

This summary presents selected highlights about the NHSRU research study entitled “Maintaining Ontario’s Nursing Workforce: Evaluating the Impact of Ontario’s Late Career Nurse Initiative”. This applied health research project is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. Once the study has been completed, the full report will be available on our website: [www.nhsru.com](http://www.nhsru.com). For more information, please contact Autumn Chilcote at [autumn.chilcote@utoronto.ca](mailto:autumn.chilcote@utoronto.ca).

### **Evaluating the Impact of Ontario’s Late Career Nurse Initiative**

Ontario’s aging population alongside the decreasing nursing workforce will have a significant impact on the health care system in future years. On average, nurses tend to retire in earlier years when compared to other professionals, and work fewer hours as they approach retirement. In 2004, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) introduced the Late Career Nurse Initiative (LCNI), providing hospitals and long-term care homes with salary/benefits replacement costs for late career nurses (Registered Nurse, Registered Practical Nurse and Nurse Practitioners who are aged 55 and over) participating in less physically demanding nursing roles for 20% of their working time.

#### **Purpose:**

The goal of the LCNI Evaluation Study is to systematically evaluate the impact of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s Late Career Nurse Initiative on the retention of late career nurses in Ontario, and explore the degree to which it is having an impact on job satisfaction and feelings of organizational commitment.

The study also explores specific characteristics of successful LCNI organizational projects and the secondary benefits of participating, such as capacity building and its impact on patient care.

#### **Research Methodology:**

The NHSRU LCNI Evaluation applies a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis. A qualitative analysis of both frontline nurses and nurse managers’ experiences with the initiative will explore emerging concepts related to the objectives through semi-structured interviews. A quantitative statistical analysis of responses to surveys will provide objective measures of the LCNI’s influence on workplace satisfaction, burnout, organizational commitment, and retention targets set by the MOHLTC. Between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) will also be used to determine whether significant differences exist between participating and non-participating nurses on indexes of job satisfaction and commitment.

#### **Accomplishments:**

1. Researchers have been in contact with 90 organizations that have participated in LCNI with 63 sites agreeing to participate.
2. Phase One of the evaluation is underway: Nurse managers throughout Ontario have been engaged in semi-structured interviews to assess perceived success of the LCNI and characterize components of successful LCNI proposals.
3. Preliminary analysis of interviews with nurse managers indicate
  - Organizations support the LCNI and report successful retention of late career nurses.
  - Participation in the LCNI is reported to have been associated with improved patient outcomes and diverse organizational benefits; and
  - The late timing of the annual Late Career Nurse Initiative (LCNI) funding announcement makes it challenging to use the money.

*Note:* Further analysis is underway and results are forthcoming.



## What participants said:

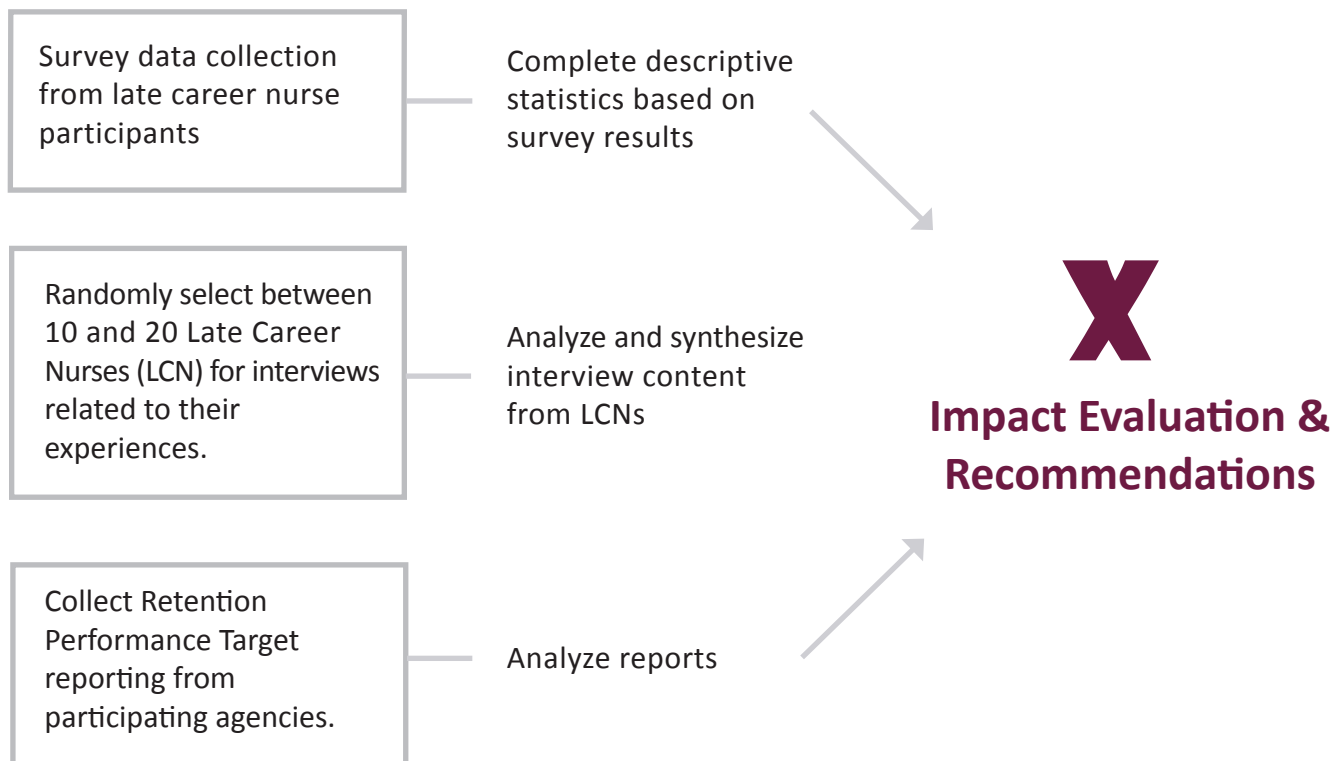
*“We recognize that we need to retain and harness the knowledge, skill, and judgment that these nurses have amassed over their careers. And the Late Career Nurse Initiative was a positive way to provide that.”*

*“I think if the Initiative continues that we’ll see a lot of the more experienced nurses stay in the work force for a longer period of time, because you won’t find as many burned out...we’ll have a more productive society if we’re able to keep our experienced nurses working longer.”*



*“You can see that pathway of how the program is benefitting the patients, also benefits the families, also benefits the employees”*

## Future Steps:



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