HIMSS 2017 Nursing Informatics Workforce Survey

Executive Summary

The HIMSS 2017 Nursing Informatics Workforce Survey, supported by the HIMSS Nursing Informatics Community, builds on previous HIMSS research from 2004, 2007, 2011, and 2014. The 2017 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). Over half (57 percent) of respondents have a post-graduate degree in any field, which remains about the same as the 2014 survey. In addition, 41 percent of respondents planned to pursue additional informatics education and training and just over half (51 percent) of the nurse informaticist respondents indicated that they would be pursuing some type of certification within the next year.

The annual salary question was updated to ask for a salary range rather than an exact amount. Nearly half (46 percent) of respondents indicated a salary of over $100,000. Compared to 2014 results, there were increases in the number of respondents in each salary range over $100,000.

Other key findings and comparisons to previous surveys include:

Respondents: Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of all survey respondents work at either a hospital (42 percent), a multi-facility health system not otherwise described (15 percent) or at the corporate offices of a healthcare system (7 percent). Half work at a Magnet designated hospital, a 9 percentage point increase over 2014.

Nursing Background and Education: Over half (57 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, 24 percent of this year's respondents had a Master's degree or PhD in nursing. While this appears as a decrease from the 43 percent who indicated such in 2014, the decrease is related to an additional selection of Master's Degree in Nursing Informatics (23 percent) in this year's survey. In terms of the respondents' clinical experience at the bedside before becoming a nurse informaticist, slightly more respondents indicated more than 16 years of experience in 2017 (42 percent) compared to 2014 (41 percent). On the other hand, there was a decrease in the number of respondents reporting one to five years of clinical bedside experience from 2014 (20 percent) to 2017 (16 percent). This may suggest that even as hospitals move from the EHR implementation phase, nurses are continuing in their informatics roles.

Nursing Informatics: Training and education in informatics continues to advance. Over half (56 percent) of the respondents had some type of on-the-job informatics training, but of those, 28

percent had only on-the-job training compared to 34 percent in 2014. In addition, the percent of respondents who had obtained a post-graduate degree in nursing informatics or other informatics increased by almost 3 percentage points between the 2014 and 2017 surveys. Two-fifths (41 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 identify their base salary (not including benefits or bonuses) as of December 1, 2016. Twenty-five (25) percent of respondents' salary ranged from $86,000 to $100,000 while 24 percent ranged from $61,000 to $85,000. Nearly half (46 percent) of respondents indicated a salary of over $100,000.There were increases from the 2014 survey for each salary range over $100,000.

Certification: The number of respondents with any certification increased from 48 percent in 2014 to 49 percent in 2017. Over half (51 percent) of the nursing informaticist respondents also indicated that they would be pursuing some type of certification within the next year. Survey respondents indicated that the perceived value of certification was personal satisfaction and enhancing their credibility and marketability. Certification is found to have a fairly high impact on respondents' career paths; a new ratings question was added to the 2017 survey and the average rating for the impact certification has on career was 4.96 out of seven.

Informatics Career: Over half (51 percent) of respondents had more than seven years of informatics experience. The percent with seven to ten years of experience decreased slightly from 21 percent in 2014 to 20 percent in 2017 while the percent with more than ten years of experience increased from 25 percent in 2014 to 31 percent in 2017. This could be the result of experienced nurse informaticists staying in informatics positions.

Career Satisfaction: Satisfaction of respondents' current position and their career choice in informatics was rated using a one to seven scale where one was not at all satisfied and seven was highly satisfied. Over half (58 percent) of respondents indicated that they were satisfied or highly satisfied with their current position (score of six or above). The majority of respondents (80 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 as satisfied with the current position they hold.

Job Responsibilities: Approximately two-thirds (64 percent) of respondents indicated that they do not have a supervisory role and there are no individuals who report to them. This number decreased from 2014 (67 percent) meaning respondents' roles may supervise larger departments. The job responsibilities of the respondents continue to include systems implementation and utilization/optimization. While systems development is still in the top three job responsibilities, the percent currently working in this area decreased from 38 percent in 2014 to 31 percent in 2017.

Barriers to Success: Over the history of the survey, there has been a 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. In 2014 and for this year's survey, a lack of administrative support and a lack of staffing resources were the primary barriers faced. Lack of administrative support as a top barrier increased from 17 percent in 2014 in 21 percent in 2017.