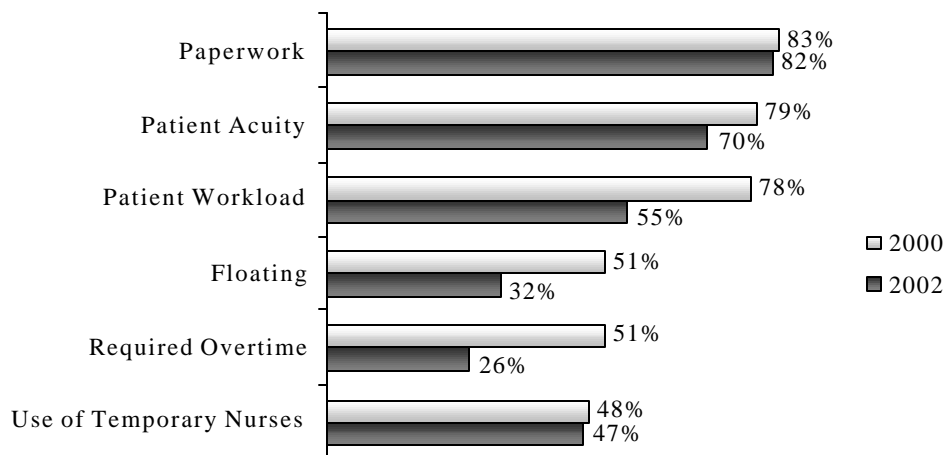


Work Environment

Figure 8
Work Environment and Staffing Practices
(Percentages Reporting Increases from Previous Year)



- Since 2000:
 - a. Less floating and less use of LVNs, UAPs.
 - b. More foreign-educated nurses
 - c. More violence against nurses.
- RNs see too little or no relief from paperwork and the use of temporary nurses. Although fewer RNs are reporting increases in patient workload and patient acuity, the issues remain of concern.
- 48% of RNs report an increase in patient turbulence (rapid admission, transfer, and discharge).
- Only 17% of RNs felt that their ability to influence unit or hospital policy had increased.

In Their Own Words:

“I observed large patient loads per nurse, nurses who floated to another unit without adequate preparation, ...low pay for hospital nurses, mandatory “doubles”, and denial of vacation requests due to patient census.”

“My experience is in the emergency departments of hospitals. All were understaffed. Safety to patients and nurses was always a problem. Too much overtime – 12 hour shifts are too long over a prolonged period of time [and may lead] to mistakes and burnout.”

Table 7
Percent Reporting Increases from Previous Year in Selected Staffing Practices and General Institutional Practices, 2002

Survey Question: Please indicate the extent to which the following have increased in your workplace the past year.	TOTAL 801	Rural 103	Metro 672	Border 220	Non-Border 577	Age Cohorts			
						30 & Below 66	31-45 203	46-55 195	56 & Above 105
Staffing: (%)									
RNs required to float to other units/departments	32.3	37.8	31.4	34.4	31.4	37.1	34.4	33.3	21.2
LVNs or nurses aides taking over RN duties	24.8	32.0	23.5	28.6	23.1	31.3	23.0	21.6	26.7
Use of temporary nurses	46.6	39.0	47.7	47.6	46.1	50.5	51.2	44.9	32.8
Use of foreign-prepared nurses	29.6	29.4	29.5	31.8	28.7	30.5	32.6	29.9	21.8
Patient workload	54.7	63.6	53.3	54.7	54.6	56.7	56.6	58.0	43.2
Required overtime	26.4	28.7	25.8	33.3	23.5	28.1	27.8	26.5	22.2
General Institutional Practices: (%)									
Paperwork	82.1	89.3	80.9	79.4	83.0	76.5	83.8	85.6	74.8
Acuity of patients	69.9	71.8	69.5	66.7	71.0	62.2	73.7	74.3	59.7
Violence against nurses	18.7	21.4	18.1	17.6	18.8	16.5	21.7	16.9	15.5
Patient accidents	28.1	31.3	27.5	27.4	28.2	26.8	31.0	27.9	22.9
Harassment by MD	25.3	26.0	24.9	27.6	24.1	33.3	27.8	21.5	17.2
Harassment by patients	36.2	36.7	35.9	31.6	37.7	35.4	40.6	34.2	28.4
Harassment by staff	22.6	24.7	22.0	22.4	22.3	23.7	27.5	19.1	14.4
RN turnover	60.8	60.4	60.8	62.7	60.0	68.0	65.1	59.8	47.0
LVN turnover	30.4	49.5	27.4	33.3	29.2	26.8	32.1	30.3	30.2
Patient turbulence	47.9	47.5	47.7	45.7	48.5	47.4	53.6	44.3	40.5

Some totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Reference for Time Comparisons: [Health and Nurses in Texas: In Their Own Words](#) (Vol. 2, No. 1), Table 10, Page 43. [Health and Nurses in Texas: The Future of Nursing](#) (Vol. 3, No. 1), Table 3.10, Page 3.40.

Work Environment

Figure 9a
Perceiving Risk in the Workplace, 2002

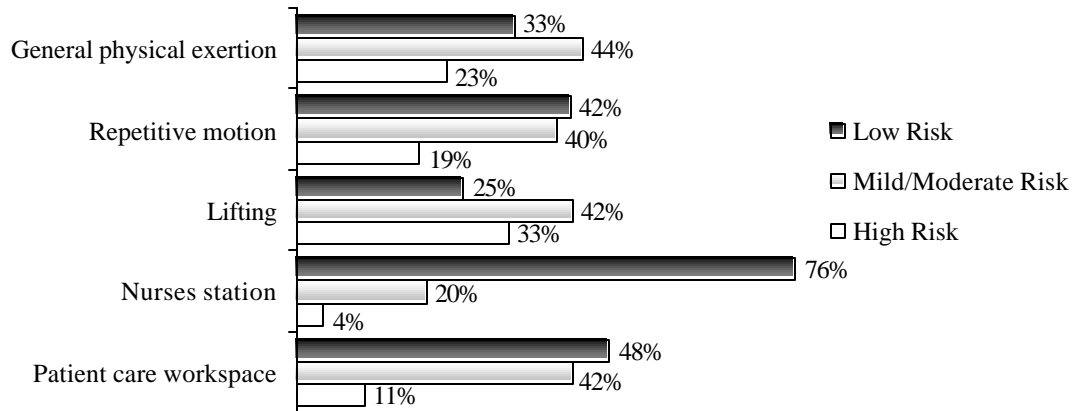
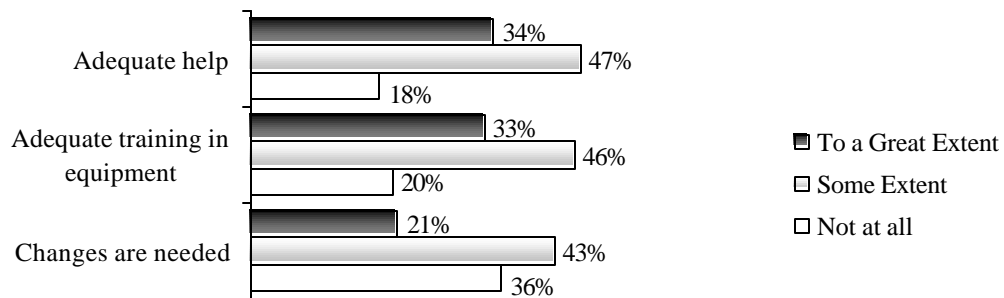


Figure 9b
Perceived Physical Demands in the Workplace, 2002
(Percent of RNs who report...)



- Lifting is the greatest risk.
- Physical exertion was rated “mild/moderate” to “high risk” by 67% of the RNs.
- Only 1/3 of RNs perceived they have adequate help.
- Only 7% of nurse managers indicated that their employers had made changes in the workplace such as part-time scheduling and reducing physical demands to accommodate nurses over 55 (15% of all RNs in Texas are in this age group).

In Their Own Words:

“I recently located in Illinois and began working in my present position as a staff nurse working part-time. I find that here as well as at the hospitals in Texas the work was designed before computers became a part of our work. Workplace design is therefore unhealthy in that ergonomics are inadequate. [I] also find location/delivery of supplies and housekeeping to be problems as well. Yes, pay is important, but so is the workplace environment.”

Table 8.1
Perceived Risk in the Workplace, 2002

Workplace Requirement or Attribute	Low Risk	Mild to Moderate Risk	High Risk
Patient Care Workspace (%)	47.5	42.0	10.5
Nurses' Station (%)	76.1	19.8	4.1
Lifting (%)	25.3	42.2	32.5
Repetitive Motion (%)	41.7	39.6	18.7
General Physical Exertion (%)	33.3	43.7	23.0

Table 8.2
Physical Demands in the Workplace, 2002

Percent Who Agreed	To a Great Extent	Some Extent	Not at All
Changes Are Needed (%)	21.0	43.4	35.6
I Received Adequate Training on Equipment (%)	33.3	46.4	20.3
I Receive Adequate Help (%)	34.4	47.2	18.4

