The Education of Vermont’s Registered Nurses

In January of 2011 the Institute of Medicine published *The Future of Nursing: Focus on Education*, a pivotal report on the nature of the current nursing workforce and the pedagogical changes necessary to ensure its continued adequacy as both the practice and the patients evolve. The report concludes with four recommendations that are often the goals of policy measures at both state and federal levels: increase the proportion of nurses with bachelor’s degrees to 80 by 2020; double the number of nurses with doctorates; create nurse residency programs; and encourage nurses to be constantly learning.

What remains unclear is the current state of the education of nurse, and the proper courses of action necessary to approach the goals put forth by the Institute of Medicine. Despite a variety of workforce databases, few sources have successfully captured the complexities of the distribution of health-related human capital. The research herein works to fill this literature gap by mapping typical nursing pipelines, conducting qualitative research on the current objectives of the nursing workforce, and constructing econometric models to improve our knowledge of the distribution of nursing degrees.

With a better understanding of the supply and demand of nursing degrees across Vermont’s varied health sector, more informed financial and social policy decisions will hopefully increase the efficiency of Vermont’s health economy.