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Introduction

Previous research conducted by the authors (Bostwick, Delahoyde, & Ramirez, 2021), indicate that nurses working in rural communities of Nebraska prioritized three areas for additional education and training to provide safe patient care in their current position: 1) Mental health, 2) Diabetes, and 3) Trauma. Based on these results, an online survey was designed to identify specific specializations for these three fields.

Study Site(s): All rural¹ communities where Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) work.

¹The U.S. Census Bureau defines rural as "all population, housing, and territory not included within an urbanized area or urban cluster".

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand motivational levels and the specific areas of training, and educational needs of mental health, diabetes, and trauma, by requesting participants to take part in the study through completion of an online survey for RNs and APRNs working in rural communities in Nebraska.

Research Questions

- What specific areas of specialization are needed for nurses regarding mental health, diabetes and trauma?
- Overall, how motivated are nurses to receive education/training working in rural communities?

Methods

A 10-item training/education needs assessment survey was delivered to all RNs and APRNs working in rural communities of Nebraska using a Survey Monkey ® format via e-mail addresses from the Nebraska State Board of Nursing's directory. Levels of motivation to receive additional education/training was measured on a scale from 0 to 100.

Results

Total N: A total of 231 surveys were received. Seven respondents were not considered for analysis due to exclusion criteria. Survey response rate: 14%.

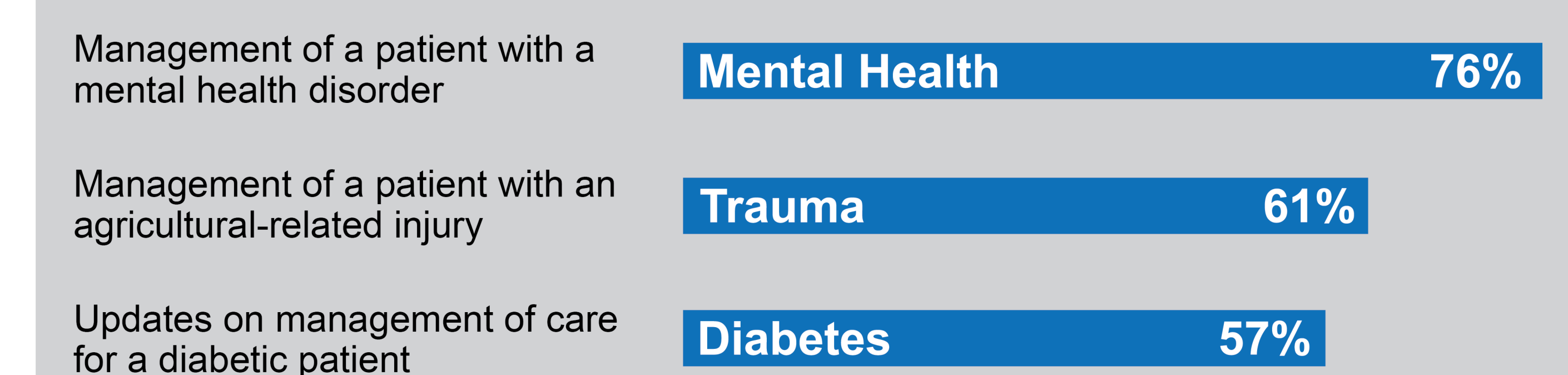
Type of nurse: RN: 56.6%; APRN: 10.2%; Nurse Administrator (23.5%); Travel RN (0.9%); Other (8.8%)

Demographic characteristics: Race/ethnicity: 97.3% White; 0.9% non-Hispanic minorities; 1.8% Hispanic. Gender: 97.3% female; 2.7% male. Average age: 49.3 (min: 26; max: 74). Geographic location: Surveys were received from 80 different rural towns, representing 62 counties of Nebraska. Nearly one out of five (18%) nurses work in communities under 1,000 people.

Areas of training & education needs:

Nurses were asked if there was a designated expert in their facilities for these specialties. Over 70% of nurses responded that they did not have a designated expert for mental health (71%), trauma (72%), and two-thirds (65%) mentioned that they did not have a designated expert for diabetes.

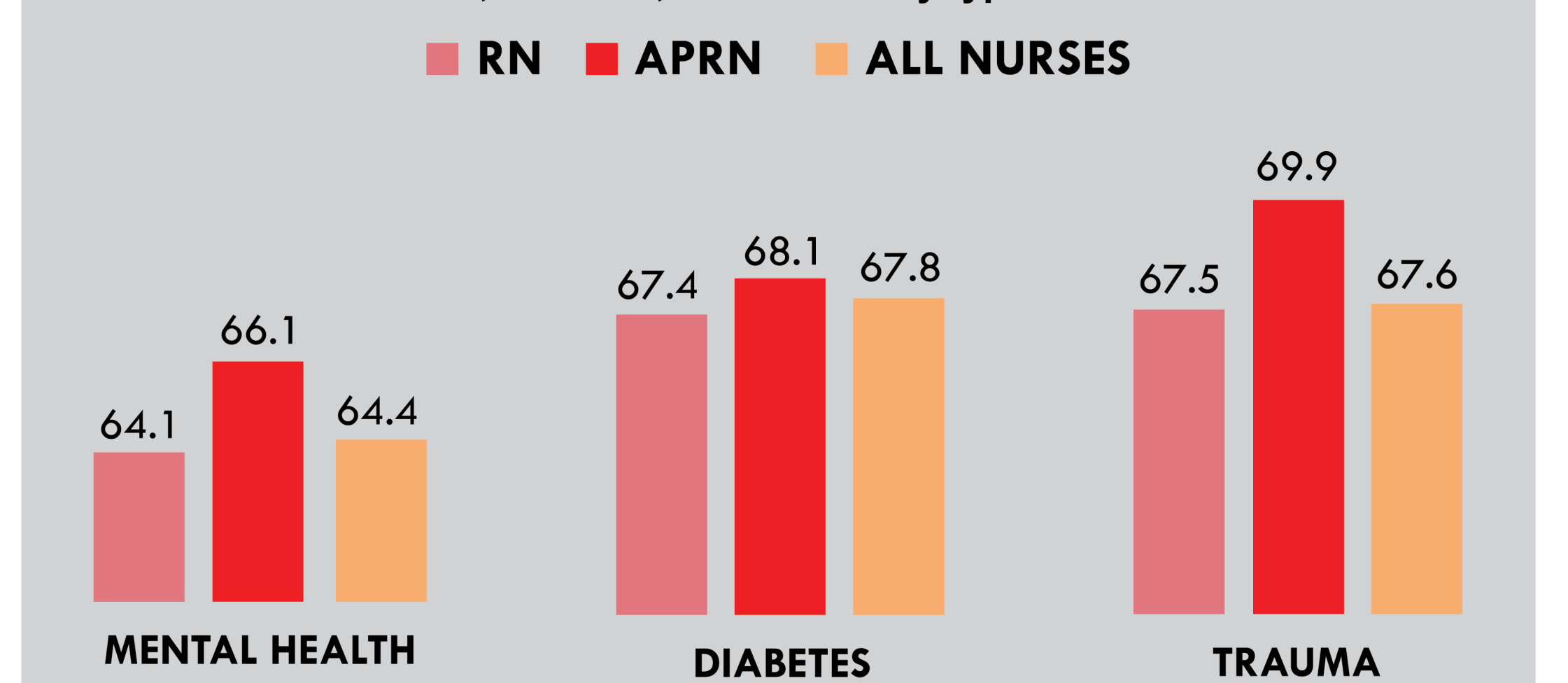
Figure 1. What areas do you need more education/training to meet the needs of patients? (All nurses)



Level of motivation:

Nurses were asked on a scale from 0 to 100 how motivated they were to receive additional education/training in mental health, diabetes, and trauma. Results show that nurses (RNs and APRNs) are slightly more motivated to receive training on **diabetes** (67.8) when compared to trauma (67.6), and mental health (64.4). Of all nurses who scored **90 or higher** in motivation to receive additional education/training, those who selected **trauma** were significantly more motivated when compared to nurses who selected mental health (38% vs. 26%, respectively). APRNs showed slightly higher levels of motivation when compared to RNs.

Figure 2. Average level of motivation to receive education/training in mental health, diabetes, and trauma by type of nurse



Conclusions & Recommendations

- The majority of nurses (RNs and APRNs) mentioned **management** of patient either with a mental health disorder, diabetes, or ag-related injury were priorities for more education/training.
- Over two-thirds of nurses working in rural communities mentioned that they did not have a designated mental health, diabetes, or trauma expert in their facilities. Strengthening collaboration with facilities that have these expertise may overcome these challenges in rural America.
- Overall, rural nurses are highly motivated to receive additional education/training in mental health, diabetes, and trauma. Of those who selected trauma for additional education/training, nearly four out ten (38%) were more highly motivated (score over 90 points) when compared to those who selected mental health and diabetes (26% and 29%, respectively).

Works Cited

Bostwick, L., Delahoyde, T., & Ramirez, J. (2021). Continuing Education for Nurses Working in Critical Access Hospitals and Rural Settings: A Call for Action (Part III). *Nursing News*, 38 (3):14-16. Available online: <https://epubs.thinknurse.com/publication/?m=9518&i=718302&p=14&ver=html5>