

CONCLUSION

The recommendations put forth by the NCIOM Task Force on the Future of the Nursing Workforce outline key activities needed to bolster current nurses and build a strong workforce for the future. Current nurses have withstood the trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to ongoing challenges that contribute to high rates of burnout and poor mental health and well-being. Implementing recommendations from the task force could significantly improve the practice environment, workplace culture, and organizational valuing of nurses, thereby improving satisfaction and retention. These outcomes, along with implementation of recommendations for expanded career pathways and educational program improvements, will also strengthen the development of the future nursing workforce.

The task force's call to action extends beyond the confines of this report; it is a call to continually reevaluate, adapt, and innovate in response to the evolving health care landscape and the changing needs of the nursing workforce. The journey toward a more robust, representative, and well-supported nursing workforce in North Carolina is ongoing, requiring persistent advocacy, strategic investment, and a collective commitment to the principles of equity and excellence in nursing education and practice. The future of health care in North Carolina hinges on our ability to heed these recommendations, adapt to emerging challenges, and seize opportunities to elevate the nursing profession for the benefit of all its residents.

“Our state’s caregiving and health care workers not only help keep our children and families healthy, but they also keep our workforce healthy, which supports our businesses and keeps our economy strong... They are a vital part of our workforce, and their recruitment and retention are critical to North Carolina’s future economic success.”

- NC Commerce Secretary Machel Baker Sanders, <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/news/press-releases/2024/01/23/roadmap-strengthen-north-carolinas-caregiving-workforce>

“What nurses need now is a radical transformation in all levels of support and resources they receive. We need everyone in positions of power and decision-making ability to invest in nursing. The fate of our health care system depends on it.”

- Kate Judge, Executive Director of the American Nurses Foundation, <https://www.nursingworld.org/news/news-releases/2023/the-american-nurses-foundation-says-action-is-still-needed-to-address-serious-nursing-workforce-challenges/>