

**Consideration of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing  
CORE Report 2012**

**Information and discussion item only**

The following information concerning this project was prepared by Mary Beth Thomas who reviewed this report to identify findings and implications of the 2012 Commitment to Ongoing Regulatory Excellence (CORE) Report.

**Introduction and Purpose**

The purpose of the Commitment to Ongoing Regulatory Excellence (CORE) project is to provide an ongoing performance measurement and benchmarking system for nursing regulators. CORE provides and compares data that can be used for performance measurement and organizational enhancements by boards of nursing (BONs). By providing evidenced-based data nursing regulators are better able to meet their legislative mandate to protect the public.

Through CORE, BONs receive data collected and analyzed by NCSBN. The data may help BONs promote excellence in the provision of regulatory services with the overall goal of public protection.

This is the fifth cycle of CORE surveys that the Board has participated in.

**Summary:**

For discussion. No action required.

# NCSBN 2012 CORE Report

## Excerpts from the 2012 CORE Report

### Historical Perspective, Data Collection/Processing and Limitations

CORE (Commitment to Ongoing Regulatory Excellence) is a comparative performance measurement and benchmarking process for state boards of nursing (BONs). Development of the CORE process was initiated in 1998 by National Council of State Boards of Nursing's (NCSBN) Board of Directors and the process incorporated surveys of BONs, as well as three external stakeholder groups including nurses, employers of nurses and nursing educational programs.

Its purpose is to track the effectiveness and efficiency of nursing regulation nationally, as well as on an individual BON level in order to assist BONs with improving program performance and providing accountability to higher levels of authority and the public.

### Enhanced 2012 CORE Process

Building on previous rounds of CORE data collection and reporting, the 2012 CORE process was enhanced to include more outcome oriented performance measures. In addition, the 2012 process identified multiple sources of "big" data beyond the four CORE surveys mentioned above to include:

- Hospital Consumer Assessment of Health Care Providers and Systems Survey (HCAHPS) which is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients' perspectives of hospital care.
- Member Board Profiles
- NCLEX® Examinations
- Nursys®

The 2012 CORE Report also includes a redesigned presentation of results which include tables and graphs providing comparisons with all BONs and BONs of similar structure (umbrella versus independent). In addition, The CORE committee mapped all survey questions onto the CORE Logic Model. The CORE Logic Model represents the functions and expected results to be generated by BONs. In doing this, the committee could identify key performance measures and identify sources of performance data to strengthen performance measurement processes. The committee was also able to validate which questions were not guiding them to the final outcome goal of protecting the public.

### National Data Collection and Processing

The four CORE surveys were conducted in a staggered schedule in the summer of 2012. Ultimately, 34 BONs responded to the survey for a slightly higher response than in previous years. Approximately 1,500 nurses licensed by each BON were included in the survey and as well as 100 employers of nurses within the purview of each BON. Surveys were also distributed to the directors of all nursing education programs in the U.S. with an NCLEX code. The following table summarizes the number of surveys sent to and completed by each of the stakeholder groups.

#### National Target Group: Surveys Distributed    Surveys Returned    Response Rate

National Target Group	Surveys Distributed	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
BONs	55	34	62%
Nurses	78,153	11,619	15%
Employers	5,500	902	16%
Educators	3,885	1,502	39%

**Texas Target Group: Surveys Distributed Surveys Returned Response Rate**

Nurses	1500	220	15%
Employers	100	36	36%
Education Programs	200	80	40%

**Limitations of the Report**

Limitations of the report include missing or incomplete data and inconsistencies among the BONs as to how certain data are reported. For instance, the committee reviewed the Nursys® data that was used in the CORE discipline reports. The data represented was the number of actions a board took against certain discipline codes; however, a better measure would be to represent the number of nurses disciplined under certain discipline codes. In order to achieve this comparison, the committee will have to go through all discipline codes to finalize what codes pertain to certain discipline actions. Until NCSBN has implemented this process Texas data from Nursys® may not accurately reflect true benchmarking information. With respect to the surveys to nurses, educators and in particular employers, the number of responses for some individual states is low; therefore caution is needed regarding sampling error.

**Discussion of Texas Data**

The CORE Report contains over 240 pages of information about the Texas indicators. Consequently, this report focuses on key areas that provided meaningful, relevant information. The full report may be requested from the Executive Director.

Overall, the Texas data suggests very favorable ratings found in the CORE Report's four defined sections which include **Licensure, Discipline, Practice and Education**. One common finding in all of these sections is that the budget allocations for Texas is in the middle to lower end of the range for other similar sized boards. These data should be explored further to ascertain if Texas is doing "more with less" and how other boards might benefit from Texas successes. Or, as reflected in the Licensure Section below, this indicator may reflect a need to allocate more resources to improve performance.

**I. Licensure****Key areas exceeding national averages**

Length of time to process renewal applications:

National	4 Days
Texas	3days

Dollars received per application:

National	\$18
Texas	\$5

Percentage of initial licenses processed online:

National	32%
Texas	74%

NPA is state of the art for licensure:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 84%	Texas 94%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 81%	Texas 92%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 92%	Texas 99%

**Key areas for improvement**

Texas nurses' satisfaction surveys reflect that they are satisfied with the initial licensure process (99%) and renewal process (98%). In addition, the data regarding Texas employers and educators satisfaction with their correspondence with the Board exceeds national standards.

However, the data regarding Board responses to nursing constituents in a reasonable and timely manner is below national averages.

Timeliness of responses to e-mail inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 74%	Texas 58%
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Helpfulness of responses to e-mail inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 74%	Texas 65%
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Ease of telephone inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 73%	Texas 64%
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Timeliness of response to telephone inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 68%	Texas 59%
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Staff have outlined 3 areas for improving response times. These include licensing by endorsement, deeming students eligible to take the NCLEX Exam and students' request for CBC results.

The number of personnel assigned to address these three priorities has not kept pace with the corresponding increase in the growth of the nursing population in Texas. As noted in the introduction to the Texas data, Texas is in the middle to lower range for budget allocations in this area and staff have determined that more resources were needed to adequately address the issue. Consequently, 8 new staff have been added to the Operations Department to provide more timely responses.

## II. Discipline

### Key areas exceeding or meeting national averages

BON process deters nurses from violating regulations:

Strongly Agree/Agree	Employers	National 80%	Texas 80%
Strongly Agree/Agree	Nurses	Not surveyed*	Not surveyed*
Strongly Agree/Agree	Educators	Not surveyed*	Not surveyed*

\* Nurses and educators were not asked this question

NPA is state of the art for discipline:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 72%	Texas 85%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 71%	Texas 85%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 86%	Texas 93%

BON process was fair during investigation and resolution of the problem:

Agree	Employers	National 89%	Texas 90%
Agree	Nurses	National 80%	Texas 93%

\*See Education Section for education program response to this question

BON kept you informed during the disciplinary process:

Agree	Employers	National 50%	Texas 75%
Agree	Nurses	National 54%	Texas 71%

\*See Education Section for education program response to this question

Average Cost in 2012 per Completed Investigation:

National	\$2,804
Texas	\$363

Average number of cases in 2012 completed per investigator:

National	147
Texas	375

### Questionable areas

In the Discipline Section, there were several data taken from Nursys® and as outlined in the Limitations Section, the methodology used in entering discipline cases into Nursys® may not accurately reflect Texas comparisons with other states. Thus some data in the report is questionable. These data include:

- number of reinstatements
- number of removals from practice
- number of disciplinary actions
- number of probation action

NCSBN will be reviewing the methodology for obtaining this information in future CORE Reports and the data should be more comparable at that time.

### Key areas for improvement

BON acted in a timely manner:

Agree	Employers	National 60%	Texas 45%
Agree	Education Programs	National 91%	Texas 78%

Of the cases brought to resolution in 2012, the number of months the cases had been open:

	National	Texas
4 months or less	17%	0%
4-6 months	46%	60%
7-12 months	13%	8%
13-18 months	16%	22%
19-24 months	6%	8%
Over 24 months	1%	2%

Length of time in days from opening investigation to resolution of formal hearing\*:

	National	Texas
Average Days	360	744
Number of Hearings	70	123

\* The CORE Report did not differentiate those boards who resolved cases through an internal formal hearing or an external hearing such as the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

Since 2012, the Board has implemented many measures that provide information about enforcement activities to employers. These include:

- a dedicated section on the BON Website for employers of nurses
- e-Notify a nurse licensure notification system that informs employers of any discipline or licensing alerts for RN or LVN employees

- the Executive Director providing ongoing information and expertise to the Texas Organization of Nurse Executives (TONE)
- a planned Webinar for employers outlining due process requirements for discipline cases

As outlined in the data above, the number of completed cases per investigator is more than double the national average. Consequently, the BON has increased FTE's in the Enforcement Section. In addition, established performance measures have been implemented to better allocate staff resources for quicker resolution of priority cases in FY 2014 and for all cases beginning in FY 2015. Because of turnover in staff positions, compensation has been increased for "degreed-entry-level" investigators for recruitment and retention purposes to better compete with the private sector.

### III. Practice

#### Key areas exceeding national averages

BON performance in addressing emerging issues:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 62%	Texas 100%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 70%	Texas 81%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 75%	Texas 90%

BON performance in assurance of practicing nurse competency:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 69%	Texas 89%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 74%	Texas 84%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 84%	Texas 94%

Understand scope/legal limits of nursing practice:

Fully Understand	Employers	National 73%	Texas 86%
Fully Understand	Nurses	National 57%	Texas 60%
Fully Understand	Educators	National 88%	Texas 90%

Are statutes/rules readily available?

Yes	Employers	National 87%	Texas 92%
Yes	Nurses	National 73%	Texas 83%
Yes	Educators	National 96%	Texas 100%

Usefulness of BON presentations:

Useful	Employers	National 98%	Texas 100%
Useful	Nurses	National 92%	Texas 100%
Useful	Educators	National 97%	Texas 99%

NPA is state of the art for practice:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 78%	Texas 92%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 77%	Texas 90%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 82%	Texas 94%

#### Key areas for improvement

Timeliness of responses to e-mail inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 74%	Texas 58%
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Helpfulness of responses to e-mail inquiries:

Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 74%	Texas 65%
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Ease of telephone inquires:

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Since 2012, Practice staff have set and been meeting several performance targets related to response times for webmasters and phone inquiries. Of note, the four areas for improvement are derived from survey items which are reflective of the entire agency and may not accurately reflect the practice area apart from licensure and discipline.

#### IV. Education

##### Key areas exceeding national averages

NPA is current and state of the art for education:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 73%	Texas 91%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 75%	Texas 88%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 78%	Texas 91%

BON performance in promoting quality education:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 69%	Texas 89%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 75%	Texas 86%
Excellent/Good	Educators	National 86%	Texas 93%

BON response to innovation in education:

Excellent/Good	Employers	National 62%	Texas 83%
Excellent/Good	Nurses	National 69%	Texas 80%
Excellent/Good	Educators	Not surveyed*	Not surveyed*

\* Nurses and educators were not asked this question

##### Educational programs ratings of BON performance of initial and ongoing review or approval process:

Conducting the Program Review or Approval Process:

Excellent/Good	National 90%	Texas 94%
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Consultation for Rules, Regulations, Polices:

Excellent/Good	National 89%	Texas 94%
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Notification of BON Visit:

Excellent/Good	National 93%	Texas 97%
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Communication with BON Staff:

Excellent/Good	National 87%	Texas 91%
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Timeliness of Feedback:

Excellent/Good	National 86%	Texas 94%
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Usefulness of Feedback:

Excellent/Good	National 88%	Texas 88%
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Fairness/Objectivity of BON Findings:

Excellent/Good	National 89%	Texas 91%
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Due Process for Disagreements:

Excellent/Good	National 88%	Texas 91%
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### **Key areas for improvement**

BON process was fair during investigation and resolution of the problem:

Agree	Education Programs Involved in Discipline	National 86%	Texas 78%
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BON acted in a timely manner:

Agree	Education Programs Involved in Discipline	National 91%	Texas 78%
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BON kept you informed during the disciplinary process:

Agree	Educators	National 89%	Texas 89%
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Of note: Only nine educational programs that were disciplined responded to these questions.

Several factors, including the number of new nursing education programs in Texas administered by institutions with little or no experience in nursing education, have considerably impacted the workload of the nursing education consultants. In 2012 there were many more nursing education programs with sanctions than those in earlier CORE Reports. Since 2012, staff have increased regular communication with all programs, including programs with sanctions and those with a first time drop in NCLEX pass rates. Schools with sanctions or in risk of being placed on sanctions are provided the opportunity to conference with staff, review and comment on Board reports before action is taken and attend an individualized meeting with staff at the BON office when program closure is imminent. Staff have also increased the number of orientation offerings for new deans/directors/coordinators from two times a year to three times a year. Finally, the addition of another FTE consultant position and another FTE administrative assistant position will assist in meeting the demands of the growth in Texas nursing education programs.