

2026 Hospital Executive Level Priorities – NURSING

The NSI **H**ospital **E**xecutive **L**evel **P**riorities surveys take the pulse of Hospital and Healthcare CEO’s, COO’s, Nursing, and Human Resource Executives across the country to understand what is important to them. The results of this 2026 H.E.L.P. Nursing survey were based upon **1,113 respondents**.

This H.E.L.P. survey covers twenty-one (21) broad industry leading topics. The following table scores each priority on a scale of 1 through 100, with one hundred being the most important. The “Change” column reflects the difference from 2025. **The top five (5) Nurse Leader priorities are Quality of Care & Patient Safety, Patient Satisfaction & Experience, Retaining Talent or Employee Turnover, Registered Nurse/Professional Recruitment, and Maintaining Staff Engagement & Professional Satisfaction.**

H.E.L.P. NURSING	2025	2026	CHANGE
Quality of Care & Patient Safety	91.7	92.6	0.9
Patient Satisfaction & Experience	79.4	81.3	1.9
Retaining Talent or Employee Turnover	73.5	80.0	6.5
Registered Nurse/Professional Recruitment	72.2	78.1	5.9
Maintaining Staff Engagement & Professional Satisfaction	-	72.5	-
Maintaining Competitive Salary, Wages, & Benefits	71.4	69.8	-1.6
Cost Containment	58.8	67.1	8.3
Workplace Violence & Bullying	71.0	63.7	-7.3
Optimizing RN Workload	66.2	63.5	-2.7
Maintaining Safe Staffing Ratios	-	63.3	-
Burnout	58.8	63.0	4.2
Leadership Development	58.6	60.2	1.6
Capital Equipment/Technology Acquisition & Implementation	56.8	58.8	2.0
Professional Development	56.5	58.1	1.6
Regulatory Mandates	54.6	57.1	2.5
Shift Coverage	64.1	56.8	-7.3
Bed Capacity & ER Overcrowding	70.0	54.1	-15.9
Lowering Readmission Rates	47.8	52.1	4.3
Succession Planning	51.0	51.5	0.5
Redesigning Care Process	54.1	47.8	-6.3
Impact of Travel Nurse Cost on total RN Labor Cost	59.5	42.7	-16.8