



# MEDIA RELEASE

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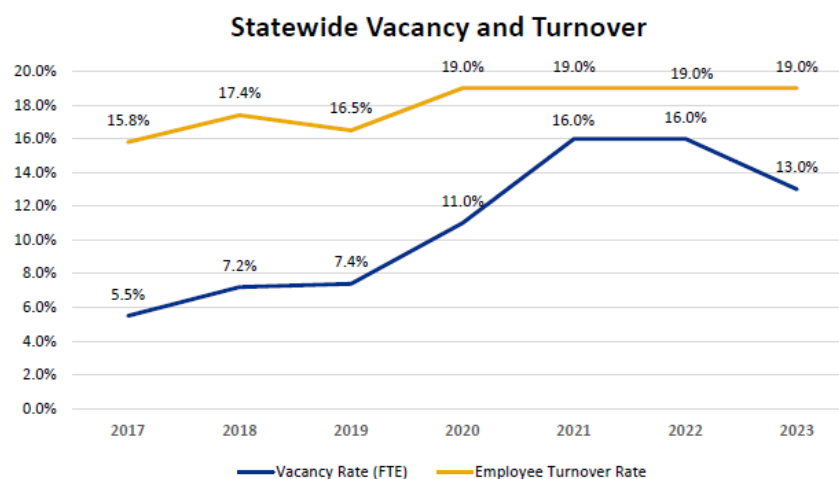
## **Kansas Hospitals Are Beginning to See Less Vacancies, Although Workforce Needs Are Still Great**

*Report Focuses on Challenges and Opportunities for Sustaining Skilled Workforce*

(April 24, 2024) – The Kansas Hospital Association has published its annual [Kansas Health Care Workforce Report](#). The report utilizes data gathered from various sources to illustrate the current pulse on health care workforce challenges in Kansas.

The 2024 KHA Workforce Survey is the primary source of data, providing vacancy and turnover rates for 29 hospital-based and four clinic-based positions and highlighting those most in-demand positions statewide and regionally. With this information, hospital and health system leaders and policymakers gain a better understanding of the current workforce environment as well as what to expect in the future. The data is designed to inform strategies for recruitment and retention to ensure Kansas hospitals have the capacity to support the health of their local communities.

This year, 110 Kansas hospitals participated in the survey, the highest participation in the last ten years. Statewide, turnover remains at record high levels while vacancies have declined but are still higher than pre-pandemic levels.



Turnover for approximately half of the jobs surveyed improved from last year's numbers, but there are increases in turnover in pharmacy, surgery, housekeeping, dietary, occupational and physical therapies, and APRNs. Vacancy rates statewide for nursing, respiratory therapy, laboratory, and clinics have improved, but unfortunately, vacancies in the diagnostic imaging professions have worsened.

The report shows that vacancy and turnover rates in 2023 for licensed practical nurses and registered nurses have declined from their peak in 2022, but nursing assistants' vacancy and turnover rates are unchanged from 2022. Nineteen percent of hospital LPN positions and fifteen percent of hospital RN positions are vacant. Twenty percent of LPN and sixteen percent of RN positions turned over throughout 2023. Other positions with the highest full-time vacancy rates are sonographer/ultrasound technologists (20 percent), nursing assistants (19 percent) and radiology technologists-certified (18 percent).

The overall employee turnover rate for surveyed health care positions in Kansas averaged 19 percent, with the occupations that turned over the most being housekeepers (34 percent), dietary aides (34 percent) and nursing assistants (30 percent).

New Kansas Department of Labor data indicates that respiratory therapists are now the fastest growing occupation. The number of RTs needed by 2030 will be up by nearly 23 percent, while registered nurses have the highest number of jobs with 3,192 new RN jobs created by 2030.

The report also includes breakouts of vacancies and turnover geographically by seven regions. For the second year in a row, Southwest Kansas is the region of Kansas with the highest vacancies (17 percent of jobs are open). The largest openings in that region include mammography technologists (67 percent), sonographer/ultrasound technologists (41 percent) and magnetic resonance imaging technologists (40 percent).

The report also notes that enrollment into Kansas K-12 and post-secondary schools has continued to decline. This leads to fewer students seeking health care credentials, licenses, and degrees, and in turn, working in health care in Kansas.

KHA continues to work with multiple stakeholders to combat these issues on a variety of fronts including resiliency and retention education efforts, new preceptor/mentor statewide trainings, events to promote health care careers, advancements of health care apprenticeship opportunities to allow hospitals to grow their own workforce, and workforce executive roundtables that bring together colleges and hospitals to collaboratively address these issues.

KHA partnered with the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas State Department of Education to host Kansas's second annual Health Care Virtual Career Day that saw more than 160 school districts and colleges and 3,000+ students and adult learners participate in learning about the wide variety of career opportunities in health care.

This event also launched Kansas's new health care pathways tool, [HappyInHealthCare.org](http://HappyInHealthCare.org). This website contains comprehensive information on health care careers, the colleges in Kansas that offer health care programs, and a one-stop shop of financial aid information to make it as easy as possible for Kansans to obtain a health care credential with little to no out-of-pocket expense.

"KHA is dedicated to our partnerships with other organizations across the state to address the issue of workforce and ensure Kansas hospitals can continue to deliver the best care to every patient every time, said Chad Austin, president, and CEO of the Kansas Hospital Association. "Policymakers can support these efforts by enhancing existing incentive programs to encourage students to pursue health care careers and commit to working in Kansas following graduation, increasing support to collegiate health care programs to be able to enroll and graduate more students, and providing assistance for hospitals lacking resources."

The Kansas Hospital Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization existing to be the leading advocate and resource for members. KHA membership includes 237 member facilities, of which 122 are full-service, community hospitals. Founded in 1910, KHA's vision is: "Optimal Health for Kansans."

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