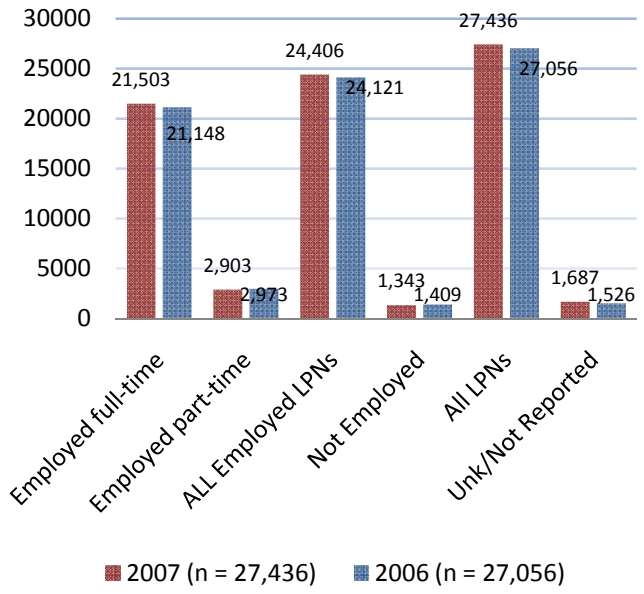
The Licensed Practical Nurse Population in Tennessee, June 2006 and 2007

Licensed Practical Nurses in Tennessee

The Tennessee Board of Nursing provides data to the Tennessee Center for Nursing annually on the cumulative population of nurses licensed in the State of Tennessee. The list is provided shortly after the end of the second quarter of each year. The following information includes LPNs with an active license status in Tennessee.

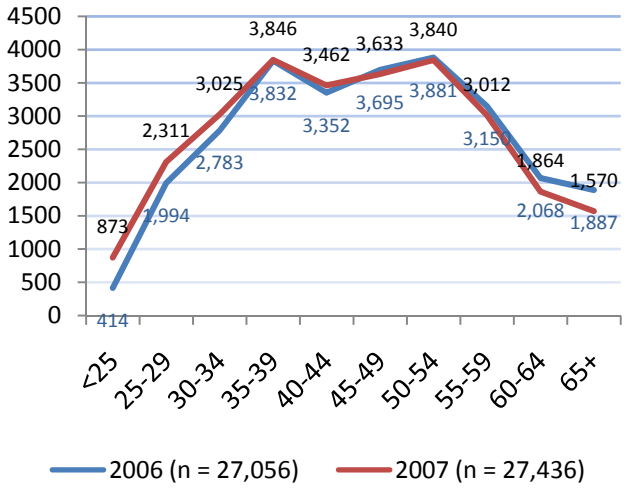
Chart 1. LPN Population, by Nursing Employment Status in Tennessee, 2006 & 2007



There is little information available about the LPN workforce in the US. The most current data is from the Supply, Demand, and Use of Licensed Practical Nurses published in 2004.[1] In 1984, 80% of LPNs nationally reported being employed and rose to 94% in 2001. In 2007, 89% of LPNs were employed (a decrease of 0.2% from 2006). In Tennessee, 78.4% of active LPNs were employed full time (a 0.2% increase from 2006), 10.6% were part time (a decrease of 0.4% from 2006), and 5% were not employed (a 0.3% decrease from 2006). The total number of LPNs increased by 1.4% from 2006 to 2007 (from 27,056 to 27,436).

AGE

Chart 2. Age Distribution of the LPN Population in Tennessee, 2006 & 2007



In 1984, the average age of the LPN population in the US was 39 and in 2001 was 43. In Tennessee, the average age is 44.9 (2007), which is down slightly from the 2006 average age by 1.31% (46.2). In Tennessee, 37.5% of the licensed practical nurse population is over the age of 50 and only 11.6% of TN LPNs are under the age of 30 (2007).

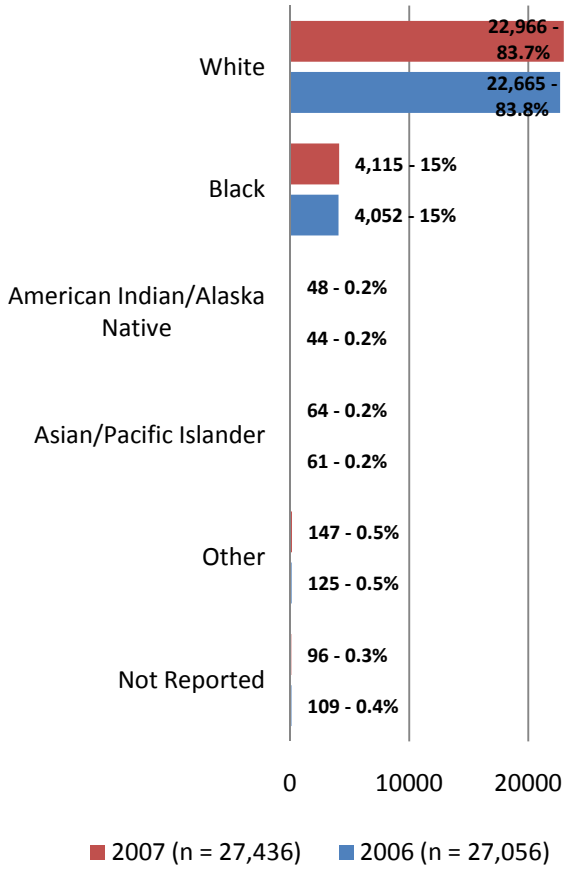
Men still comprise a very small percentage (5%) of the total LPN population nationally (2001), and are only slightly higher percentage in Tennessee (5.6%, 2007).

RACIAL / ETHNIC BACKGROUND

The LPN workforce is predominately white, although the ethnic diversity of LPNs has grown over time. In 1984, 77% of the LPN workforce was white, but this number dropped to 67% by 2001. The largest minority group of LPNs is blacks, comprising 26% of the workforce in 2001. The

LPN population in TN consists of 84% whites and 15% blacks. Less than a half of a percent of the LPN workforce is composed of American Indian/Alaskan Native and Asian/Pacific Islander.

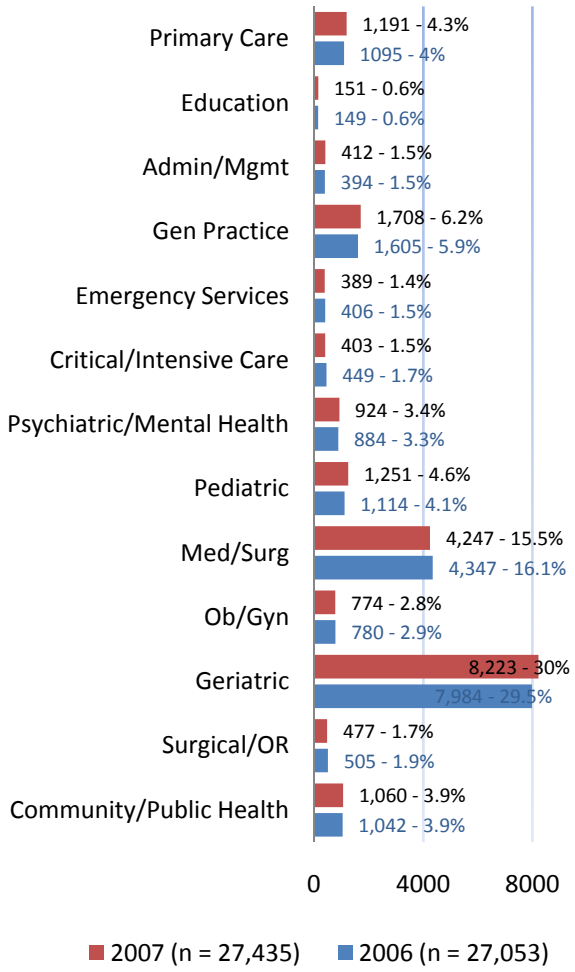
Chart 3. Distribution of LPNs by Racial/Ethnic Background in Tennessee, 2006 & 2007



EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS

LPNs work primarily in hospitals and nursing and personal care facilities. Nationally, the number of LPNs working in hospitals declined from 54% in 1984 to 32% in 2001. In the same time frame, the percent of LPNs working in nursing and personal care facilities increased by 6% (from 26% to 32%). In Tennessee, the largest LPN employment setting is Geriatrics (30%), followed by Med/Surg (15.5%).

Chart 4. Distribution of LPNs by Employment Settings in Tennessee, 2006 & 2007



** Excludes "Other" (n=5,982) and "Not reported" (n=243) categories.

References:
1. US Department of Health and Human Services. 2004. *Supply, Demand, and Use of Licensed Practical Nurses.* http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/reports/lpn/LPN1_5.htm Accessed June 2008.