

# Don't Say Goodbye! The Revolving Door in Nursing: Insights from New Nurses, A Case Review

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## Abstract

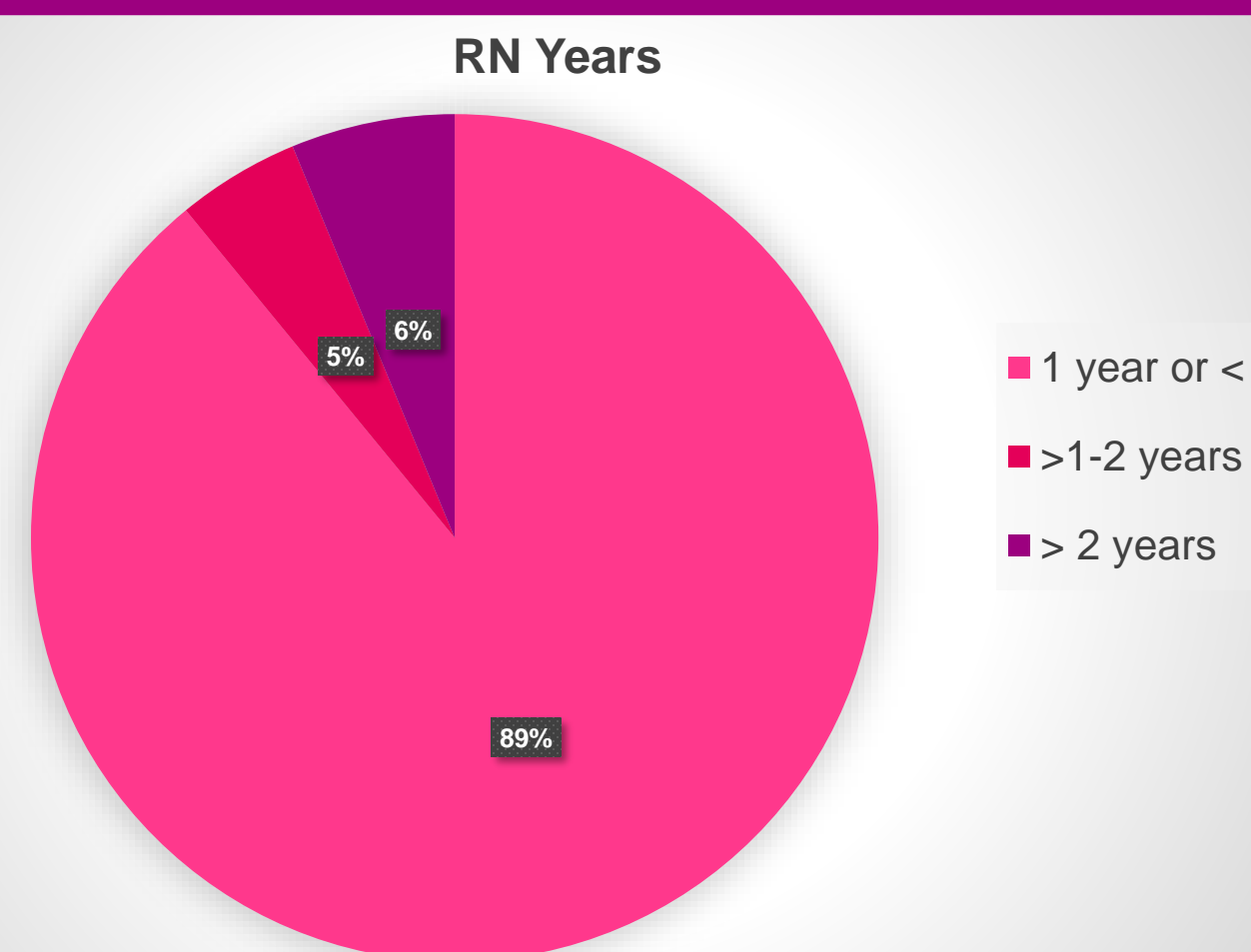
**Background:** Nurses are the backbone of America's health systems, providing care and support to patients for the duration of their lives (Blouin, Podjasek, 2019). According to the American Nurses Association (ANA), there will be more registered nurse jobs available through 2022 than any other profession in the United States (Haddad, Toney-Butler, 2019). New data reported in the 2019 National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report, published by NSI Nursing Solutions, Inc. shows a demand for nursing staff and other hospital professionals continues to outpace supply. Voluntary turnover continues to increase. The cost of turnover can have a profound impact on a hospital's budget. According to this latest survey, the average cost of turnover for a bedside RN is \$52,100. This results in the average hospital losing \$4.4-6.9M. Each percent change in RN turnover will cost/save the average hospital an additional \$328,400. The National RN vacancy rate slightly decreased this year to 8%. UPMC Hamot's bedside RN vacancy rate was 5.98% in 2019.

## Purpose

**Purpose:** To identify the number of nurses planning to leave their place of employment, both nationally and at UPMC Hamot. To investigate reasons for leaving, and variables that impact a decreased nurse turnover and increased nurse retention.

## Methodology

**Methods:** A survey was given to 64 newly licensed RNs during one of their Nurse Residency monthly sessions. Questions were asked regarding how long they have been a nurse, if they had any plans to leave UPMC Hamot, and/or the nursing profession, and reasons why. In addition, they were also asked what factors may influence them to stay at UPMC Hamot and/or in the nursing profession. They were also asked if they would recommend UPMC Hamot to their friends/family to work at, and why or why not.

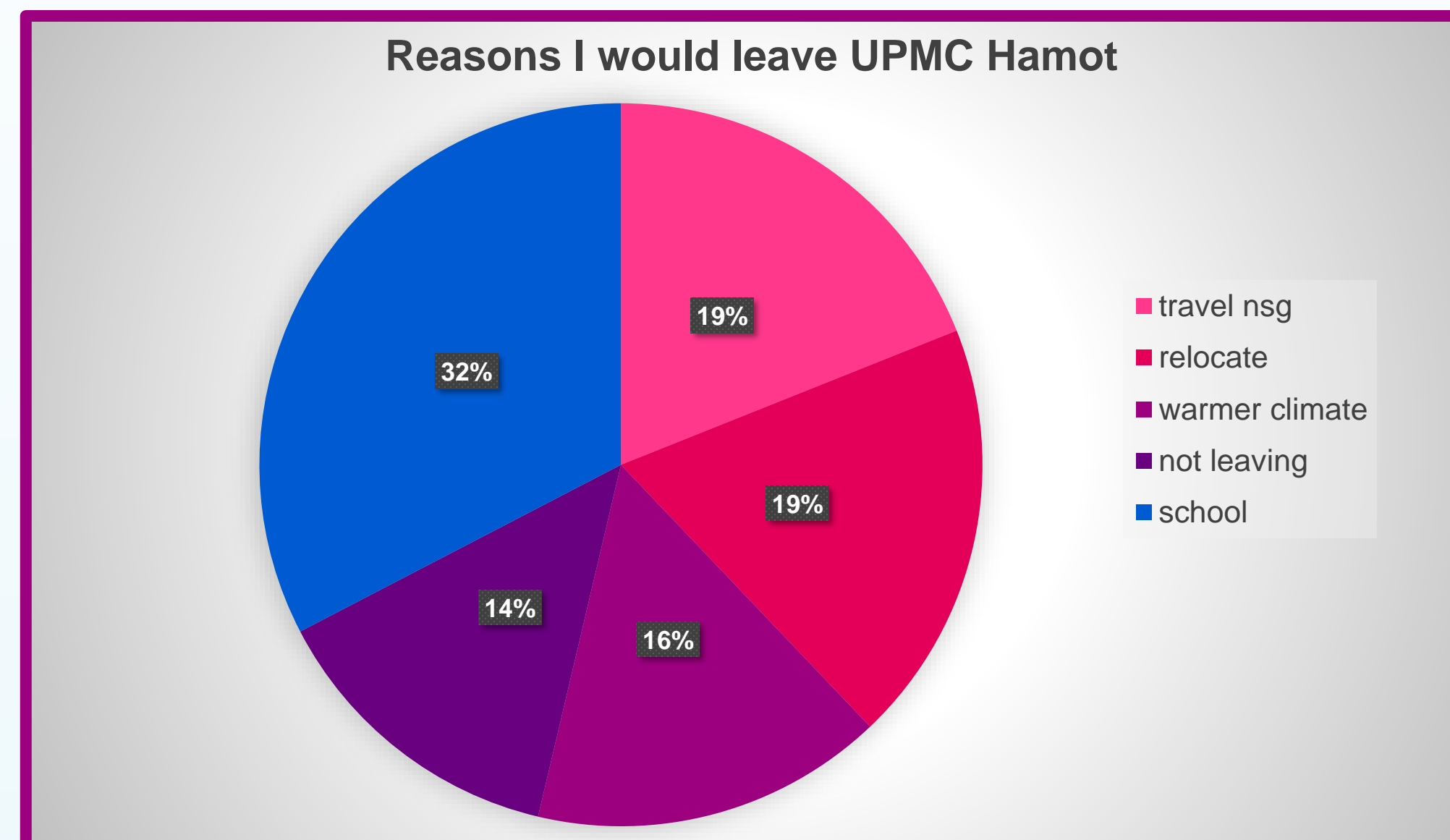


## National Bedside RN Turnover Rate

The National Bedside RN Turnover rate has been increasing steadily over the past 6 years. The average total turnover of bedside RNs was 16.4% in Calendar Year (CY) 2014, and with the exception of CY 2016, when it was 14.6%, has stayed at 16.8% in CY 2017 and 17.2% in CY 2018 (2019 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report). Hospitals with less than 200 beds experienced the greatest increase in turnover. RN vacancy rate continues to be of concern and currently stands at 8.0% for 2019. This is slightly below 2018 (8.2%), but still at an elevated level leading to excess labor utilization such as overtime and travel/agency usage. Today, only one in five hospitals (21.9%) reported a RN vacancy rate of "less than 5%" (2019 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report).

## What could UPMC Hamot do to increase our retention of nurses?

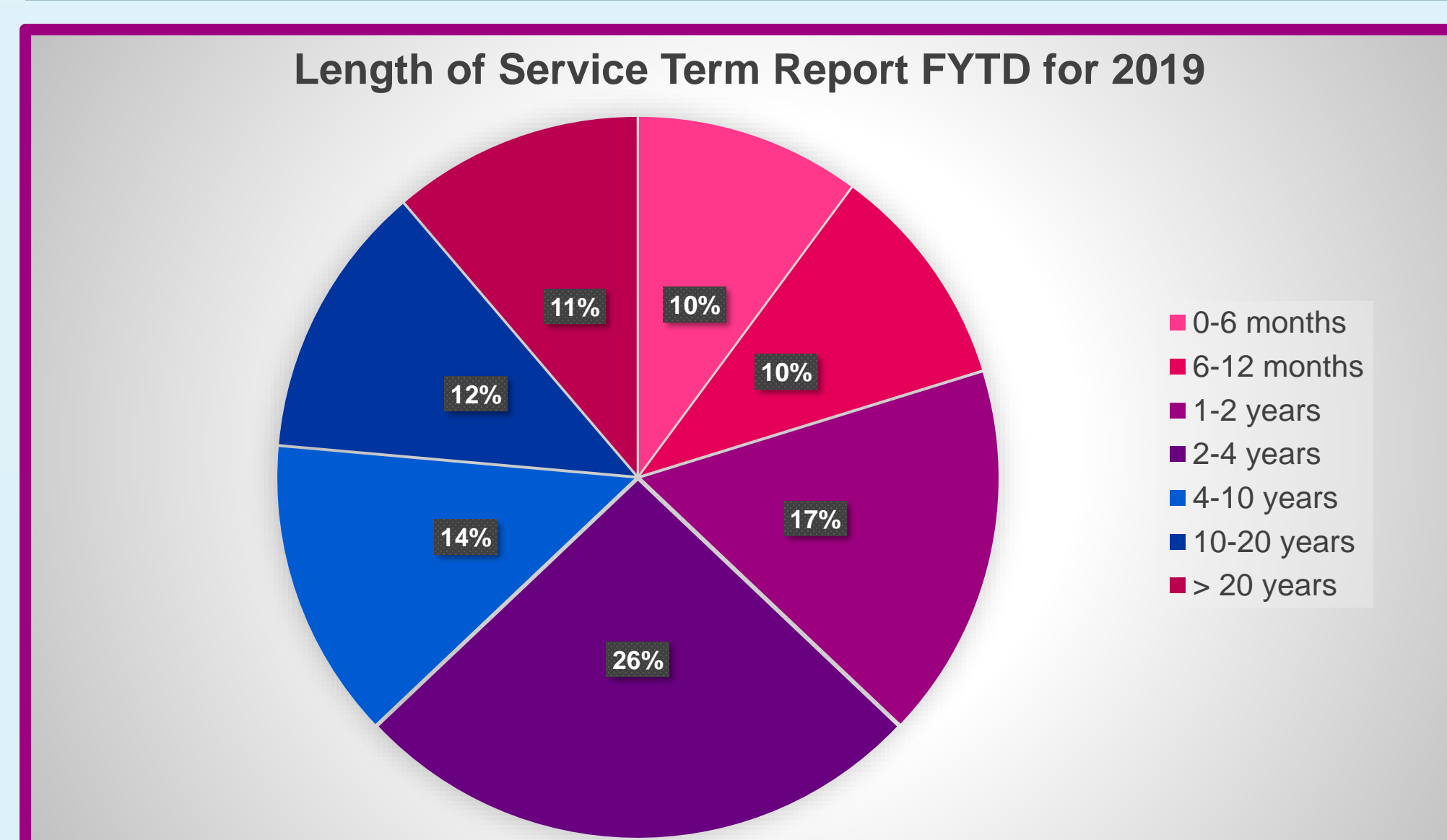
- \* Incentive Pay/Increase Salary/Wages: 40 out of 64 nurses
- \* Improved Staffing and Staffing Ratios: 10 out of 64 nurses
- \* Schedule flexibility: 4 out of 64 nurses
- \* Figure out a way to attract nurses with 5+ years experience to apply for positions
- \* Offer opportunities for nurses to advance in status before the 2-year mark, maybe a "fast track" to Sr. Pro or certain certifications
- \* Respectful co-workers/Respectful providers (physicians and nurse practitioners)



## Would you recommend UPMC Hamot to your friends/colleagues/family members to come here to work or to get medical treatment? Why or why not?

When asked if they would recommend UPMC Hamot to their friends/colleagues to work here, or to family members to get their medical treatment, 58 of the 64 nurses said YES. Two nurses did not answer and 4 said NO. Reasons for the "YES" responses varied from "Educational support," "It's a great place to learn and grow," "it's a great place to start a career, a great teaching and learning facility," "good reputation," "lots of team work here," "nurses are friendly and give good care," "great learning opportunities supported well by my unit director and coworkers," "great managers and leadership," "a sense of community within the organization," the best hospital in the area," and "the experience is the best in the region." The 4 responses of "NO" had no explanations.

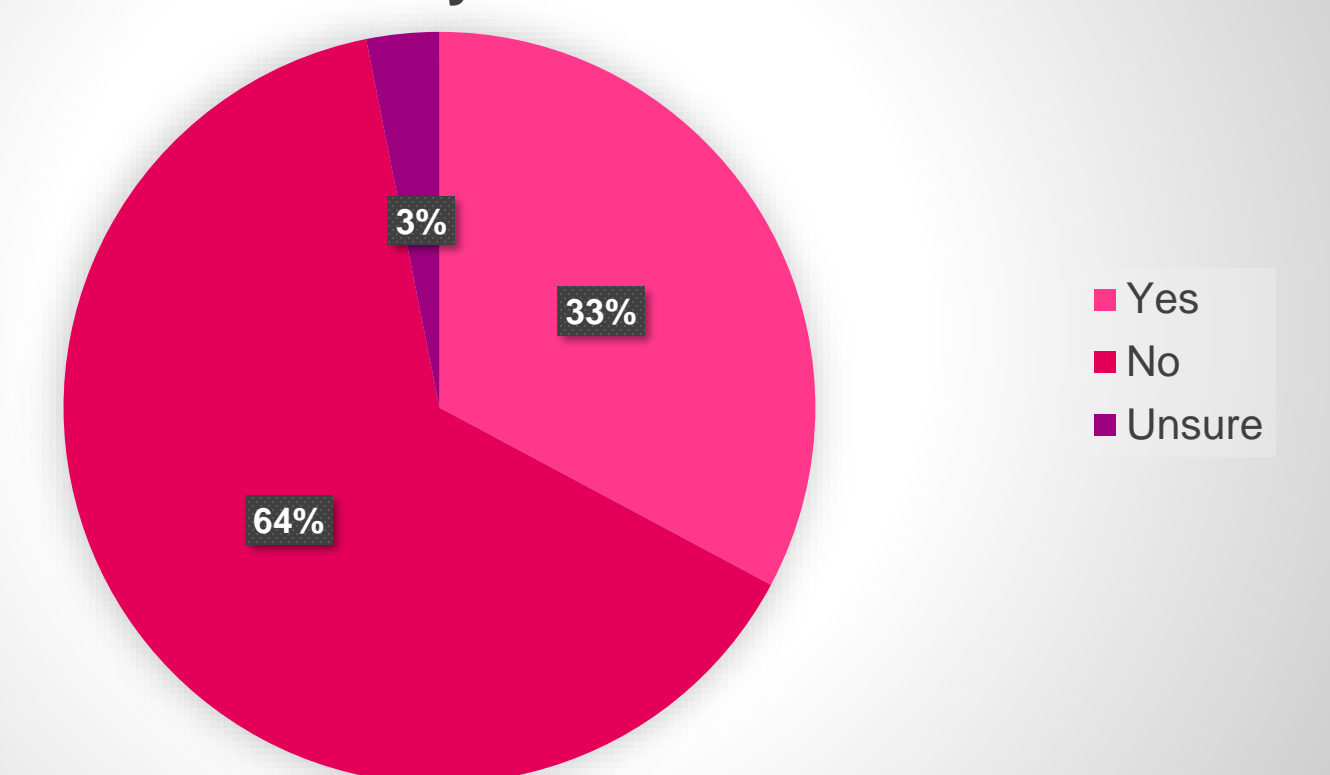
## UPMC Hamot Length of Service Term Report for 2019



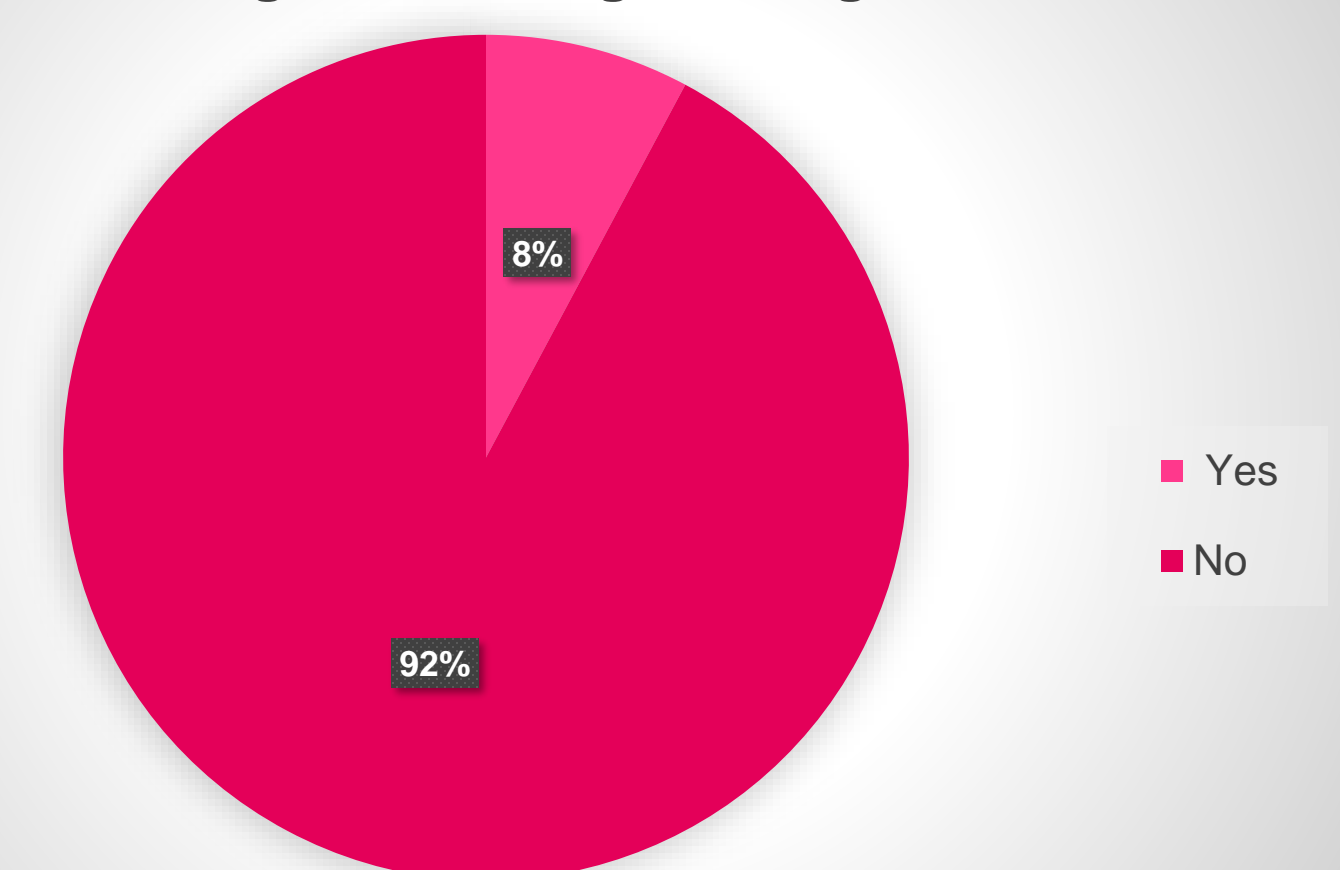
## Results

Sixty-four new nurses were surveyed. Fifty-seven of the 64 have been a nurse for one year or less, and 50% have worked at UPMC Hamot for one year or less. When asked if they have considered leaving UPMC Hamot in the next 1-2 years, 21 of them said YES, while 5 of them said they plan to leave the nurture profession altogether. Reasons for leaving varied, from plan to go into travel nursing, in order to pay off student loans more quickly, to pursue advanced education as a Certified Nurse Anesthetist or Nurse Practitioner, or to relocate to a warmer climate.

### I have thought about leaving UPMC Hamot in next 1-2 years



### I have thought of leaving Nursing Profession



## Conclusions

Financial implications aside, high rates of turnover can potentially affect the patient experience, as well as leading to understaffed shifts and interrupted workflows. With the baby boom generation reaching retirement age, it is imperative that we address voluntary turnover and look for solutions that will retain nurses beyond their first or second year of employment.

## Thoughts on Future Research

Questions for future research may include:

1. What is the difference in RN turnover between Magnet and non-Magnet hospitals?
2. What percentage of nurses who are leaving are returning to school to pursue graduate studies to become Nurse Anesthetists or Nurse Practitioners?
3. Are there variables that can be impacted to retain any of the nurses considering a job change?

## References

- Blouin, A.S., & Podjasek, K. (2019). The continuing saga of nurse staffing: Historical and emerging challenges. *Journal of Nursing Administration, 49*(4), 221-27.
- Haddad, L.M., & Toney-Butler, T.J. (2019). *Nursing Shortage*. StatPearls, StatPearls Publishing, Nov. 12.
- Nursing Solutions. (2019). *2019 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report*.