

The majority of participants are above their ideal weight range for their height. A significant personal safety risk identified is distracted driving, such as texting or talking on the phone while driving. On the positive side, most participants said they had access to worksite wellness and health promotion programs, and a very low percentage said they smoke cigarettes.

This summary contains preliminary highlights and key findings from the American Nurses Association’s (ANA) Health Risk Appraisal (HRA). It is a snapshot of registered nurse (RN) and student nurse participants’ responses received between October 2013 and October 2014. The results cannot be generalized to the broader nursing workforce. Data will be analyzed periodically as long as the HRA is active and open to participants.
Background

Substantive research studies that address the multitude of unique health, safety and wellness risks that RNs and nursing students face are limited. While general population health and wellness data and gender-specific data such as those found in the Harvard Nurses’ Health Study are accessible, RN and student nurse-specific studies are not readily available.

The HRA, an online interactive health-focused survey, was developed as a collaborative initiative between ANA and Pfizer Inc to address this gap in nursing data. ANA set four aims in developing the HRA:

1) Identify personal and professional role-related health, safety and wellness risks.
2) Compare individual results to known national averages or ideal standards.
3) Provide access for survey participants to an interactive Web wellness portal.
4) Build a nurse-specific personal and occupational health risk database.

To meet these goals, ANA conducted a review of the literature, consulted with subject matter experts and engaged a research group to develop the survey questions and metrics. The national averages and ideal standards used as comparison data came from evidence-based sources, including Healthy People 2020, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, and Health Indicators Warehouse.

The HRA is divided into three categories:

1) Demographics
2) Healthy work environment
3) Health/safety/wellness

The HRA was successfully launched and open to RNs and nursing students in late 2013. In October 2014, ANA commissioned the LCWA Research Group to conduct a preliminary analysis of the HRA data. More than 5,000 surveys were completed between Oct. 7, 2013, and Oct. 13, 2014. After incomplete and duplicate surveys were removed, 3,765 completed participant surveys were analyzed.
Demographics of the participants

- **RN status** — 90% were registered nurses, 8% were nursing students
- **Gender** — 93% were female, 7% were male
- **Race** — 88% White, 6% Black or African-American, 4% Asian, 3% Hispanic or Latino, 2% American Indian or Alaskan, 1% Other, and less than 1% identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- **Education in nursing** — Baccalaureate degree, 32%; master’s degree, 22%; associate degree, 17%; doctoral degree, 5%; diploma, 3%
- **Top employment status** — 86% are actively employed in nursing
- **Marital status** — 67% are married or in a domestic partnership
- **Top-listed work settings** — 23% work in a hospital, 16% in acute care, 13% in academia
- **Top percentage of years as a registered nurse** — 19% have worked 31-40 years
- **Largest percentage of ANA organizational affiliate participants** — 11%, American Association of Critical Care Nurses
- **Largest percentage of ANA state nurses association participants** — 4%, Texas Nurses Association
**Healthy work environment**

### Occupational Health

- **80% or more** responded favorably about their workplace health and safety, though lower percentages indicated they assist with safety planning and selecting the appropriate technology.

- Workplace stress was identified as the top work environment health and safety risk (**82%** said they are at a “significant level of risk for workplace stress”).

- **42%** of participants ranked lifting/repositioning of heavy objects as a significant health and safety risk for nurses.

- **Approximately three-quarters** have access to safe patient handling and mobility technology.

- **Student nurses and older RNs (ages 50-68)** were more likely to use safe patient handling and mobility equipment.

- **More than half** report experiencing musculoskeletal pain at work.

- **Up to half** had been bullied in some manner in the workplace.

- **Almost one-quarter** had been physically assaulted at work.

- **Nearly 10%** were concerned for their physical safety at work.

### Work Environment Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to wellness health promotion programs</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don’t Know/Not Sure/Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco free</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to healthy food choices (e.g., fruits, vegetables, whole grains)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to employer-based exercise facilities and programs</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to nutrition and weight management classes and counseling</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to employer-sponsored health promotion activities</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The price for healthy food choices is comparable to the price of other food choices.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The price for healthy food choices is comparable to the price of other food choices.
**Occupational Health cont.**

- **About 60%** reported working through their breaks and coming in early and/or staying late to accomplish their work.

- **One-third** said they had often been assigned a higher workload than they were comfortable with.

- **More than half** of the participants reported that their usual scheduled shift length was 10 hours or longer.

**Worksite Wellness**

- **Almost 90%** reported that their place of employment is tobacco-free.

- **Almost 70%** had access to worksite wellness health promotion programs.

- **Less than 60%** indicated they had access to healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables or whole grains during their work hours.

---

**Work Environment Health & Safety Risk Results**

- **Workplace stress**
  - 82%

- **Lifting/repositioning heavy objects**
  - 42%

- **Prolonged standing**
  - 37%

- **Needlesticks and other sharps injuries**
  - 35%

- **Blood-borne pathogens**
  - 33%

- **Infectious disease agents**
  - 30%

- **Slips, trips and falls**
  - 28%

- **Violence at work**
  - 21%

- **Poor indoor air quality**
  - 18%

- **Noise level**
  - 17%

- **Latex allergens**
  - 15%

- **Work-related injury**
  - 14%

- **Debilitating musculoskeletal injury**
  - 13%

- **High level disinfectants**
  - 11%
Participants’ health, safety & wellness

Health

- **Almost 90%** responded affirmatively to “Do you feel well today?”

- **Most** receive the routine care and screenings recommended for their age.

- **80%** received the seasonal flu vaccine in the past 12 months.

- The average body mass index (BMI) for respondents was **28**, which is in the “overweight” category.

- **34%** reported being diagnosed by their health care provider with lower back pain.

Wellness

- **About 20%** eat five or more servings of fruits or vegetables per day, and **35%** eat three or more servings of whole grains daily.

- **More than half** go out to eat two or fewer times a week.

- **The majority** drink 35 ounces or less of sugar-sweetened beverages weekly.

- **94%** do not smoke cigarettes at all. Of those who do smoke, **56%** are actively trying to quit.

- On average, participants sleep **eight hours** in a 24-hour period.

Safety

- **Almost 90%** used sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.

- **8%** had used an artificial UV light to tan in the past year.

- Participants said they had engaged in distracted driving behaviors somewhat frequently, including talking on the phone (60%), eating while driving (53%), and texting while driving (16%).
This project is being conducted in collaboration with Pfizer Inc.