What is needed to have 65% of the RN workforce with a BSN or higher degree by 2020?

• The percentage of RNs in the South Carolina workforce with a BSN or higher degree increased by 1% per year between 2008 and 2012. At that rate it will take 20 years to reach our 65% goal.

• The Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning has projected that the size of the RN workforce will be approximately 50,000 by 2020. In order to reach the statewide goal, approximately 32,500 RNs will need to have a BSN or higher degree that year.

• In 2012, 17,367 RNs already have a BSN or higher degree. That means that between 2012 and 2020 an additional 15,133 RNs need to achieve a BSN degree.

• On an annual basis, this means that we need to graduate 1,882 RNs from entry-level or RN-BSN completion programs each year.

• In the 2012-13 academic year we graduated a total of 1,122 persons from entry-level and RN-BSN completion programs. At that rate of production, we will not reach our goal of 65% until 2026.

• Not all graduates plan to be licensed in South Carolina. In the years 2011 – 2013 an average of 981 new graduates sat for the NCLEX in South Carolina. Not all of them passed on the first sitting.

• If we can increase the number of new graduates passing the NCLEX in South Carolina to 1,000 each year, we would also need to graduate approximately 900 RNs from RN-BSN completion programs each year.

• In 2014 a total of 421 RNs were admitted into RN-BSN completion programs in the state, based on information reported in the 2014 SREB survey of nursing education programs. We will need to double those annual admission numbers immediately in order to meet our goal by 2020.

What do we need to do?

1. Increase the number of new BSN graduates sitting for and passing the NCLEX in South Carolina.
2. Double the number the new students admitted annually in our RN-BSN completion programs.

Caveats: These figures do not take into account RNs who might be enrolled in out-of-state RN-BSN completion programs. Nor does the estimate of future RN workforce numbers by education incorporate age- and education-related workforce patterns.

This information was compiled by the Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning, December 2014.