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How Do Scope of Practice Regulations Affect Demand for LPNs?

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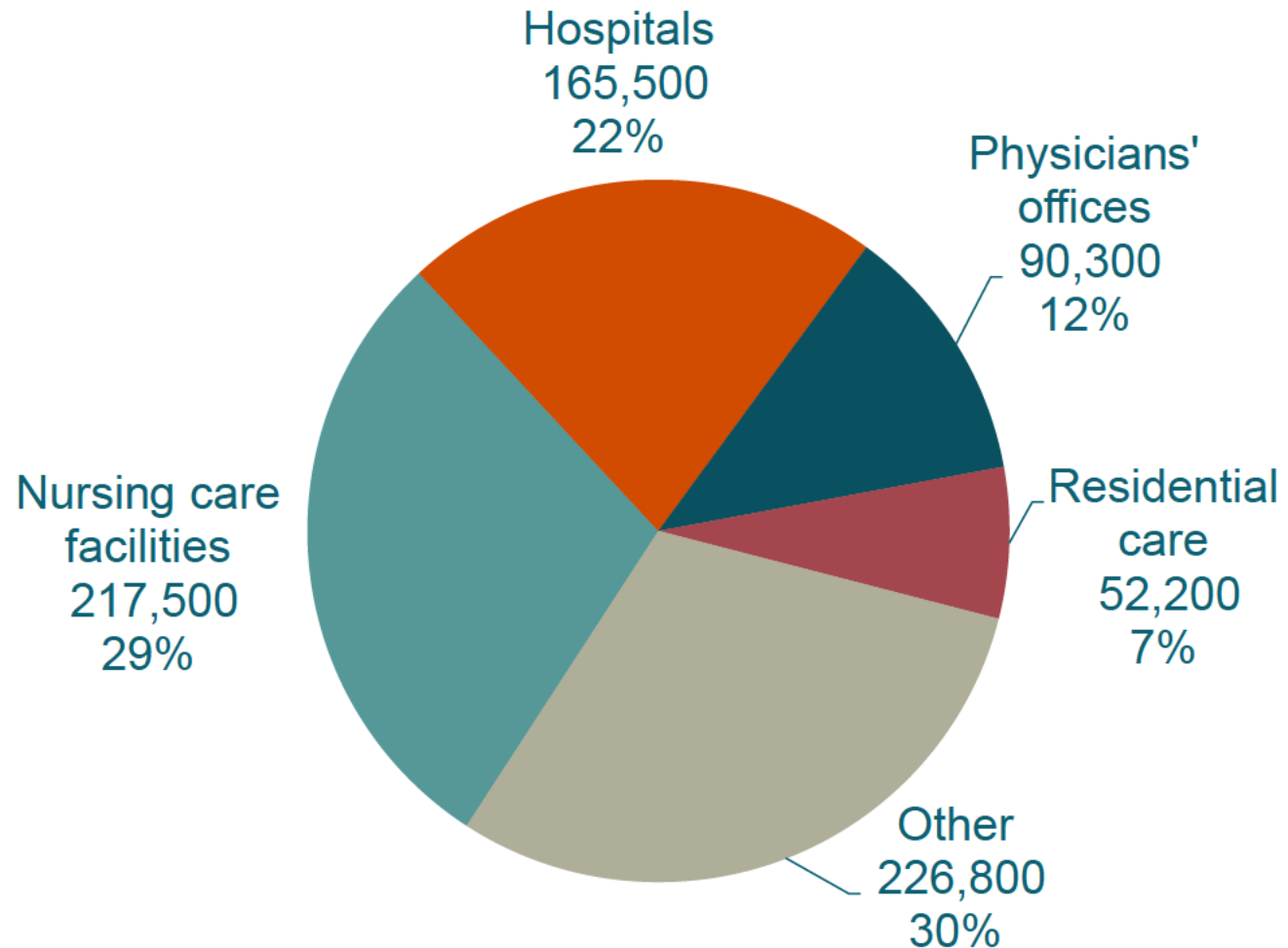
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What are LPNs?

- **Licensed practical nurses**
 - Licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) in CA and TX
- **1-2 years education**
 - Community Colleges
 - Vocational Schools
 - Adult Schools & High Schools
 - Military Medical Corps
- **Licensure mandated in all U.S. states by 1965**
 - License granted by state agency
- **Scope of practice varies across states**

Employment of LPNs, 2010



752,300 total employed; 920,800 forecast for 2020

Rising interest in LPNs

- **Growing long-term care needs**
- **Rising need for RNs in higher-level roles**
 - Care coordination
 - Patient & family education
 - High-acuity patients
- **Role in outpatient care**
 - Physicians' offices
 - Medical homes
- **Building career ladders**

Variations in LPN scope of practice

- **Most scope of practice information is in published regulations**
- **Some states offer “position statements” or other semi-regulatory guidance**
- **Some states offer only “decision trees” for determining appropriate practice**
- **Some states have explicit lists of permitted activities**

Maine's scope of practice decision tree

1. Describe the act to be performed. Review the scope of practice for your licensure level.

- **LPN**: contributing to data collection, participating in development of plan of care, implementing aspects of care as directed, maintaining client safety, participating in evaluating care, and delegating to qualified others.
- **Is this act expressly permitted or prohibited by the Nurse Practice Act for the license you hold?**
 - **UNSURE → go to #2**
 - **WITHIN SCOPE FOR YOUR LICENSE → go to #3**
 - **PROHIBITED → STOP**

What types of things can LPNs do?

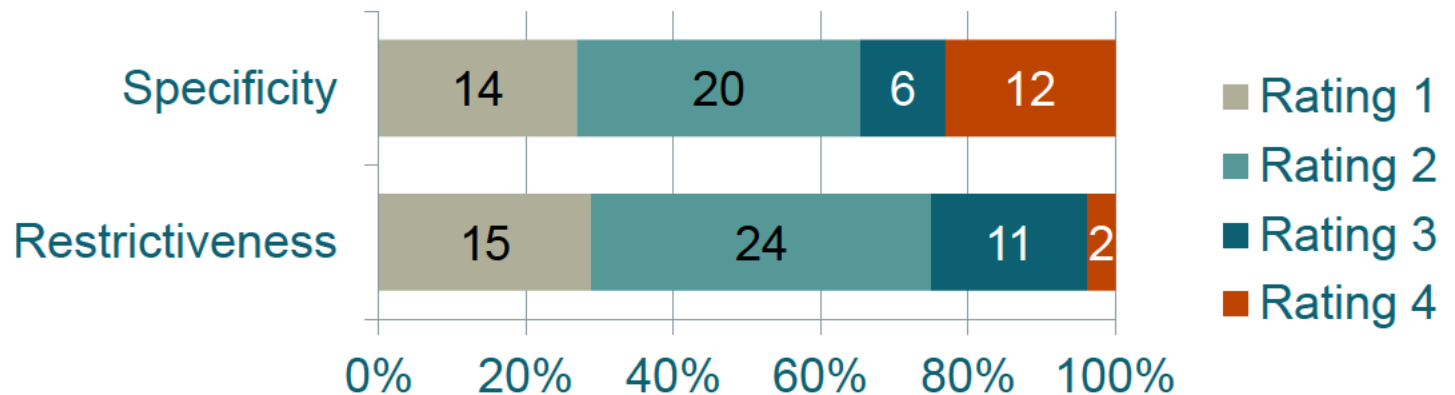
- **Assessment of patients and development of care plan**
 - Can LPNs do any assessment?
 - Can LPNs do initial assessment?
 - Must a RN sign off on the assessment?
- **Drawing blood**
 - Any blood withdrawal?
 - With additional certification?

What types of things can LPNs do?

- **Intravenous administration**
 - Starting IVs?
 - Regulating IVs?
 - Hanging new IV solutions?
 - Medicated pre-mixed solutions?
 - IV “push”?
 - Blood products?
 - Chemotherapy?
 - Additional certification required?

Ratings of scope of practice (2004)

- **Review of scopes of practice**
 - Published regulations
 - Position statements
 - Telephone survey of nursing boards
- **Restrictiveness**
 - 1-5 scale, with 5 as most restrictive
- **Specificity**
 - 1-5 scale, with 5 as most specific



Do these regulations affect demand for LPNs?

- **Multivariate regression analyses**
- **Hospital data from American Hospital Association**
 - Dependent variables were LPN full-time equivalent employment, and LPN share of licensed nurse hours
 - Controlled for wages, patient characteristics, service mix of hospital, market characteristics
- **Nursing home data from CMS (OSCAR data)**
 - Dependent variables were LPN hours per resident day, and LPN share of all licensed nurse hours
 - Controlled for wages, patient case mix, nursing home characteristics, market characteristics

Impacts of scope of practice on LPN demand

- **Hospitals**

- Restrictive scope of practice reduces demand
 - 13% reduction in FTEs per point on our scale
- More specific scope of practice reduces demand
 - 8% reduction in FTEs per point on our scale

- **Nursing homes**

- Restrictive scope of practice reduces demand
 - 2% to 2.5% reduction per point on our scale
- More specific scope of practice reduces demand
 - 3% reduction per point on our scale

Conclusions and questions

- **Scope of practice affects demand for LPNs**
- **Regulations have not been linked to quality differences**
- **Some research finds that LPNs can improve productivity in hospitals and outpatient care**
 - Limited research to date
- **Regulations could impede new models of care**
 - Can RNs take more complex roles if there is nobody to take the less-complex work?
 - How can the workforce be deployed to support care transitions and home-based care?