HIMSS 2014 Nursing Informatics Workforce Survey

Executive Summary

Since 2004, HIMSS has surveyed the nursing informatics community to gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the informatics nurse professional.

The HIMSS 2014 Nursing Informatics Workforce Survey, supported by the HIMSS Nursing Informatics Community, representing 6,000 nurses, builds on previous HIMSS research from 2004, 2007 and 2011. This survey captures current professional status and practice trends while identifying changes that have occurred over the last 9 years in the nursing informatics workforce.

The 2014 survey continues to suggest that nurse informaticists play a crucial role in the development, implementation, and optimization of clinical applications including nursing clinical documentation, computerized practitioner order entry (CPOE) and electronic medical/health records (EMR/EHR). The number of respondents with a post-graduate degree in any field increased by 19 percent from the 2011 survey and the number with a post-graduate degree in nursing informatics or other informatics increased by 24 percent from 2011; suggesting that nurse informaticists have solid backgrounds and experience to bring to their positions. In addition, 43 percent of respondents planned to pursue additional informatics education and training and more than half of the nurse informaticist respondents also indicated that they would be pursuing some type of certification within the next year. While the average salary for nurse informaticists increased from the 2011 survey, the percent increase seen was only a two percent increase in the average salary compared to a 17 percent increase between 2007 and 2011. Lack of administrative support and lack of staffing resources were identified as the top barriers to success as a nurse informaticist.

Other key findings and comparisons to previous surveys include:

Respondents: Close to three-quarters (71 percent) of all survey respondents work at either a hospital (58 percent) or at the corporate offices of a healthcare system (13 percent). Of these respondents, over two-fifths (41 percent) work at a Magnet designated hospital.

Nursing Background: Nearly two-thirds (60 percent) of respondents had a post-graduate degree, which includes a Master’s degree or PhD in nursing or any other field/specialty. More specifically, 43 percent of this year’s respondents had a Master’s degree in nursing or a PhD in nursing, representing an increase from the 36 percent who indicated such in 2011. In terms of the respondents’ clinical experience at the bedside before becoming a nurse informaticist, slightly fewer respondents indicated more than 16 years of experience in 2014 (41 percent) compared to 2011 (46 percent). On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of respondents reporting one to five years of clinical bedside experience from 2011 (12 percent) to 2014 (20 percent). This may suggest that the nursing informatics field continues to grow as a specialty and that there is increasing demand for the role, drawing nurses from the bedside.

Informatics Background: Training and education in informatics continues to advance. Over one-third (37 percent) of the respondents had only on the job informatics training. More specifically, 43 percent of this year’s respondents had a Master’s degree in nursing or a PhD in nursing, representing an increase from the 36 percent who indicated such in 2011. In terms of the respondents’ clinical experience at the bedside before becoming a nurse informaticist, slightly fewer respondents indicated more than 16 years of experience in 2014 (41 percent) compared to 2011 (46 percent). On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of respondents reporting one to five years of clinical bedside experience from 2011 (12 percent) to 2014 (20 percent). This may suggest that the nursing informatics field continues to grow as a specialty and that there is increasing demand for the role, drawing nurses from the bedside.
percent of respondents reported that they were currently enrolled in some type of informatics education or training, either a formal degree program or a non-degree program/course.

**Salary:** Respondents were asked to report their base salary (not including benefits or bonuses) as of December 1, 2013. Salaries among the nurse informaticist respondents continued to increase when compared to previous surveys. The average salary in 2014 was $100,717; up from $98,703 in 2011 and $83,675 in 2007.

**Certification:** The number of respondents with any certification increased from 45 percent in 2011 to 48 percent in 2014. More than half of the nursing informaticist respondents also indicated that they would be pursuing some type of certification within the next year. More nurse informaticists appear to be becoming certified in a number of areas. Survey respondents indicated that the perceived value of certification was personal satisfaction and enhancing their credibility and marketability.

**Informatics Career:** Nearly half (46 percent) of respondents had more than seven years of informatics experience. The percent with seven to ten years of experience increased from ten percent in 2011 to 21 percent in 2014 while the percent with more than ten years of experience decreased from 39 percent in 2011 to 25 percent in 2014. This could be the result of experience nurse informaticists pursuing other career paths or retiring, or an increasing number of informatics nurses entering the specialty.

**Career Satisfaction:** New to the 2014 survey were questions surrounding the respondents’ job satisfaction with both their current position and their career choice in informatics. Satisfaction was rated using a one to seven scale where one was not at all satisfied and seven was highly satisfied. Over half (57 percent) of respondents indicated that they were satisfied or highly satisfied with their current position (score of six or above). The majority of respondents (81 percent) were also satisfied or highly satisfied with their career choice in informatics. Respondents seemed to be quite satisfied with their choice of career in informatics but not necessarily with the current position they hold.

**Job Responsibilities:** Two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents indicated that they do not have a supervisory role and there are no individuals who report to them. This number increased from 58 percent in 2007 and 61 percent in 2011. The job responsibilities of the respondents continue to include systems implementation and development as well as system utilization and optimization, which was a new selection category added to this year’s survey.

**Barriers to Success:** There was a significant shift in the identified barriers to success as a nurse informaticist. In the 2004 and 2007 surveys, respondents identified the lack of financial resources as the top barrier while in 2011 it was the lack of integration and interoperability. For this year’s survey, a lack of administrative support and a lack of staffing resources were the primary barriers faced.

**Download the full survey results at www.himss.org/ni**