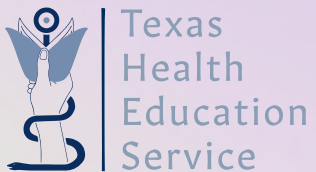


TX-NCAS

Nursing Advisory Council (NAC)

Inaugural Meeting, Nov. 18, 2025

Working together to build a new admissions application service to strengthen the nursing workforce in Texas



Welcome to our NAC meeting!

We will be recording this meeting to:

- Share with those who are unable to join us
- Create thematic notes to inform the next phases of this work

Please contact erin@collectinsight.com if you have questions or concerns pertaining to how this recording will be used.

Today's Objectives

Our Topics for Today:

- Welcome and Introductions
- NAC Overview
- Background
- Informing Our Next Phase
- Next Steps

Discussion Time Dedicated:

- Answer questions about the NAC
- Validate or expand upon what we have learned to date
- Provide input on how the NAC can inform our work



WELCOME!



Supporting NAC and Broader Project Success

Hope Morrison, principal consultant and owner of Sophos Strategies LLC

- 31 years experience with government health care and human services programs and policy in Texas and nationally
- Previously worked at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission supporting policy and program oversight
- Previously served as aide to Texas State Senator addressing health professions licensure and regulation; nursing facility, home health, and assisted living regulation; Medicaid reform and managed care; advance directives
- Earned a Master's degree in Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin



Proposed Meeting Guidelines

- Please use your camera when possible
- Keep microphones muted unless speaking
- Jump in during discussions or raise your hand
- Use Chat to add to the conversation
- Welcome differences in opinions and experiences
- Avoid using acronyms when possible
- Keep to the agenda and try to stay on topic
- End on time
- Take breaks when needed

Keep the conversation going after the meeting by contacting us directly.

NAC Overview



Texas Health Education Service (TXHES)

Purpose

To lead statewide efforts to simplify and strengthen the pathway into health professions

Mission

To prepare and empower the next generation of healthcare providers by enhancing advising, streamlining admissions, and building collaborative networks across Texas

Vision

Every Texan — regardless of background — has the opportunity to pursue their dream of becoming a health professional, contributing to a stronger, more diverse, and more resilient healthcare workforce for the State

Medical Schools

- Baylor College of Medicine
- Fertitta Family College of Medicine at UH
- Long School of Medicine at UT HSC San Antonio
- McGovern Medical School at UT HSC Houston
- Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Texas A&M HSC School of Medicine
- Texas Tech HSC Paul L Foster SOM at El Paso
- Texas Tech HSC SOM at Lubbock
- UNT HSC Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
- UT Austin Dell Medical School
- UT Medical Branch at Galveston
- UT Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine
- UT Southwestern Medical Center
- UT Tyler School of Medicine

Member Professional Schools

Dental

- Texas A&M School of Dentistry
- UT School of Dentistry at Houston
- UT School of Dentistry at San Antonio
- Woody L. Hunt School of Dental Medicine

Podiatry

- UT Rio Grande Valley School of Podiatry

Veterinary

- Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine
- Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine

Member Undergraduates Schools

Public Schools

Angelo State Univ
East Texas A&M Univ
Lamar Univ
Midwestern State Univ
Prairie View A & M Univ
Sam Houston State Univ
Stephen F. Austin State Univ
Sul Ross State University
Tarleton State Univ
Texas A&M - Victoria
Texas A&M Galveston University
Texas A&M Intern. Univ
Texas A&M Univ
Texas A&M Univ - Kingsville
Texas A&M Univ - Texarkana
Texas A&M Univ San Antonio
Texas A&M Univ-Corpus Christi
Texas Southern Univ
Texas State Univ
Texas Tech Univ
Texas Woman's Univ
Univ of Houston
Univ of Houston - Clear Lake
Univ of Houston - Downtown
Univ of North Texas
Univ of Texas at Arlington
Univ of Texas at Austin
Univ of Texas at Dallas
Univ of Texas at El Paso
Univ of Texas at San Antonio
Univ of Texas at Tyler
Univ of Texas of the Permian Basin
Univ of Texas Rio Grande Valley
University of North Texas at Dallas
West Texas A&M Univ

Private Schools

Abilene Christian University
Austin College
Baylor University
Concordia University Texas
Dallas Baptist University
East Texas Baptist University
Hardin-Simmons University
Houston Christian University
Howard Payne University
Huston-Tillotson University
Jarvis Christian University
LeTourneau University
Lubbock Christian University
McMurry University
Our Lady of the Lake University
Rice University
Saint Edward's University
Saint Mary's University
Schreiner University
Southern Methodist University
Southwestern University
Texas Christian University
Texas College
Texas Lutheran University
Texas Wesleyan University
Trinity University
University of Dallas
University of the Incarnate Word
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
University of Saint Thomas
Wayland Baptist University
Wiley College

TXHES – Service

Statewide Collaboration: Partnering with high schools, 68 undergraduate campuses, and 21 health professions institutions, and numerous state agencies and health-related organizations to strengthen the pipeline.

Outreach & Resource Development: Centralized tools and communications that expand access and support advisors and applicants.

Pipeline Programs: Advancing workforce initiatives like JAMP, RAMP, and early admission pathways.

Strategic Enrollment: Helping schools develop new programs while supporting institution's unique mission.

Education & Transparency: Promoting clear, equitable, and student-centered admissions processes.

Research: Providing insights for institutional planning, workforce projections, and state reporting.



TXHES – Operational Philosophy

- **All stakeholder voices** are represented in the process
- Member institutions and partners **empowered to lead**
- **Innovation** from technology to policy
- Fostering statewide **relationships** to advance our collective mission
- Student and applicant **advocacy** centered
- Responsive to the needs of **Texas healthcare workforce**

HB 2851

- Requires a service or organization that provides a consolidated application service for medical or dental schools in Texas to include nursing schools.
- Directs TXHES to appoint an advisory board to develop recommendations and implementation plan for including nursing school applications in its centralized application service for medical/dental schools.

- **House authors:** Donna Howard, Vincent Perez
- **Senate sponsor:** Lois Kolkhorst

- Passed House and Senate but funding not included in SB 1

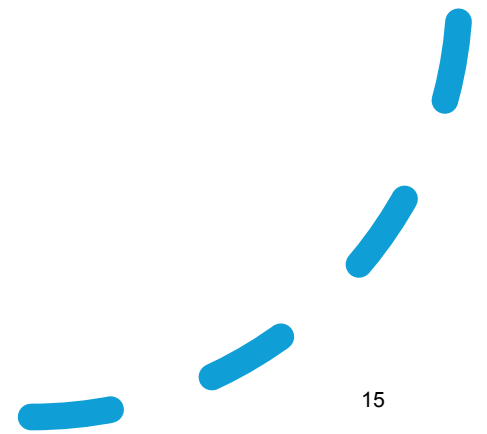
NAC Focus

- Provide recommendations on integrating nursing-school applications into the consolidated service outlined in HB 2851
- Inform an implementation plan for deployment of that service
- Guide stakeholder communication, system adoption, data infrastructure, and continuous improvement

Shape a shared vision for a more efficient and equitable nursing admissions ecosystem across Texas

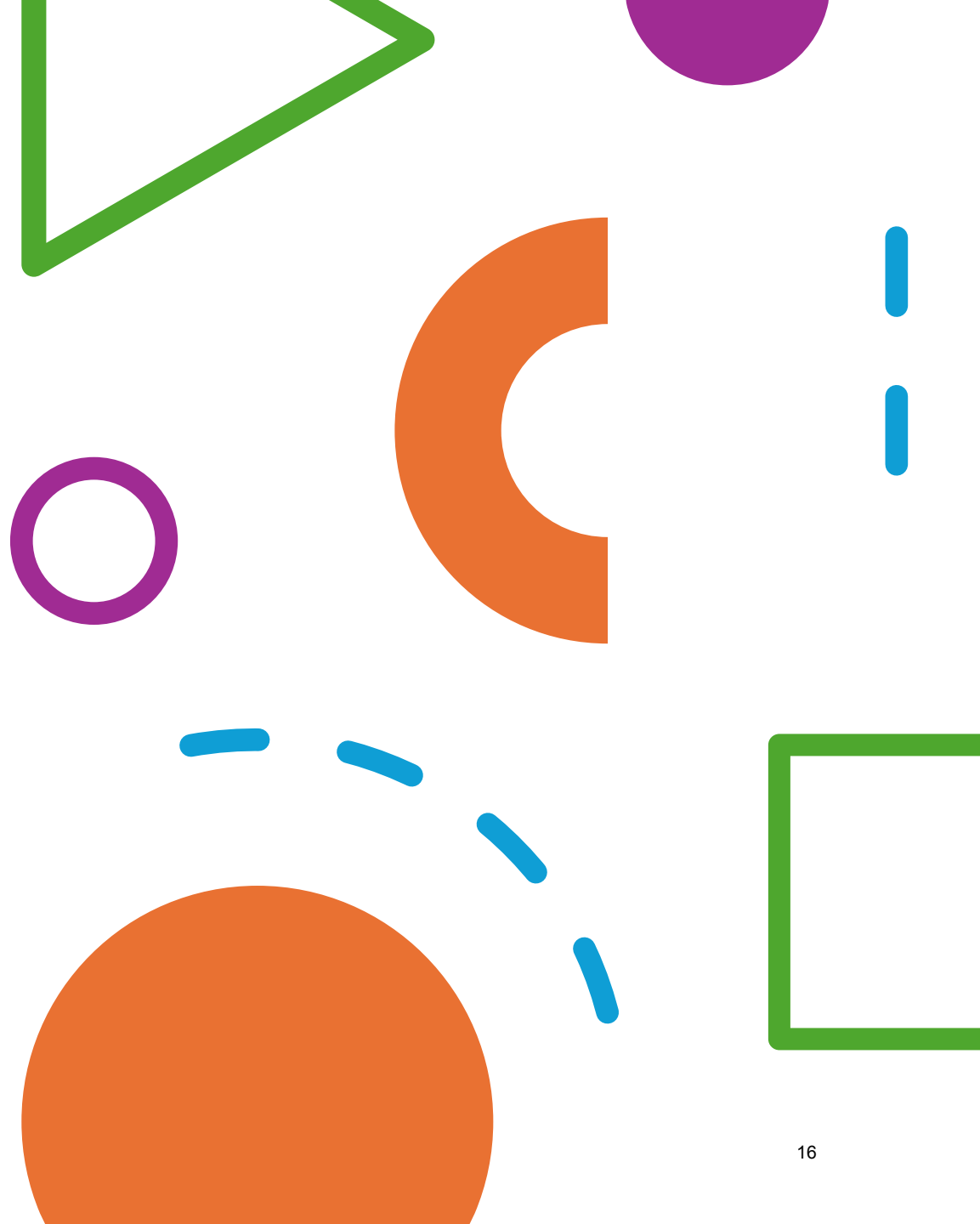
Important NAC Voices

- Community colleges, health science centers, and universities
 - Admissions and advising staff
 - Information Officers
 - Presidents and Deans
- Student and professional nursing associations
- State agencies liaisons
- Legislative liaisons
- Workforce experts
- Technology partners



NAC Investment

- Meet virtually 3 times in November, January, and February to inform a Feasibility Report and Implementation Plan
- Join additional meetings or activities to help with data collection
- Join routine meetings (e.g., quarterly) to inform future phases
- Consider one-year renewable term, in future



NAC Benefits



Expertise and time featured on TXHES.com in recognition of leadership and contributions



Invited to contribute to statewide reports, policy discussions, and public-facing materials



Network with peers while shaping a more efficient and equitable nursing admissions ecosystem for Texas, enabling effective workforce development and program planning

Questions about the NAC Approach?



Project Background

Vacant Seats in Nursing Programs: A Neglected Foe in Boosting the Registered Nurse (RN) Supply

Maja Djukic, PhD, RN
UTHealth Houston Cizik School of Nursing

What is the Problem We are Trying to Solve?

- The shortage of registered nurses (RNs) is a chronic and cyclical problem in the U.S. and globally with negative consequences for the cost and quality of health care.
- While the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily worsened the shortage, the RN shortage estimates are returning to the pre-pandemic levels. National estimates show that by 2036 there will be a shortage of 337,970 FTE RNs with demand exceeding the supply by 9%.
- The latest available supply and demand calculations for **Texas** show a **deficit of 44,678 FTE RNs in 2022**. By 2036 that deficit is projected to grow to **56,370 FTE RNs** resulting in an unmet demand of 15.6%. There is a projected surplus of NPs, and APRNs, and a decreased deficit of Midwives.
- Resolving the problem of the RN shortage depends on a complex interplay of many supply and demand factors. ***Demand factors:*** an aging general population that needs more care, an aging nursing workforce whose retirements will further fuel the shortage. ***Supply factors:*** **limited production** of new nurses by the nursing education systems, **low retention** of nurses by the health care system.
- ***Focus on improved production of RNs within higher education settings and nursing programs.***

Filling the Vacant RN seats to Solve the RN Shortage in Texas

Program type	ADN (N = 54)	BSN (N = 58)	Total (112)
Seats for new students	7,461	16,493	23,954
Qualified applications received	12,087	18,635	30,722
Offered admission	7,259	14,621	21,880
Registered and enrolled	6,477	12,460	18,937
Vacant seats	984	4,033	5,017

Note. Data retrieved from [Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies \(2024\)](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/center-health-statistics/texas-center-nursing-workforce-studies/nursing-education-reports), Nursing Education Reports: Registered Nursing (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/center-health-statistics/texas-center-nursing-workforce-studies/nursing-education-reports>). ADN = associate of nursing degree; BSN = bachelor of science in nursing.

Figure 1. Texas BSN Program Applications, Empty Seats, Admissions, and Enrollments (2019-2023)

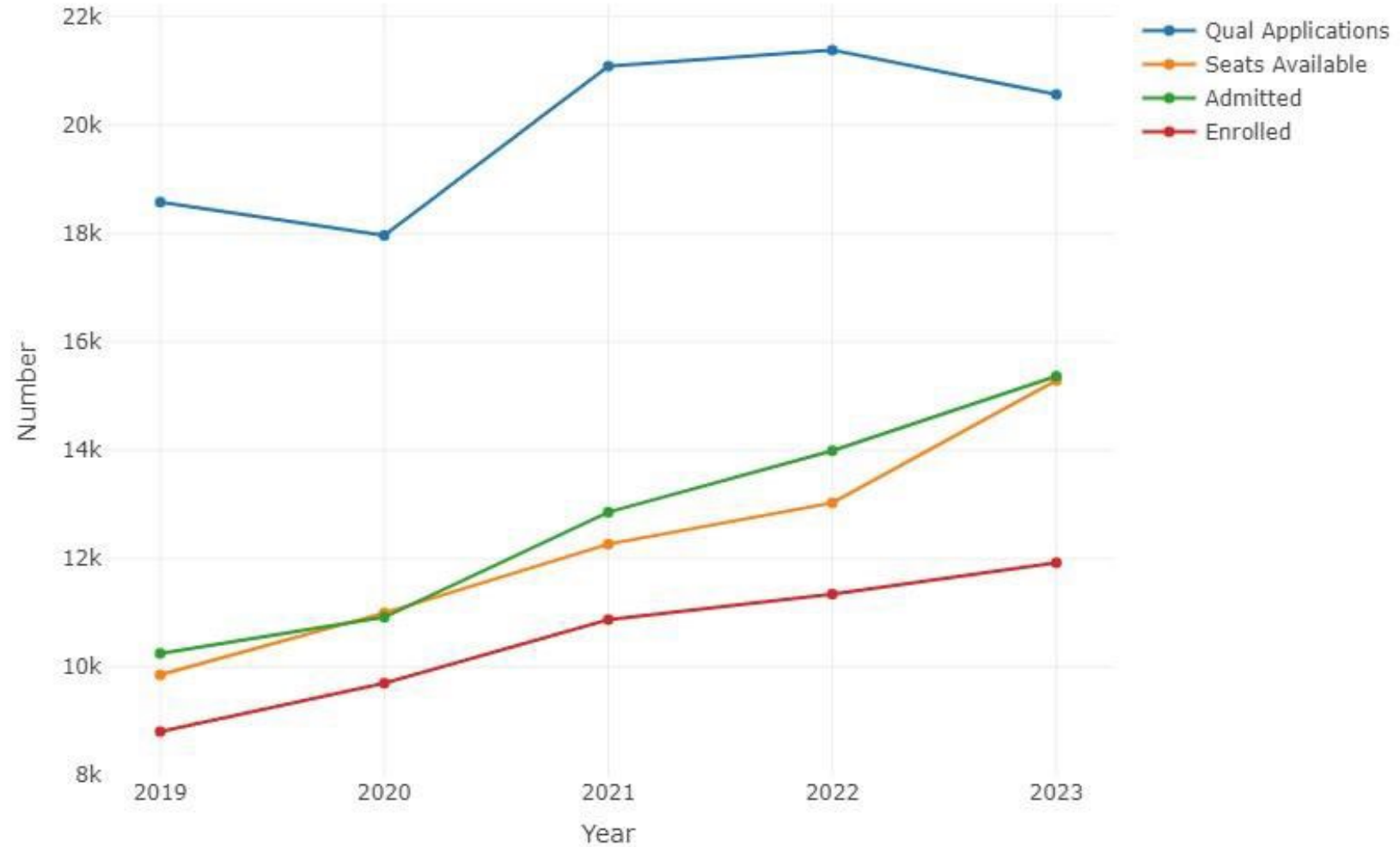
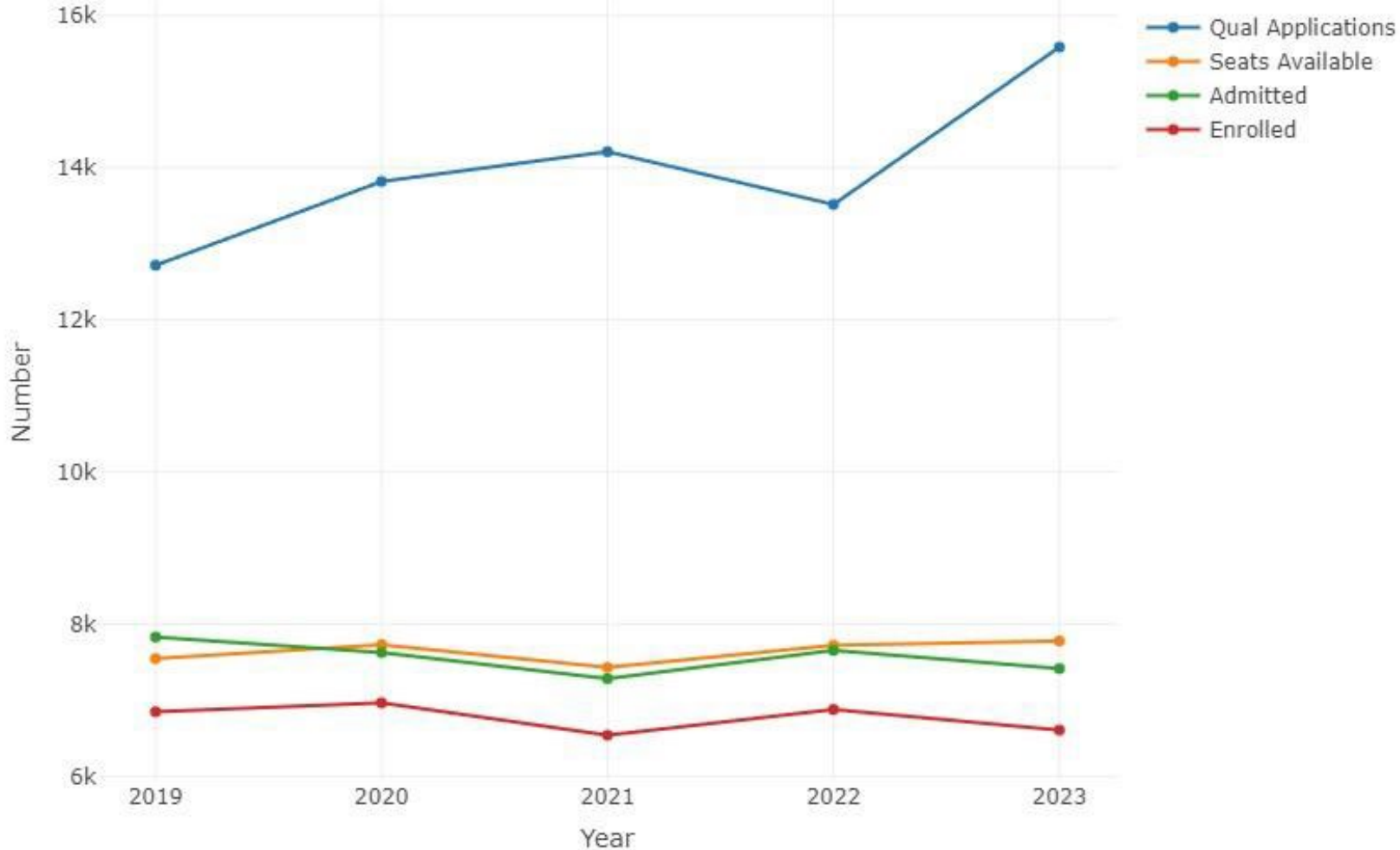


Figure 2. Texas ADN Program Applications, Empty Seats, Admissions, and Enrollments (2019-2023)



Summary and Recommendations

- Our analysis suggests that the **numbers of qualified applications and admissions are not a reliable estimate of the actual number of qualified students enrolling in nursing education programs in Texas.** This is because each student applies to multiple programs and is admitted to multiple programs yet only enrolls in one program.
- Currently there is no way in Texas or nationally to **track unique individuals applying to nursing programs,** only applications, admissions, and enrollments. This creates a problem for accurately assessing the supply of qualified applicants for nursing programs. ***There is no effective and universal system to match nursing students to empty seats.*** In contrast, the medical education system uses unique application identifiers and a matching system for residency programs.
- Improvement strategies to fill empty seats include incentivizing schools to participate in the Centralized Application Service for Nursing Programs (NursingCAS) or creating a NursingCAS plus user-friendly system for sharing information on empty seats between schools and educating students and parents about availability of empty seats in high quality programs.
- In summary, the national and local narrative on the oversupply of qualified applications to nursing programs emphasizes a need for increasing the number of seats in nursing programs. ***However, the most immediate problem is a limited supply of qualified applicants distributed across the state to fill all the available and fully staffed nursing program seats.*** If Texas can fill all the available seats in nursing programs over the next 12 years (e.g., 4,981 seats x 12 = 59,772 RNs), it should be able to produce enough RNs to meet the projected demand by 2036 of 56,270 FTE RNs.



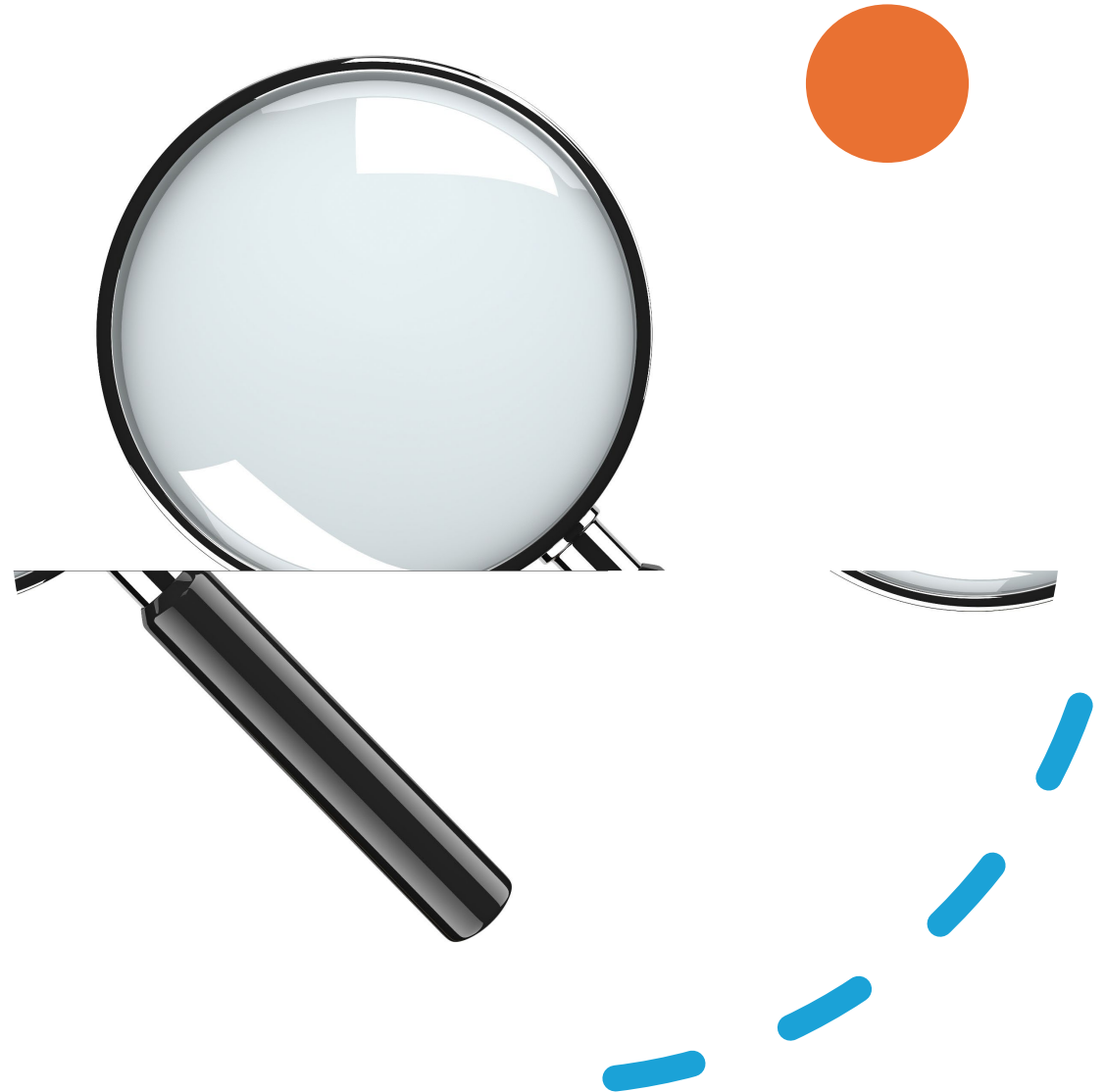
Building Texas' Future Healthcare Workforce

Texas Healthcare Workforce Task Force
Final Report | October 2024

- **In April 2024**, Governor assembles healthcare workforce taskforce committee comprised of statewide leaders
- **In October 2024**, Taskforce publishes report of eighteen recommendations for the 89th legislative session
- Report found over 5,000 nursing seats go unfilled across our state each year
- Recommendation #8 called for a standardized application system to streamline student applications and fees, improve the quality of data, and allow for effective planning

The Challenges We Face

- Despite rising demand for nurses, many programs across the state report unfilled seats
- We have no centralized, reliable data system to track applications, admissions, and enrollment across schools
- This makes it difficult for policymakers and educators to identify gaps or align capacity with workforce needs



Learning From Our Partners (Spring and Fall 2025 Surveys)



Texas Nursing Program Admissions Survey (Spring 2025)

Survey Focus

- Assessed interest, readiness, and concerns related to a potential centralized nursing application system
- Identified opportunities for standardization and efficiencies
- Surfaced barriers, equity implications, and institutional needs

Who Responded

- Over 40 Texas nursing programs
- Mix of ADN, BSN, RN-to-BSN, and graduate programs
- Includes community colleges, public universities, and private/faith-based institutions
- 28 respondents volunteered for a future planning activities

Texas Nursing Program Admissions Survey Findings

Spring 2025

Current Processes

- Variation in admissions requirements (prereqs, GPAs, TEAS/HESI, holistic review)
- Variation in systems used (institutional portals (majority), NursingCAS, ApplyTexas, and custom tools)
- Variation in technology readiness for API integration

Benefits Recognized

- Potential for standardization
- Improved transparency and statewide applicant data
- Streamlined process for students
- Opportunity to fill unfilled seats
- Student education and transparency for more informed applicant pool

Texas Nursing Program Admissions Survey Findings Spring 2025

Primary Concerns

- Cost to students, especially the proposed \$100 fee
- Loss of institutional autonomy and flexibility
- Misalignment with missions of small, rural, and private institutions
- Complexity of aligning diverse prerequisites, scoring systems, and timelines
- Fears of enrollment shifts disadvantaging community colleges
- Technology burden and transition challenges

Implications for Statewide Planning

- Affordability must be central
- Any model must allow flexible admissions criteria
- Strong need for robust technical support and representation from all institution types



TXHES Survey (October 2025)

64 total respondents

- Community colleges, universities, and private institutions

Focus Areas:

- How can TXHES best partner with your school?
- How can we design a system to anticipate and close workforce gaps?
- In 10 years, what should we have accomplished together?
- Preferred communication engagement method?
- Additional feedback or questions

How can TXHES best partner with your school? (n=60)

Theme	% Weight	Notes Based on Response Frequency
Address Cost / Fee Concerns	30%	<p>“Finding a way to make the application fee or deeply reduced.”</p> <p>“We are dropping NursingCAS because of the cost to students; this would need to be cost-free.” “Our students do not pay for application.”</p>
Ensure Representation & Inclusion	25%	<p>“Ensure all colleges, including community colleges, have their voices heard.” “Please include robust community college representation on the advisory council.”</p>
Ensure Comm & Transparency	22%	<p>“Maybe a newsletter.” “Come visit our campus.”</p> <p>“Provide updates, allow for feedback via surveys.”</p> <p>“Create a listserv of all directors and provide updates.”</p>
Avoid Duplication with NursingCAS / System Overlap	15%	<p>“We are NursingCAS, so this seems like duplication of work and costs for students.” “We use NCAS currently—curious how it will intersect with a state approach.”</p>
Address Faculty & Clinical Capacity Constraints	8%	<p>“We don’t have unfilled seats; we need more faculty and access to clinical space.” “There are so many seats unfilled because there are not enough educators.”</p>
Willing to Participate	5%	<p>“We are available to support the process as needed.” “I would like to serve on the advisory group.”</p>

How can TXHES design a system to anticipate and close workforce gaps? (n=55)

Theme	% Weight	Evidence From Responses
Support Data & Workforce Alignment	32%	“Track locations where seats are unfilled,” “Give students info about open seats,” “Determine number of students not admitted,” “Identify regions turning students away.”
Support System Integration (NursingCAS, ApplyTexas, SIS)	22%	“NursingCAS already provides data,” “Make it interface with ApplyTexas,” “Interoperability with school systems.”
Address Equity & Fee Considerations	15%	“Free,” “Charge is not appropriate for community college applicants,” “Don’t create another obstacle.”
Ensure Collaboration & Inclusivity	13%	“Be inclusive,” “Include community colleges,” “Develop a task force,” “Open to schools not using NursingCAS.”
Address Capacity	12%	“Seats are not the issue—faculty shortages drive admissions,” “Clinical placement limitations,” “Lack of scholarships.”
Address Complexity / Feasibility Concerns	6%	“Will require multi-layered approaches,” “Not clear this addresses root issues,” “Only works for 4-year programs.”

In 10 years, what should we accomplish together? (n=60)

Theme	% Weight	Evidence From Responses
Fill All Seats / Ensure Every Qualified Applicant Gets In	28%	“Every available seat filled in Texas.” “Every qualified applicant finds admission.” “No unfilled seats.”
Unified / Streamlined Application Process	22%	“Have a common application for all nursing programs.” “Standardized and admission process throughout Texas.” “Applications have become streamlined.”
Collaboration & Shared Effort Across Schools	18%	“We truly worked together to shape the future of nursing.” “All colleges work together and not against each other.” “Working collaboratively.”
Increase Nursing Workforce / Graduates	15%	“Train more nurses in Texas to fill openings.” “Increased enrollment across pre-licensure programs as well as advanced degrees.” “We have greatly increased the number of nursing graduates.”
Faculty Pay & Clinical Capacity Improvements	10%	“Fix the salaries for nurse educators.” “We need clinical support.” “Faculty shortages limit admissions.”
Equity & Student Access (Geographic & Financial)	7%	“Opportunities to enter nursing sooner at other schools.” “Applicants want to stay near family.” “Equity for nursing applicants.”

Preferred Communication and Engagement? (n=65)

Communication Method	% Weight (Ranked #1)
Focus Groups	34.4%
Meetings	23.4%
1:1 Conversations	20.3%
Surveys	20.3%
Town Halls	1.6%

Discussion to Confirm the Needs and Challenges

- Your key takeaways?
- Things that we may have been missed?



Informing Our Next Phase...

Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan Overview

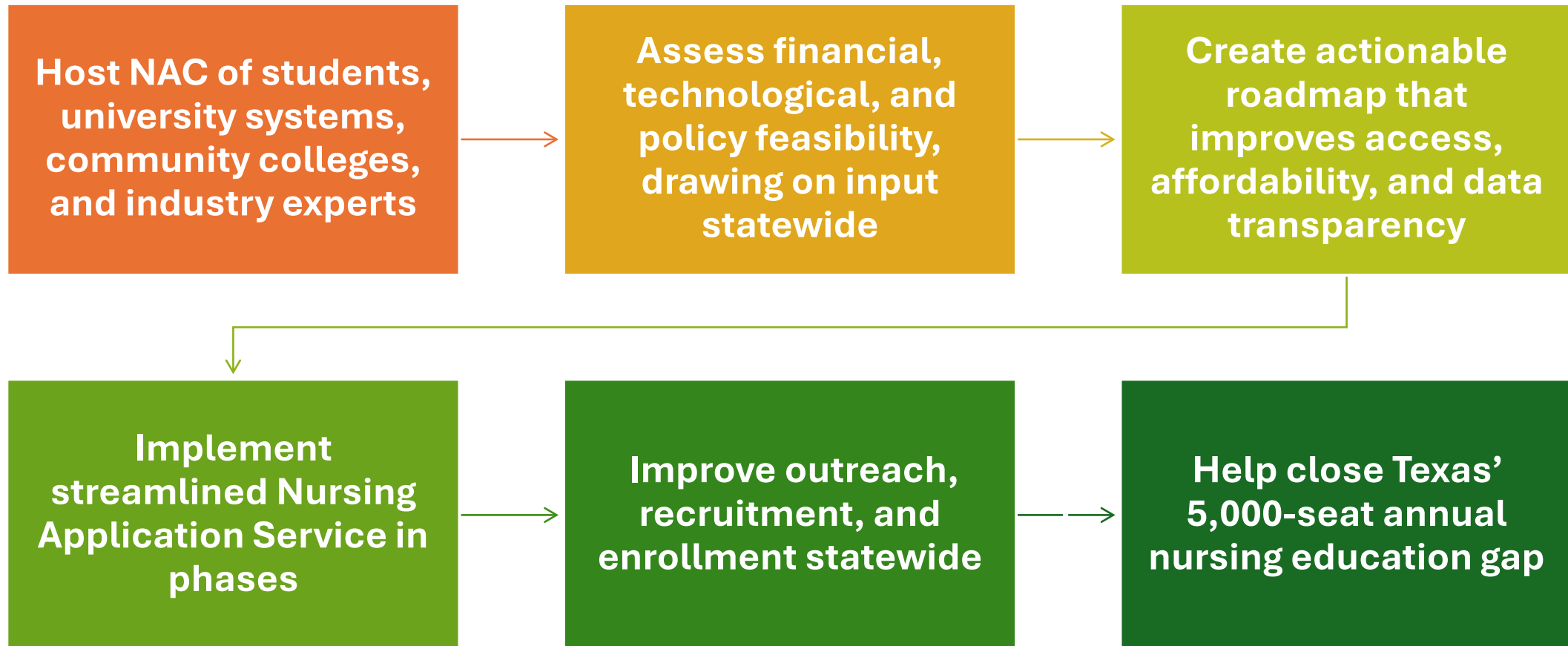
Purpose

- Develop a feasibility study to determine the viability, design, and operational requirements of a centralized nursing application service for Texas.
- Support development of recommendations and an implementation plan that provides a clear, actionable roadmap that enables the nursing community to meet the pressing enrollment needs of their institutions statewide and strengthen the state's pre-health pipeline through an equitable, efficient, and sustainable system

Study Facilitator: Sophos Strategies, LLC

Study Period: Oct 2025 through Feb 2026

Developing a Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan



Domains for Analysis



Technical Feasibility – Evaluate system compatibility and data architecture issues, integration risks, scalability



Operational Feasibility – Assess workflow alignment, staffing/training needs, readiness, and change-management processes



Stakeholder Feasibility – Gauge awareness, perceptions, and readiness of nursing schools, universities, and agencies; identify concerns and opportunities for alignment



Governance Feasibility – Examine statutory authority, data ownership, compliance, and interagency coordination



Financial Feasibility – Estimate costs, identify funding mechanisms and cost-sharing strategies, evaluate sustainability

Data Collection Opportunities

Interviews, focus groups and complementary qualitative methodologies to elicit rich, contextual data from the broader nursing community throughout the study period.

Structured dialogues within respective systems to promote the systematic exchange of perspectives and ensure ongoing bidirectional feedback across institutional contexts.

Timeline and Deliverables

Stakeholder Engagement and Data Collection

- **Round 1-** November and December
 - Interim Memo
- **Round 2-** January
 - Interim Memo

NAC Meeting Focus Areas

- **January-** Review interim findings and validate recommendations
- **February-** Review draft implementation plan and next steps



Informing the Data Collection Process

- Who should we talk to ensure this work is informed?
- What are the best ways to reach these individuals/groups now through January?
- How can the NAC assist in this outreach and data collection process?

Thank You!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YDXGFCK>



Next Steps:

- Take our meeting survey to improve our NAC process, inform NAC scheduling, and provide additional input
- Visit our shared space (live soon) to stay up to speed, including to access meeting notes and progress updates

Questions, ideas, or concerns:
erin@collectinsight.com