BACKGROUND

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. Substantive research studies that address the multitude of unique health, safety, and wellness risks that registered nurses 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, registered nurse and student nurse-specific health and wellness 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 had four main goals in developing the HRA:

• Respondents would identify personal and professional role-related health, safety, and wellness risks.
• Respondents would compare their individual results to known national averages and ideal standards.
• Respondents would link to an interactive web wellness portal to access further information and resources.
• Respondents’ results would build a nurse-specific personal and occupational health risk and prevalence aggregated 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, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, and Health Indicators Warehouse.

The HRA was divided into three categories:
1. Demographics,
2. Healthy Work Environment, and
3. Health/safety/wellness
**KEY FINDINGS**

**DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

- **REGISTERED NURSE STATUS**: 82% were registered nurses, 17% were nursing students
- **GENDER**: 92% were female, 8% were male
- **TOP EMPLOYMENT STATUS**: 80% were actively employed in nursing
- **MARITAL STATUS**: 60% were married or in a domestic partnership
- **TOP PERCENTAGE OF YEARS AS A REGISTERED NURSE**: 19% were in their first 1-5 years

**RACE**
- 86% White
- 7% African American
- 4% Hispanic/Latino
- 2% American Indian
- 4% Other

**EDUCATION IN NURSING**
- 31% Baccalaureate
- 18% Masters
- 4% Doctoral
- 3% Diploma
- 18% Associates
- 4% Diploma

**TOP LISTED WORK SETTINGS**
- 22% worked in a hospital
- 18% in acute care
- 13% in academia
HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT

**Occupational Safety**

- **90%** responded that they are familiar with their workplace’s written safety guidelines and policies.
- **80%** felt that their employer valued their health and safety.
- **78%** felt treated with dignity and respect.

- **86%** reported that their place of employment is tobacco free.
- **67%** had access to worksite wellness health promotion programs.
- **56%** indicated they had access to healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, or whole grains during their work hours.

- **82%** said they are at a “significant level of risk for workplace stress.”

- **45%** of respondents ranked lifting/repositioning of heavy objects as a significant health and safety risk for nurses.
- **73%** had access to safe patient handling and mobility technology.
- Only **51%** used that technology every time they transferred or moved a patient.

- **51%** reported experiencing musculoskeletal pain at work.

- **56-57%** reported often coming in early and/or staying late and working through their breaks to accomplish their work.

- **25%** had been physically assaulted at work by a patient or patient’s family member; **9%** were concerned for their physical safety at work.

- **33%** said they had often been assigned a higher workload than that with which they were comfortable.

- **93%** reported access to sharps safety devices.
- **86%** used these safety devices all the time.
- **30%** were involved in their selection and evaluation.

**Worksite Wellness**

- **86%** reported that their place of employment is tobacco free.
- **67%** had access to worksite wellness health promotion programs.
- **56%** indicated they had access to healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, or whole grains during their work hours.

- **59%** of respondents reported that they worked 10 hours or longer daily.
- **1/2** About half of the respondents had been bullied in some manner in the workplace.

- **10** HR

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HEALTH/SAFETY/WELLNESS

HEALTH

- 89% responded affirmatively to “Do you feel well today?”
- About three-quarters received routine checkups and dental care within the past year
- 91% received the seasonal flu vaccine in the past 12 months
- 43% of those that qualified for the pneumococcal vaccine received it
- The average body mass index (BMI) for respondents was 27.6, which was in the “overweight” category
- Allergies (44%) and lower back pain (31%) were the most commonly diagnosed medical conditions among respondents

SAFETY

- 88% used sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher
- About 11% had used an artificial UV light to tan in the past year
- Talking on the phone was the most frequently identified distracted driving behavior

WELLNESS

- Only 16% ate five or more servings of fruits or vegetables per day, and 35% ate 3 or more whole grain servings
- 48% of respondents did muscle strengthening activities two or more days per week
- 58% went out to eat two or fewer times a week
- 85% drank 35 ounces or less of sugar-sweetened beverages weekly
- 94% did not smoke cigarettes at all, and of those who did smoke, 56% were actively trying to quit
- On average, respondents slept seven hours in a 24-hour period

Nurses and nursing students face unique hazards in the workplace and multiple health, safety, and wellness risks in their personal lives.

The results of the HRA show there is room for improvement in nurses’ health, particularly with physical activity, nutrition, rest, safety, and quality of life. Effective workplace programs are still needed for wellness, safe patient handling and mobility, needle stick prevention, workplace violence, stress reduction, and other issues. Nurses need to be involved in the planning and implementation of these programs as well as in the selection of safety devices. As seen by the fact that 68 percent of the nurses reported putting the health, safety, and wellness of their patients before their own, now is the time to educate nurses and employers on the importance of nurse self-care. Nurses give the best care to patients when they are operating at their own peak wellness.

ANA’s Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation(TM) Grand Challenge, is a nationwide movement, designed to transform the health of the nation by improving the health of the nation’s 3.8 million registered nurses, offers a health survey, discussion boards, blogs, mini-challenges, and more to connect nurses and partner organizations to take action in nutrition, physical activity, rest, quality of life, and safety.

Learn more and accept the challenge today at www.healthynursehealthynation.org.
This project was conducted in collaboration with Pfizer Inc.