

dedication **caring**

kindness

critical-thinking

empathy

integrity

advocate

selfless intelligent

strength

heart



Annual Report 2014

patience

amazing

commitment

knowledge

concern

compassion
nurses

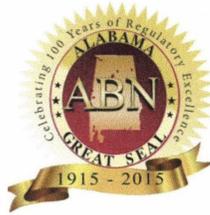
patients

adaptability

proactive

respectful

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Honorable Robert J. Bentley
Governor, State of Alabama
State Capitol
600 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130

Dear Governor Bentley:

On behalf of the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN), it is my pleasure to submit to you the agency's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2014.

As you are aware, nurses represent the largest community of professionals licensed and regulated by a single regulatory board in the state of Alabama, with more than 67,000 Registered Nurses (RNs) and 17,000 Practical Nurses (LPNs) holding Alabama licenses. Nearly 4,500 of the Registered Nurses licensed in Alabama also carry an approval for Advanced Practice Nursing as Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners (CRNPs), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs), or Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs).

In addition to licensing and regulating nurses, ABN is responsible for approval of nursing education programs. Presently, there are 69 pre-licensure programs with a status of either full or provisional approval.

This report contains relevant statistics on ABN's annual activity, but also is intended to reflect the agency's implementation of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, as well as ABN's continuously developing cooperative relationships with the Executive and Legislative branches of Alabama's government, other regulatory authorities, and the nursing community. I trust that you will find it informative and invite you and your staff to direct any inquiries to Board staff in Montgomery.

With warmest personal regards,

Catherine E. Dearman, PhD, RN
ABN President, Calendar Year 2014

Board Members

Catherine E. Dearman, PhD, RN, President, Mobile
Nursing Education

Francine M. Parker, Ed.D., MSN, RN, Vice-President, Auburn
Nursing Education

Laura Wright, PhD, MNA, CRNA, Secretary, Birmingham
Advanced Practice

Cheryl Bailey, RN, MBA, Cullman
Nursing Practice

Pamela Spencer Autrey, PhD, MBA, RN, Gadsden
Nursing Practice

Melissa Marie Bullard, LPN, Decatur
Licensed Practical Nurses Association of Alabama

Miriam Ellerbe, LPN, Tuskegee
Alabama Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses

Gladys Hill, MSN, RN, Moundville
Nursing Education

Gregory Tyrone Howard, LPN, Tuscaloosa
Alabama Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses

Vicki P. Karolewics, Ed.D., Hanceville
Consumer

Chrystalbell King, LPN, Montgomery
Licensed Practical Nurses Association of Alabama

Amy Price, MSN, RN, Sylacauga
Nursing Practice

Carol M. Stewart, CRNP, MSN, Montgomery
Advanced Practice



Francine M. Parker, Vice President
EdD, MSN, RN, Auburn, AL



Catherine Elizabeth Dearman, President
RN, PhD, Mobile, AL



E. Laura Wright, Secretary
PhD, MNA, CRNA, Birmingham, AL



Pamela Spencer Autrey, Board Member
PhD, MBA, RN, Gadsden, AL



Melissa Marie Bullard, Board Member
LPN, Decatur, AL

Alabama Board of Nursing



2014



Cheryl Bailey, Board Member
RN, BSN, MBA, Cullman, AL



Miriam Ellerbe, Board Member
LPN, Tuskegee, AL



Gladys Davis Hill, Board Member
RN, MSN, Moundville, AL



Gregory Tyrone Howard, Board Member
LPN, Tuscaloosa, AL



Vicki P. Karolewics, Board Member
EdD, Cullman, AL



Chrystalbell King, Board Member
LPN, Montgomery, AL



Amy Price, Board Member
MSN, RN, Sylacauga, AL



Carol M. Stewart, Board Member
MSN, CRNP, Montgomery, AL

Authority

The Alabama Board of Nursing is charged under Code of Alabama 1975, § 34-21-1, et seq. (the Alabama Nurse Practice Act) with the regulation of nursing practice and nursing education, as well as enforcing the provisions of the Nurse Practice Act. This charge includes licensing of Registered Nurses and Practical Nurses, approval and oversight of nursing education programs, and promulgating rules for nursing practice and nursing education. Discipline may be applied to licensees who fail to comply with the legal and professional standards of nursing practice.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Board Values

- Integrity
- Fairness
- Objectivity
- Quality
- Collaboration
- Innovation

Board Mission

The mission of the Alabama Board of Nursing is to safeguard and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public through licensing and approval of qualified individuals and adopting and enforcing legal standards for nursing education and nursing practice.

Board Vision

The Alabama Board of Nursing strives to promote and safeguard the health of the public through regulatory excellence.

2014-2018 Strategic Plan

On September 19, 2013, after several months of development, the Board adopted its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, which affirms the mission, values, and vision of ABN, as well as establishing a set of broad strategic goals and objectives to be achieved at intervals over the course of the Plan. The five (5) goals adopted for the implementation period are below; more information, including the full text of the 2014-2018 ABN Strategic Plan, can be found at www.abn.alabama.gov.

Goal 1.0	Increase efficiency and effectiveness of regulatory functions.
Goal 2.0	Enhance the external perceptions and opinions about the Board of Nursing.
Goal 3.0	Promote public health by supporting the practice of nursing at the level of education, experience, and licensure.
Goal 4.0	Implement a comprehensive Board Development Plan that addresses the dynamic needs of a rotating board membership.
Goal 5.0	Continue evidence-based regulatory processes and data-driven decisions related to fulfillment of legal mandates for the oversight of nursing education and nursing practice.

The Board

The Board's ultimate responsibility is to enforce the Nurse Practice Act (NPA) and the ABN Administrative Code. The Board does not accomplish its work on its own, but employs an experienced staff to accomplish the day-to-day operations and activities of the Board. All Board actions are recorded and reported in the ABN Board Minutes available on the Board's website.

The ABN Board in Action in FY 2014

October 2013

- Approved agency operating budget for FY 2015.
- Reviewed FY 2012 Board Actions.
- Reviewed FY 2008-FY 2012 Strategic Plan.
- Approved coordination with Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (ABME) and Nurse Practitioner Alliance of Alabama (NPAA) to proliferate web-based FAQs relating to controlled substance prescriptive authority for Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners (CRNPs) and Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs).

November 2013

- Elected Dr. Catherine Dearman President for calendar year 2014.
- Elected Dr. Francine Parker Vice-President for calendar year 2014.
- Elected Dr. Laura Wright Secretary for calendar year 2014.
- Established meeting dates for calendar year 2014.

The ABN Board in Action in FY 2014

November 2013 (continued from page 6)

- Approved, as final certification, Rule 610-X-4-.14, “Fee Schedule.”
- Approved amendments to Rule 610-X-7-.02, “Delegation by School Nurses.”
- Committed to reviewing rules relating to licensure of military personnel.
- Identified that Fortis Institute required oversight from the corporate level; directed Fortis to offer the students admitted in September 2013 the option to change majors or opt out of the program; delayed approval of Fortis’ teach out plan pending further information relating to student clinical opportunities; required Fortis to offer an NCLEX© refresher course at no cost to students.
- Received notification that Virginia College—Birmingham, would voluntarily close its ADN program.
- Approved Notices of Correction to Snead State Community College ADN program and University of Alabama – Huntsville BSN program for NCLEX-RN© results exceeding the 80% outcome standard in FY 2013.

December 2013

- Approved Amy Price as ABN Representative to Alabama Healthcare Action Coalition (AL-HAC).
- Agreed to support anaphylaxis preparedness legislation as developed by Alabama Association of School Nurses.
- Approved moving forward with exploration of costs associated with Directorpoint software for Board meetings.
- Approved Standard and Specialty Protocols for CRNPs and CNMs.
- Issued Notice of Deficiency and Continued Provisional Approval for Judson College ADN program, with expected NCLEX-RN© score correction by September 30, 2014.

January 2014

- Approved publication of a quarterly ABN electronic newsletter beginning in February 2014.
- Approved official ABN presence on social media, including Twitter and Facebook.

The ABN Board in Action in FY 2014

February 2014

- Approved Notice of Correction to Chattahoochee Valley Community College PN program for exceeding NCLEX® outcome standard for FY 2013.
- Approved Notices of Deficiency for Springhill College, Auburn University—Montgomery, Auburn University, and South University BSN programs for submitting the Nursing Education Annual Report late.
- Approved Notices of Deficiency to South University BSN program, Herzing University PN program, and Herzing University ADN program for failing to submit requested information.
- Approved Standardized Procedure List and directed staff to distribute to CNOs via list-serv.
- Approved separate Standard Protocols for CNM and each CRNP certification, with addition of several procedural skills.
- Approved revisions to the CNM and CRNP Specialty Protocols.
- Approved 2014 School Nurse Survey to determine health needs of public school students.

March 2014

- Approved Notice of Continuing Deficiency and Continued Provisional Approval to Virginia College ADN Program in Birmingham.
- Approved Notice of Deficiency to Fortis Institute PN program in Bessemer for failure to meet the NCLEX® outcome standard of 80%.
- Approved Revised ABN organizational chart.

April 2014

- Approved amendments to ABN Administrative Code, Chapter 610-X-8, “Disciplinary Action.”
- Approved staff guidelines for informal disposition of disciplinary cases and fines.

May 2014

- Amended strategic plan benchmark dates relating to a new ABN website.
- Approved amendments to ABN Administrative Code, Chapter 610-X-13, “Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program.”
- Approved transition to electronic notification to RNs for annual renewal.
- Approved addition of safety questions to RN renewal.

The ABN Board in Action in FY 2014

June 2014

- Elected Pamela Autrey and Gladys Hill delegates to 2014 Annual Meeting of NCSBN; Chrystalbell King and Miriam Ellerbe elected as alternates.
- Approved notification to CRNPs and CNMs who were currently inserting hormone pellets for hormone replacement that the procedure was not approved and directing them to cease performing it.
- Approved addition of intravenous iron to the Standard Formulary for CRNPs and CNMs.
- Deferred action on Drake State Technical and Community College application to offer ADN program until questions can be addressed.
- Approved standardized procedure for foot care by RN Certified Foot Care Nurse (CFNC) for Specialized Nail Care/ Cynthia Wilson.
- Denied standardized procedure request to approve central vascular access and IV therapy by LPNs; request from Dialysis Clinic, Inc.

July 2014

- Approved revised ABN organizational chart.
- Approved new nursing education program application templates.
- Approved revised nursing education annual report.
- Approved Board guidelines for video transcribing of formal hearings.

August 2014

- Approved standardized procedure for pelvic exams by RNs at UAB STD Clinic, deleting bimanual exams.
- Elected Francine Parker and Laura Wright to participate in NCSBN NCLEX® Fall Review.

September 2014

- Established FY 2015 Board Compensation at \$175/day.
- Approved repeal and replacement of Rule 610-X-4-.14, "Fees."
- Determined that hormone pellet insertion is outside scope of practice for CRNPs and CNMs.
- Denied new ADN program at Drake State Community and Technical College.
- Awarded 40 graduate scholarships in the amount of \$4,150.68 each.

Licensure

ABN licenses more than 85,000 registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and approves advanced practice nurses, making nurses the largest population of professionals regulated by any single licensing board in the state.

Initial licensure is accomplished either by completion of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Licensure Examination (NCLEX®) for LPNs or RNs, or through endorsement, where nurses who hold a license from another state are licensed in Alabama based on already having qualified for licensure at the national level and meeting any other qualifications necessary for an Alabama license.

In FY 2014, ABN issued new licenses to 7,050 RNs and 1,869 LPNs. Following initial licensure, nurses must renew their licenses on a two-calendar-year cycle, with licenses for RNs and LPNs issued in alternating years (all RNs in even years; all LPNs in odd years). The annual renewal period runs from September 1 to November 30, followed by late renewal from December 1 to December 31. Statistics on the number of nurses licensed in Alabama are updated daily on the front page of ABN's website, www.abn.alabama.gov.

Initial Licensure in FY 2014

License Type	Licensed in 2014
RN Endorsement	2,520
RN Examination	4,530
LPN Endorsement	578
LPN Examination	1,291

An active, valid Alabama license is required to practice nursing in the state of Alabama. Occasionally, nursing licenses are either revoked by the Board for disciplinary reasons or lapse due to failure on the part of the nurse to renew on time. In either case, the nurse must apply for reinstatement in order to return to practice. In FY 2014, ABN approved 1,216 applications for reinstatement of lapsed licenses and 14 for reinstatement of revoked licenses.

Citizenship Verification

Alabama Act No. 2011-535 requires ABN to verify the citizenship or legal presence of applicants prior to issuing a license. This significantly impacted the licensure process, beginning in FY 2013 with annual renewal for LPNs and continuing with RN renewal for 2014.

Nursing Practice

The practice of nursing is constantly evolving, as new technologies, new medicines, new diagnoses, and changes in healthcare require nurses to adapt to their professional environments. In 2001, the Board adopted rules for standardized procedures for nursing practice beyond basic educational preparation. The definitions of professional nursing and practical nursing, stipulated in the Nurse Practice Act, are the foundation for the ABN Administrative Code, Chapter 610-X-6, Standards of Nursing Practice.

Standardized Procedures

The standardized procedure (SP) process supports the mission of the Board through the application of education, training, and competency validation for procedures that go beyond basic nursing education. This is also a useful tool for the nursing education community to monitor and adapt to emerging trends in nursing practice. ABN continues to monitor developments in standardized procedures and approves or rejects them on a case-by-case basis. A detailed listing of the approved procedures is available on the ABN website, www.abn.alabama.gov.

Legislative Activity Related to Nursing Practice

During the 2014 Regular Legislative Session, the Alabama Legislature passed Alabama Act No. 2014-437, the Alabama Safe at Schools Act, which provides for delegation of the administration of injectable diabetes medications, a nursing task, by school nurses to trained, unlicensed school personnel. This legislation seeks to preserve the safety of diabetic students, while enhancing schools' ability to deliver necessary care in the school environment, including at school-sponsored events. Since passage of the Alabama Safe at School Act, ABN staff has worked with the Alabama State Department of Education, the American Diabetes Association, the Alabama Association of School Nurses, and numerous other stakeholders to craft both appropriate rules for delegation and the curriculum for training unlicensed personnel for diabetes care.

Continuing Education

The Nurse Practice Act mandates at least 24 hours of Continuing Education for all licensed nurses during each two-year license period. Applicants must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education hours for renewal, reinstatement, and endorsement. The Board uses evidence-based data from the disciplinary process, needs assessment, surveys, and current trends in practice and education in prescribing continuing education requirements.

FY 2014 Total Approved CE Providers

There were a total of 338 approved providers of CE at the close of FY 2014, 3% of which were located out of state.

*Includes various non-traditional providers, such as pharmacies, durable medical equipment (DME) companies, churches, K-12 schools, and nursing sororities.

Total Approved Providers	338
Out of State Providers	3%

Type/Classification of Approved Providers

Hospital/Medical Center	26%
Other*	20%
Nursing Home/Nursing & Rehab	11%
College/University/School	19%
Self-Employed	7%
Outpatient Services including Clinics	6%
State Associations	5%
Mental Health Services	2%
Rehab Center	2%
Public Health Agencies	<1%
Regional/National Association	<1%

Continuing Education

FY 2014 Continuing Education Provider Applications

During FY 2014, the Board approved 87 applications for Approved Providers (ABNP) of Continuing Education, bringing the total number of Board-Approved Providers of CE to 338.

Applications Reviewed	Total Applications Approved	Initial Applications Approved	Continuation Applications Approved	Reinstatement Applications Approved	Pending
89	87	14	67	6	2

ABN Continuing Education Course Activity

Continuing Education remains a focus of the Board, with the ABN staff providing continuing education opportunities for managers, supervisors, nurses, providers, and ABN staff. The Board presently offers 16 Courses for credit and 9 Non-CE credit course offerings.

FY 2014 ABN On-Line Educational Courses

During FY 2014, CE courses developed by the Board and ABN staff were made available to all Alabama licensed nurses.

2014 ABN Online Education: Camtasia Programs	Continuing Education Hours
Human Exploitation: Identification and Response to Victims—12/03/2013	1.82
Legislation: Anaphylaxis in Schools—6/23/2014	0.50
Hormone Therapy: Current Status and How We Got There—8/21/2014	1.00

Continuing Education

FY 2014 CE Audit of Licensed Practical Nurses

Each year the Board reinforces the CE requirements mandated by the statute by auditing licensed nurses upon renewal. The Board conducted an audit of continuing education by LPNs for FY 2014.

FY 2014 CE Audit of Licensed Practical Nurses

The CE audit consisted of a review of 2% of active LPNs for this renewal period as demonstrated below:

Total Licensees (LPN) Selected for Audit (2% of aggregate)	294	
Licensees with All ABNP Provider Continuation Credit	144	48.2%
Active Duty Military	1	less than 1%
Reviewed and Compliant with CE Requirement	143	49.14%
Non-compliant with CE Requirement	6	2%

Advanced Practice Nursing

A nurse with a valid Alabama RN license and an advanced practice specialty certification may apply for Board approval to engage in Advanced Practice Nursing. Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) includes the following four categories: Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP), Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), and Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS).

Except in cases where practice occurs in a federal facility, Alabama law requires CNMs and CRNPs to practice under a collaborative agreement with a physician licensed to practice in the state of Alabama. Collaborative practice applications require joint oversight by ABN and the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (ABME), each of which appoints three members to the Joint Committee for Advanced Practice Nursing. CRNPs and CNMs may maintain multiple collaborative practice agreements.

Advanced Practice Nursing Statistics

Advanced Practice Category	Approval: Initial Issue FY 2013	Approval: Initial Issue FY 2014	AP Category Active on September 30, 2013	AP Category Active on September 30, 2014
Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)	2	4	17	24
Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP)	397	454	3,080	3,069
Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)	97	71	1,571	1,520
Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)	7	4	84	78
Total	503	533	4,752	4,691

Collaborative Practice

The Board approved 1,054 collaborative practice applications for CRNPs and CNMs in FY 2014, compared to 1,142 for FY 2013.

Advanced Practice Nursing

Policy Activity Related to Advanced Practice Nursing

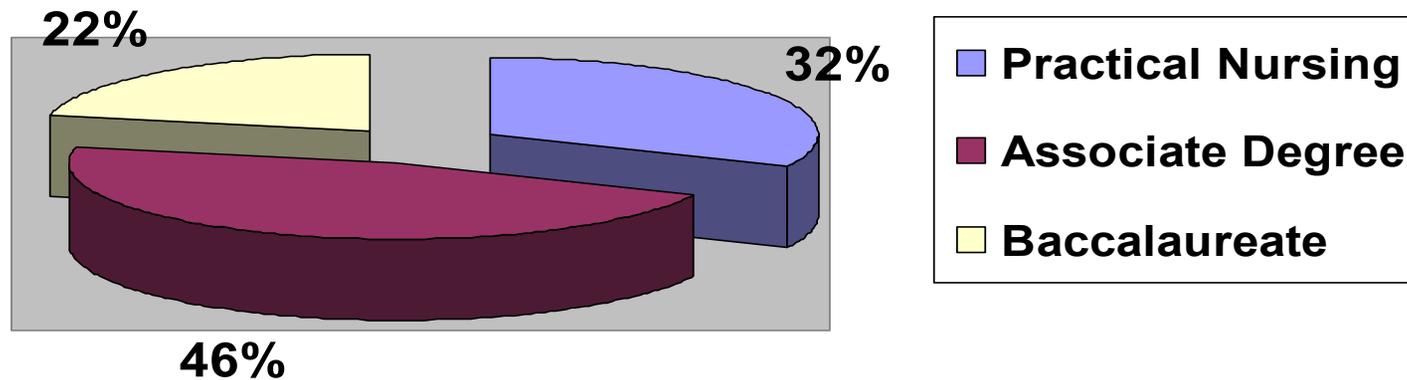
During FY 2014, Board staff began working in conjunction with the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners and the Joint Committee for Advanced Practice Nursing to streamline and formalize various aspects of collaborative practice and the application process. Among new developments in FY 2014 were:

- Specialty Protocols were revised, updated, and approved for CRNP/CNM Collaborative Practice.
- Standard Protocols were revised to include several procedures that formerly required separate applications for the individual collaborative practice. The Board authorized a specific Standard Protocol for each nurse practitioner specialty certification.
- New Skill Requests: a new process was developed to establish consistency between ABN and the Joint Committee and to ensure that sufficient information was provided and considered prior to comprehensive review of specific requests.
- Prescribing and insertion of hormone pellets was deemed outside the scope of practice of CRNPs and CNMs.
- Board staff developed and implemented new online applications for collaborative practice.

Nursing Education Programs

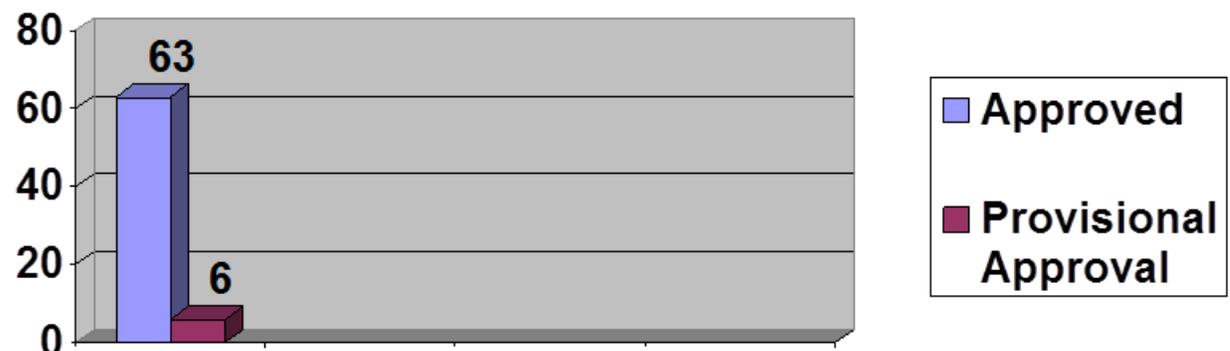
There are a total of 69 pre-licensure approved programs in the state, of which, 22 (32%) are practical nursing (PN) programs, 32 (46%) are associate degree in nursing (ADN) programs and 15 (22%) are baccalaureate of science in nursing (BSN) programs.

Types of Nursing Programs



ABN Status

91% (63) of all programs are approved and 9% (6) are provisionally approved.

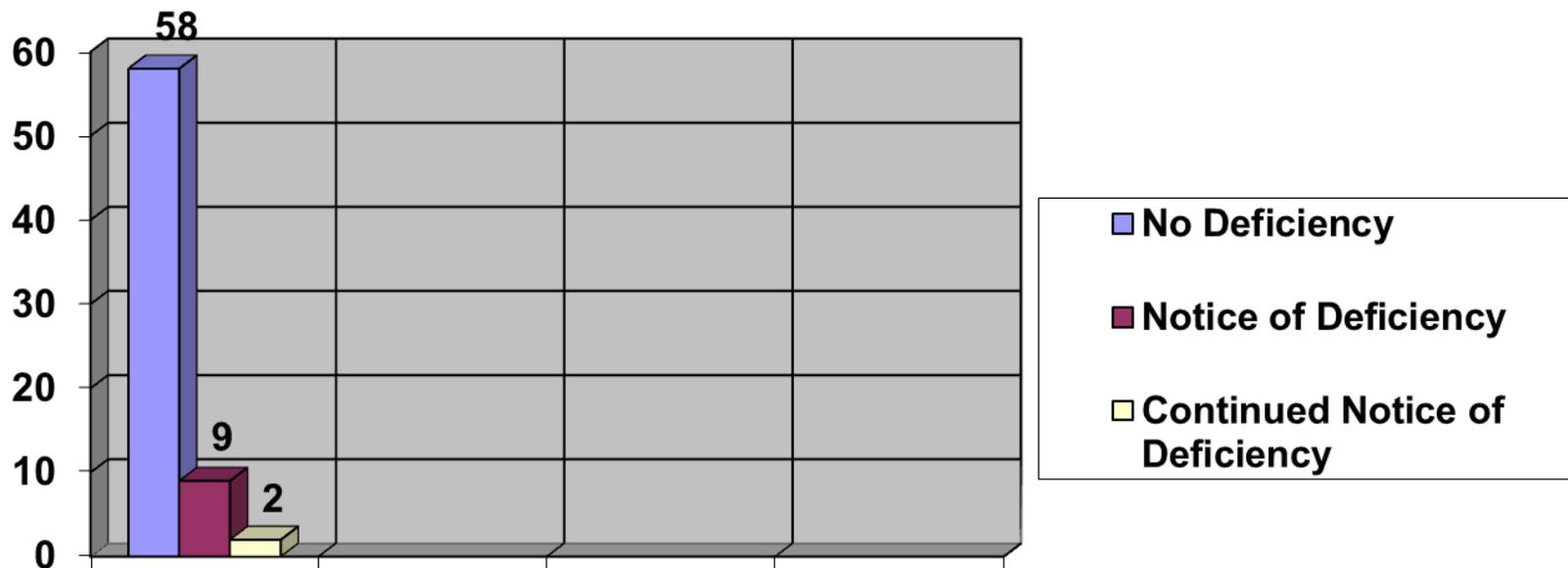


Nursing Education Programs

Board–approved nursing education programs submit an education report annually. The annual report serves as written verification of the program’s compliance with the education standards set forth in Chapter 610-X-3, Nursing Education Programs, of the Alabama Board of Nursing Administrative Code and provides information regarding number of students graduating, curriculum, faculty, and program outcome standards.

Programs that fail to meet one or more of the standards as stated in Chapter 610-X-3 may be issued a deficiency. Eleven programs (16%) were issued a Deficiency in FY 2014. Nine programs (13%) were issued a Notice of Deficiency and two (3%) were issued a Continued Notice of Deficiency.

Deficiencies for Nursing Programs—FY 2014



Operations

The ABN Operations Division is comprised of two sections: Operations and Finance. Under the management of the Director of Administrative Services, the Operations section is responsible for administrative functions such as personnel and fleet management, records disposition, and other vital day-to-day operations of the Board, as well as the Board's Call Center. The Chief Fiscal Officer oversees the Finance section, which maintains the agency's budget, including receipts and deposits.

Financial Information – Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues:

Licenses and Permits	\$	2,880,800.00
Examination Fees	\$	507,545.00
Board Penalties	\$	145,120.00
Miscellaneous Fees	\$	369,291.47
Other Revenues	\$	235.20
Total Revenues	\$	3,902,991.67

Expenditures:

Salaries and Benefits	\$	3,496,860.85
Travel Expenses	\$	45,754.04
Operating Expenses	\$	1,333,910.36
Equipment Purchases	\$	26,455.88
Total Expenditures	\$	4,902,981.13

Internal Audits and Dishonored Checks

During FY 2014, ABN conducted internal audits of revenues, expenditures, and the licensing process. The licensing processes reviewed included receipt of applications, receipts of fees, issuance of licenses, and imaging of records associated with each license. Any inaccuracies were noted, forwarded to the appropriate person, and corrected.

In 2001, the Legislature granted ABN authority to accept personal checks as payment for fees and fines. The Board does not accept third party checks, counter checks, or checks drawn on out of state banks. The majority of monetary transactions occur online (93%), and the number of checks received by ABN is minimal in relation to the total number of transactions processed. ABN received only two dishonored checks during FY 2014.

Graduate Scholarships

The Legislature appropriated \$166,027 in the FY 2014 Education Trust Fund Budget for ABN's Graduate Scholarship program. Forty awardees received \$4,150.68 each.

2014 ABN Scholarship Recipients

Name	County of Residence	Nursing School	Anticipated Degree
Adams, Amy D	Mobile	USA	DNP
Baker, Abby K	Shelby	Samford	MSN
Barron, Amanda	Madison	UA	MSN
Bergeron, Margaret	Lauderdale	UAB	PhD
Briscoe, Gina C	Morgan	Samford	DNP
Brown, Julie B	Limestone	UA	DNP
Carstarphen, Latoya M	St. Clair	Troy	DNP
Carter, Samantha	Houston	Auburn	MSN
Cherry, Traci M	Blount	UAB	MSN
Cooper, Elizabeth	Madison	UAH	MSN
Davis, Sara L	Mobile	UAB	PhD
DuBose, Wendy	Dale	UA	EdD
Dupree, Tiffany	Jefferson	Samford	MSN
Hall, Edward B	Lee	UA	MSN
Hanks, Mary L	Tuscaloosa	UA	EdD
Harris, Yolanda	Jefferson	UAB	PhD
Harvey, Melodye M	Montgomery	Troy	DNP
Hicks, Stacy D	St. Clair	Samford	DNP
Hill, Chineda L	Tuscaloosa	UA	EdD
Howard, Katie	Walker	UNA	MSN
Johnston, Kristen	Jefferson	Troy	DNP
Jones, Felisha W	Tuscaloosa	UA	MSN
Joyner, Talyia F	Lee	Auburn	MSN
Light, Megan M	Dekalb	Samford	MSN

2014 ABN Scholarship Recipients

Name	County of Residence	Nursing School	Anticipated Degree
Luman, Stephanie	Lauderdale	UA	EdD
Nedospasova, Marina V	Tuscaloosa	UA	MSN
Pence, Jillyn N	Jefferson	UA	EdD
Rutland, Capri C	Mobile	UAB	MSN
Segers, Blair	Jefferson	UAB	MSN
Strickland, Meredith	Lee	Samford	DNP
Watts, Penni	Jefferson	UAB	PhD
Westbrook, Nancy A	Coffee	Troy	DNP
White, Katie S	Baldwin	Troy	DNP
Wilbanks, Bryan A	Madison	UAB	PhD
Wilkes, Jennifer	Dekalb	Samford	MSN
Williams, Susan	Baldwin	UAB	PhD
Williford, Joyce	Macon	Samford	MSN
Willis, Rebecca	Shelby	Samford	MSN
Wood Jr, Joseph	Dallas	Troy	MSN
Yordy, Beverly M	Lee	USA	DNP

Information Technology

ABN's Information Technology (IT) section supports the mission of the Board by striving to provide the Board and ABN staff with cost-effective and quality-driven technology that meets the dynamic needs of the Board and the public.

FY 2014 was a particularly eventful year for the IT section, which successfully completed or made significant progress on key projects that speed access to technology resources and upgraded services to meet the needs of the agency. Among these:

- Refreshed the backup/disaster recovery hardware and software, equipping the IT staff to handle future backup and disaster recovery needs. Enhancements included full data encryption in-flight, as well as remote-to-disaster recovery server and a faster backup task completion.
- Prepped and installed new HP 820c Blade servers for virtual server farm.
- Completed transition to state email (ACE). This allows the ABN IT staff to be utilized in other areas, frees up valuable computing resources and allows ABN staff to reach any other state agency or employee by selecting from their contact list.
- Supported web enabled and client applications in two primary environments: Microsoft.NET and JAVA.
- Staffed a full time help desk to respond to staff questions
- Purchased and implemented ManageEngine software, which helps to centralize administration of all ABN computers and devices. ManageEngine simplifies IT management with software solutions that are easy to use, easy to deploy.

The next year and beyond will see ABN engaging in new approaches to solve problems through IT. This section is well suited to meet these challenges, as it provides maximum value while serving the mission of the board.

The Legal Division

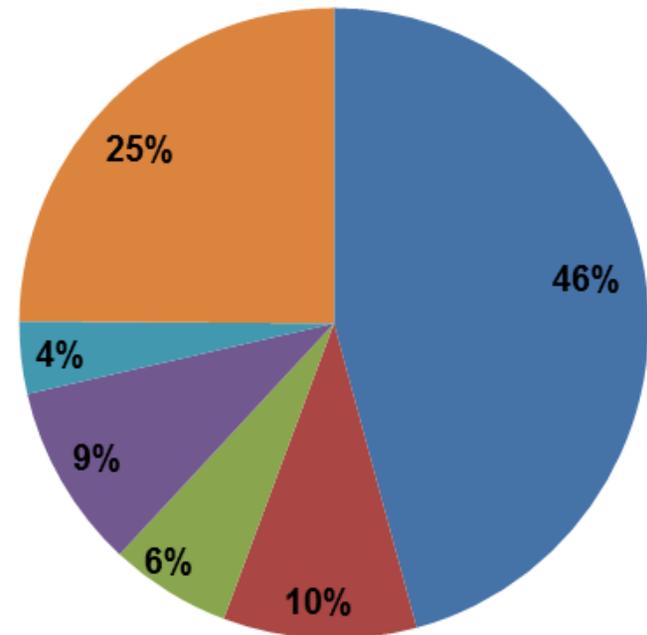
The Legal Division exists not to provide legal advice to nurses, but to investigate complaints, recommend disciplinary action against nurses, review drafted regulations, keep the Board and Executive Officer (EO) informed of legal changes or issues, and work with lawyers from other state agencies, as well as represent the ABN in court when necessary.

A written complaint is required to initiate an investigation and may be submitted to the Board at any time. The legal division received 1,418 complaints during FY 2014, a majority of which were resolved through informal processes.

The number of complaints received represents 1.5% of the Board's aggregate licensee population. Disciplinary actions are publicly available and are reported to all required data banks and other boards of nursing. A listing of licensees and applicants who received discipline during FY 2014 is available at www.abn.alabama.gov, under the "Discipline" tab.

Complaint Resolution By Discipline or VDAP Agreement

- Consent Order
- Formal Hearing
- Revocation by Order
- VDAP Agreement
- Voluntary Surrender after Administrative Complaint
- Voluntary Surrender before Administrative Complaint



The Legal Division

FY 2014 Activities of the Legal Division

Complaints received during FY 2014	1,418
Probation Monitoring	
License status Active/Probation	295
License status Suspension	121
Released from monitoring	126
Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program (VDAP)	
Actively monitored in VDAP	224
Released from monitoring	82
COMPLAINT RESOLUTION	
Application Expired	0
Withdrew Application	6
Cleared	410
Non-disciplinary Letter/Admonishment	307
Deceased	4
Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program (VDAP) Agreement	64
Formal Hearing	67
Consent Order	309
Voluntary Surrenders before Administrative Complaint	168
Voluntary Surrenders after Administrative Complaint	25
Revocation by Order	42
COMPLAINTS RESOLVED DURING FY 2013	1,402
OPEN/PENDING COMPLAINTS AT THE END OF FY 2014	784

The Legal Division

Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program (VDAP)

The Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program (VDAP) is a program authorized by the Alabama Legislature to promote early identification, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation of any registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, or applicant issued a valid temporary permit for licensure whose competence is found to be impaired or compromised because of the use or abuse of drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, chemicals, or other substances or as a result of a physical or mental condition rendering the person unable to meet the standards of the nursing profession (ABN Administrative Code §610-X-13-.01(8)). The program has been in existence since 1994.

VDAP is a program intended for nurses who readily admit to a problem with alcohol and/or drugs or a mental or physical disorder that may cause the nurse to be unable to meet the standards for the nursing profession. VDAP is not disciplinary action, and there is no discipline associated with the nurse's license.

Probation Monitoring

The Probation Monitoring section is responsible for tracking the progress and compliance of licensees who are in a "probation" status pursuant to a Board order.

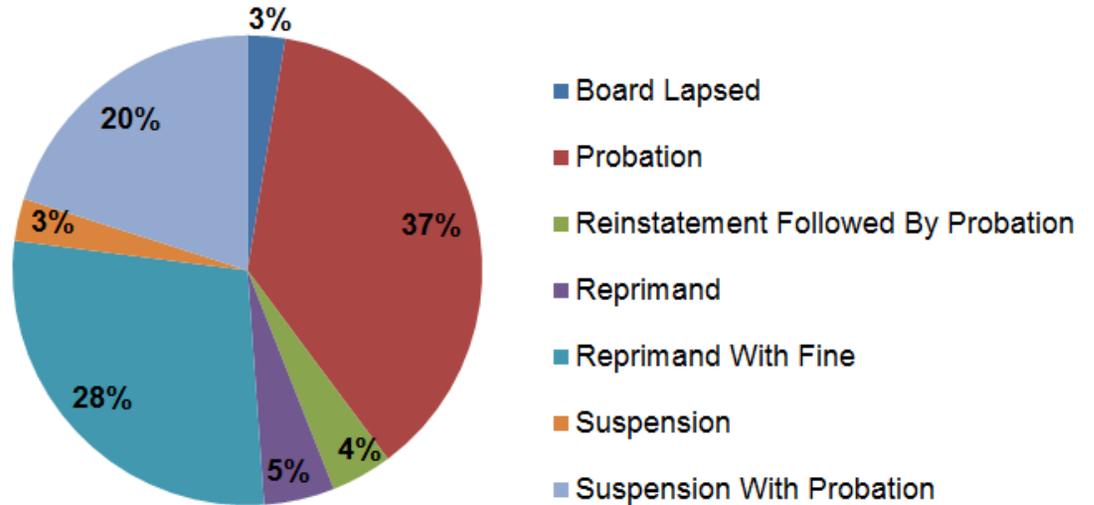
Probationers may continue to practice, subject to conditions and monitoring. Seventy percent (70%) of probationers incur discipline related to substance use or dependency, while only 30% incur discipline due to non-substance-related violations.

This section also maintains records for suspended licenses. Suspension of a license prevents the nurse from continuing legally to practice in Alabama. Initial suspension is generally applied "until conditions met," which may include comprehensive substance use disorder evaluations and treatment, payment of fines, completion of corrective education, or such other stipulations as the Board may prescribe. In most instances, a period of suspension may not exceed twelve months, as the license will convert to "revoked" status pursuant to the order of suspension. In all, 90% of licensees subject to suspension succeed in either returning to active status or transitioning to probation monitoring .

The Legal Division

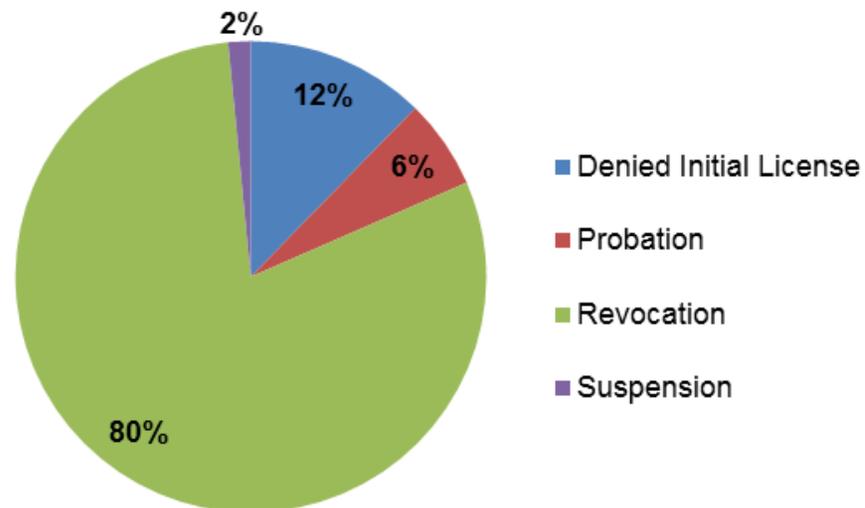
Discipline When Resolved With a Consent Order

A large percentage of discipline cases are resolved with a consent order. The chart at the right provides a breakdown of consent order activity for FY 2014.



Discipline When Resolved With a Formal Hearing

A nurse may elect to have his or her case resolved through the formal hearing process. Depending upon circumstances, the Board may require resolution through this process, as well.



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Breakdown of Violations Requiring Discipline

ABN strives to achieve consistency and equity in the disciplinary process, routinely reviewing rules and practices to develop the most efficient system possible.

While only about 1% of licensees receive discipline at any given time, the size of the nursing population, the sensitive nature of their work, and the relative vulnerability of the patients they serve require strict attention to ensure ABN's primary charge - public protection.

The fact that the Legislature has not granted ABN law enforcement authority under existing statute hampers the Board's ability to access vital law enforcement resources and share information with other agencies. Accordingly, ABN continues to advocate for this designation as a natural component of its legislative mandate.

ASSIGNED VIOLATIONS WHEN DISCIPLINE OCCURRED

	Voluntary Surrender Before AC*	Voluntary Surrender After AC*	Consent Order	Formal Hearing
Abandonment	0	1	0	0
Arrest/Conviction	9	3	36	6
Board Order Violation	2	0	1	2
Boundary Violation	0	0	1	0
CE Violations	0	0	1	2
Discipline/Pending Action Any State	4	1	5	5
Fraud/Deceit	1	1	34	5
Illegal Practice	0	1	23	1
Mental Disorder	1	0	3	0
Patient Abuse	3	0	0	0
Physical Impairment	1	1	2	0
Practicing Beyond Scope	3	0	17	2
Probation Violation	38	3	18	18
Substance Abuse	63	10	71	15
Substandard Nursing Practice	14	3	64	4
Unprofessional Conduct	7	1	28	4
Violation of VDAP Agreement	22	0	5	3

*Administrative Complaint