



**Nursing Education Program of  
Saskatchewan (NEPS) Exit Survey:  
Graduates of the 2006-2007  
Academic Year**

*Prepared for*

The College of Nursing of the University of  
Saskatchewan, the Nursing Division of the  
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and  
Technology, and the Health Sciences  
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Canada

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**Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS) Exit  
Survey: Graduates of the 2006-2007 Academic Year**

**Executive Summary**

**June 2007**

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## Executive Summary

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This report summarizes the results of the 2006-2007 Graduate Exit Survey for the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS). This is the fifth exit survey that has been conducted; it examines anticipated employment and graduate expectations at program completion. This report includes comparisons with the 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 exit surveys.

### **Response Rate**

The survey was conducted online by an e-mail invitation sent to 283 NEPS, SDEO and Post-registered nurse graduates of whom 217 completed the survey, giving a 76.7% response rate overall. A total 178 of those who completed the survey were NEPS graduates, and this report summarizes the results for those respondents.

### **Section 1: Prior to Starting the NEPS Program**

One in five (18.5%) of nursing graduates had previous education in the health care field and of these, 30.3% were licensed practical nurses. Before starting the NEPS program, more than one third of respondents had not completed any post-secondary (39.3%) and a further third (36.5%) had completed some university.

In the year before starting the NEPS program, six in ten were going to school (59.6%) and 37.1% were working. Of those who were working, one third (33.3%) were employed in the health care field.

### **Section 2: During the NEPS Program**

Most of the respondents in 2007 began the NEPS program in 2003. The average age of entry is 22.9 years with a median of 21 years and the proportion of students entering the NEPS program when they were over 30 has increased over the past three years to 10.1% this year from 4.5% in 2005 and 4.8% in 2006. The mean age of Prince Albert graduates when they started the program was significantly higher (27 years) than Saskatoon (23 years) or Regina (22 years). It is noted throughout this survey that the demographic profile for the Prince Albert respondents is quite different, especially in terms of age, marital status, and family.

This year, almost three quarters (73.6%) of respondents were single when they entered the program which is a decline from 80.0% in 2006 and 84.3% in 2005. Almost one half of respondents (47.1%) who entered the NEPS program in Prince Albert were married at the time compared to 24.2% in Regina and 17.9% in Saskatoon.

Just over one quarter (26.4%) had dependents during the NEPS program. Of those who completed the program in Prince Albert, more than seven in ten had dependents (70.6%), one third (31.8%) had dependents in Regina and only 14.7% had dependents in Saskatoon. Ages of dependents ranges from 1 to 23 with an overall average age of 8.5 currently.

More than half entered the NEPS program in Saskatoon (53.4 %), over one third (37.1%) in Regina and 9.6% in Prince Albert. The ratio of entrants in Saskatoon to Regina has remained approximately constant in the past three years with 1.4 Saskatoon entrants for every one in Regina.

Relocation is the most common life change experienced with one half of respondents (50.6%) going through this during their program. Almost four in ten (38.2%) experienced the illness or death of a family member. In Prince Albert, all respondents indicated that they had experienced a major life change compared to three quarters of graduates in Regina (76.6%) and Saskatoon (76.5%). More than one third (37.5%) of graduates from Prince Albert had a child during the program compared to 14.1% in Regina and 1.0% in Saskatoon. Less than one quarter of graduates in Regina (23.4%) or Saskatoon (14.3%) gave care to a dependent during the program compared to 43.8% of Prince Albert graduates.

The percentage of graduates who worked as a senior assistant during their NEPS program has remained constant over the past few years at slightly less than one half (49.4%). Saskatoon worked as senior assistants notably more often, and those who have not completed any post secondary before starting the NEPS program during the program.

Three quarters of respondents (74.2%) had a job other than as a senior assistant during the program and this percentage is consistent with the proportions from the two previous years. Students with a job worked an average of 18.5 hours per week in their first year, decreasing to 14.7 hours per week in their fourth year.

Almost three quarters (73.6%) NEPS students received scholarships or bursaries and this percentage is approximately constant over the past few years. The mean dollar amount of scholarships received is \$7848 with a median of \$6000. More than seven in ten (72.5%) receive their main scholarship or bursary support from the government and this has increased slightly over the past few years.

The number of NEPS students who obtained student loans was 71.9% this year, which is consistent with the proportions in previous years. The average dollar amount of student loans for those who have them is \$30 692.

Four in ten graduated from their NEPS program in April of 2007. Just under 60% of the respondents were October and December graduates. The majority graduated from Saskatoon (55.1%). Saskatoon has approximately three graduates for every two in Regina, a figure that is slightly lower than in past years. Those who enter the program in a certain city are much more likely to stay there through the program, with only 5.6% changing cities.



### Section 3: Job Search and Anticipated Employment

Notably more graduates have confirmed a nursing job this year (85.4%) than in years past (74.0% in 2006 and 59.0% in 2005). This first job is rated as being highly ideal with an overall average rating of 4.0 out of 5. Location is the most ideal factor with an average rating of 4.4 out of 5. Shifts are rated as more ideal with only 13.2% ranking this as not ideal or not at all ideal (1 or 2 out of 5) compared to 19.3% in 2006 and 24.1% in 2005.

Overall, graduates rate their first job as being mostly ideal (an overall average rating of 4.1 out of 5) with location as the most ideal factor (4.4 out of 5). The number of respondents ranking shifts as not ideal and not at all ideal (1 or 2 out of 5) has reduced notably to 12.6% in 2007 from 24.1% in 2005 and 19.3% in 2006.

A total of 19.3% rank experience as the most positive aspect of their first job, followed closely by great staff (18.7%). Full time employment is ranked as most positive by only 6.0% this year compared to 27.6% in 2006 and 11.4% in 2005.

All respondents believe they will be employed as a nurse 6 months after graduation and 96.6% of respondents expect to work in Saskatchewan. Three quarters (75.8%) will likely have their first job in an urban centre only, which is an increase in the urban/rural ratio from past years. The top factor influencing the choice of work location is family or community commitments (48.3% rank it first) and 61.8% mention it in their top three.

Clinical work is chosen as most useful in the job search by two thirds (67.4)% of respondents and three quarters (75.0%) received a job offer from where they were employed as a senior assistant, an increase from 68.1% in 2006 and 52.5% in 2005. Almost three quarters (73.6%) received a job offer from a unit where they had their 4<sup>th</sup> year senior practicum experience, an increase from 53.3% in 2006 and 54.5% in 2005. Overall, 46.1% rate their experience finding their first job as easier than expected.

The number of NEPS graduates working regular full time hours has increased appreciably to almost two thirds (65.2%) this year from less than one half the past two years (47.1% in 2006 and 30.6% in 2005). A large majority (80.9%) are happy with the number of hours they are employed to work which is a sizable increase from 63.1% in 2006 and 41.0% in 2005. As expected, those who are employed for regular full time hours are much happier with their hours (96.6% are happy) than those employed on a casual or part-time basis.

One half (50.0%) expect the length of their orientation to be between 6 and 15 days. A large majority (83.1%) expect to work at only one site as a graduate nurse, which is a large increase from years past. Three quarters (73.5%) will be working in a general hospital with more than 100 beds their first site. Almost all (99.3%) will work as a staff nurse or community health nurse. Respondents' main area of responsibility is direct care almost all (99.3%) of the time.

Overall, graduates will work an average of 39.1 hours per week. More than four in ten (42.2%) expect to make \$50 000 per year or more, and increase from 24.1% in 2006 and 15.1% in 2005. One quarter (25.8%) do not know what to expect.

In summary, there is a marked shift over the past few years to preferred work in a large urban hospital, possibly reflecting the current nursing shortage.

#### **Section 4: General Questions**

A large majority will register with SRNA (96.0%) and 1.6% will register with RPNA.

Approximately one in twenty (5.1%) NEPS graduates are male. This is consistent over the last three years. More than one quarter (27.0%) grew up in rural Saskatchewan and over one third (36.5%) grew up in either Saskatoon or Regina. More than nine in ten (93.3%) grew up in Saskatchewan. The percentage of aboriginal graduates has increased to 14.7% this year from 8.6% in 2006 and 5.2% in 2005. Of these respondents, thirteen were Métis, eleven had treaty status and two were non-status.

Upon finishing the NEPS program, one half were married or common law (49.4%) compared to just less than one quarter (23.0%) when they started the program.

Three quarters of NEPS graduates (75.3%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their educational experience in the program and this has remained approximately constant for the past three years. Those respondents who are of aboriginal ancestry are much more likely to be satisfied with the NEPS program (92.0% satisfied or very satisfied) than those who are not (76.6% satisfied or very satisfied).

Two thirds (66.8%) of graduates believe that the NEPS program has well or very well prepared them for nursing practice. Those who believe that NEPS well or very well prepared them for nursing practice also tended to be satisfied or very satisfied with the NEPS program overall.

The majority (61.2%) of NEPS graduates plan to pursue graduate studies in the future. Of those who provided additional comments, 47.5% indicated that they feel like more clinical time during the program would have been useful to them and 36.2% suggested changes in the curriculum.

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## Introduction and Methodology

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### *Goals and Objectives*

The purpose of this survey is to track the progress of students through NEPS and identify the career paths of Saskatchewan basic nursing education graduates. The goals include the following:

- Establish employment profiles of graduates and to identify trends over time
- Identify graduates' perceptions of preparation and support for entry into the workforce
- Explore details of the job search process

Ethics approvals for the individual phases of this project were obtained from the University of Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioral Science Research.

This report includes the results of the Exit Survey for the graduates of the 2006-2007 academic year and compares them to the results of the 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 NEPS Exit surveys.

### *Scope of Work*

The College of Nursing of the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), and First Nations University of Canada contracted Inshtrix Research Services to conduct analysis of the 2005-2006 Exit Survey of the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS) graduates. The survey was conducted primarily online.

### *Survey Design*

The questions were similar to the two previous NEPS Exit surveys of 2005 and 2006. It was designed jointly by Inshtrix and NEPS Database Coordinating Committee. Inshtrix programmed the survey online and distributed it by email to the graduates.

### *Survey Distribution*

Inshtrix received 257 e-mail addresses of the graduating NEPS students and each potential respondent was sent a personalized e-mail with a link to the survey.

The data collection was divided into three phases. The survey was delivered to the graduates at the end of their NEPS program, either in September (for October graduates), November (for December graduates), or March (for April graduates). Reminder e-mails were sent to those who did not respond to the first invitation.

### **Response Rates and Confidence Intervals**

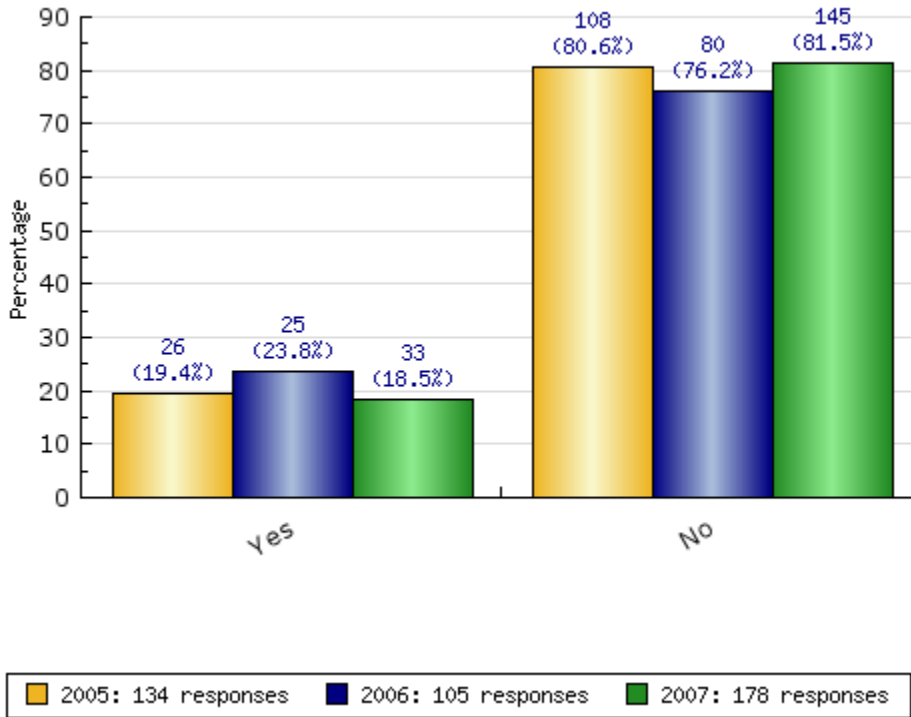
The survey was conducted online by an e-mail invitation sent to 257 graduates. Of the 283 graduates, 217 completed the survey, giving an overall response rate of 76.7%. A total of 178 respondents were NEPS graduates. Given this response rate, we can be 95% sure that the results reported are within  $\pm 3.22$  percentage points of the actual population figures.

**Section 1: Prior to Starting the NEPS Program**

**1c. Did you have any previous education in the health care field prior to starting the NEPS program?**

Almost one in five (18.5%) had previous education in the health care field prior to starting the NEPS program. This is a similar proportion to previous years.

**Figure 1- Previous education in the health care field**



**2. Please identify your previous education in the health care field (check as many as apply)**

Of the 33 respondents who have previous education in the health care field, ten were licensed practical nurses and eight were health care or home care aides. The most common entry under other was Certified Dental Assistant with six respondents.

**Table 1 - Previous health care experience**

| Previous health care experience | 2005      |                | 2006      |                | 2007      |                |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                 | Total #   | % of Responses | Total #   | % of Responses | Total #   | % of Responses |
| Licensed Practical Nurse        | 3         | 11.5           | 5         | 20.0           | 10        | 30.3           |
| Health Care or Home Care Aide   | 4         | 15.4           | 13        | 52.0           | 8         | 24.2           |
| Volunteer Program               | 8         | 30.8           | 2         | 8.0            | 3         | 9.1            |
| Lab tech /EMT                   | 5         | 19.2           | 2         | 8.0            | 2         | 6.1            |
| Other                           | 16        | 61.5           | 9         | 36.0           | 16        | 48.5           |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>26</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>25</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>33</b> | <b>100</b>     |

### 3. What was your highest educational achievement prior to starting the program?

In 2007, fewer NEPS program graduates have previously taken some university (36.5% versus 46.7% and 41.8%). Most commonly, NEPS graduates started the 2007 program after finishing at least some post-secondary (60.7%).

**Table 2 - Prior educational experience**

| Prior educational experience                             | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|--|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|  | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| High school diploma                                      | 49         | 36.6           | 30         | 28.6           | 70         | 39.3           |
| SIAST (or other Technical Institute) courses             | 1          | 0.7            | 2          | 1.9            | 3          | 1.7            |
| SIAST (or other Technical Institute) diploma/certificate | 21         | 15.7           | 15         | 14.3           | 28         | 15.7           |
| Some university classes                                  | 56         | 41.8           | 49         | 46.7           | 65         | 36.5           |
| University baccalaureate (Under-Graduate) degree         | 7          | 5.2            | 8          | 7.6            | 12         | 6.7            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>134</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>105</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>178</b> | <b>100</b>     |

### 4. Please specify the degree(s)/diploma(s)/certificates (including field of study) you held prior to starting the program:

Prior to starting the NEPS program, respondents held a wide variety of degrees, diplomas or certificates, the most common of which was a Bachelor of Arts (ten respondents). Please see appendix A for a complete list.

### 5. What was your major activity in the year before starting NEPS?

Six in ten respondents (59.6%) indicated that they were going to school in the year before starting NEPS and another 37.1% were working. This result is approximately consistent over the last three years.

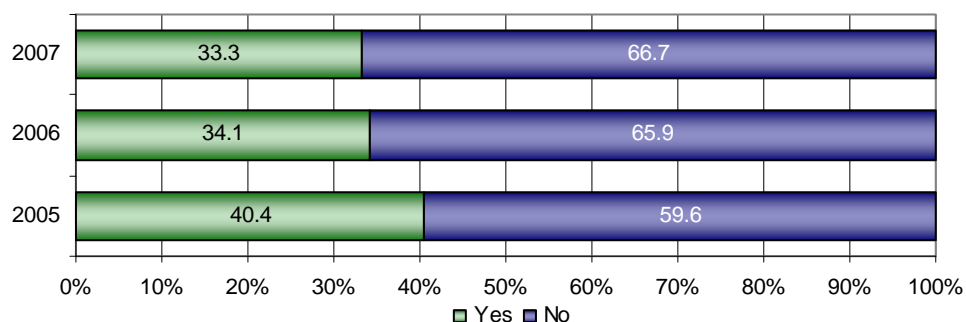
**Table 3 - Major activity in the year before starting NEPS**

| Major activity before starting NEPS | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|                                     | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| Going to school                     | 84         | 62.7           | 58         | 55.2           | 106        | 59.6           |
| Working                             | 47         | 35.1           | 44         | 41.9           | 66         | 37.1           |
| Household responsibilities          | 3          | 2.2            | 3          | 2.9            | 6          | 3.4            |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>134</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>105</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>178</b> | <b>100</b>     |

### 6. Was this work in the health care field?

Of the 83 respondents who were working prior to starting NEPS, one third (33.3%) were working in the health care field. See appendix A for a list of specific workplaces.

**Figure 2 - Working in health care prior to NEPS**



## Section 2: During the NEPS Program

### 7. What year did you start your NEPS program:

Four in five (79.8%) started their program in 2003.

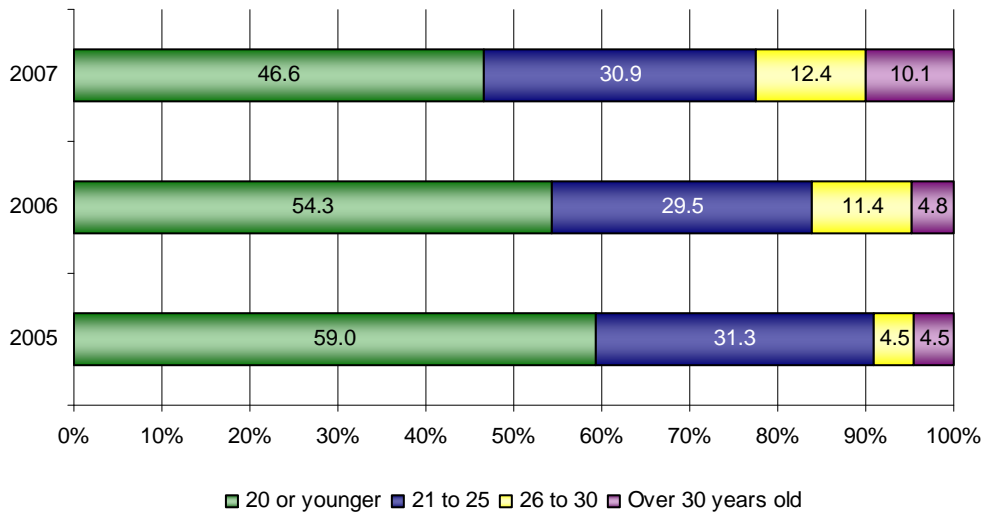
**Table 4 - Program start date**

| Program start date | Frequency  | Percent      |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| 2000               | 1          | .6           |
| 2001               | 9          | 5.1          |
| 2002               | 26         | 14.6         |
| 2003               | 142        | 79.8         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>178</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

### 8. What was your age when you entered the NEPS program?

The average age of entry into the NEPS program in 2007 was 22.9 years with a median of 21 years, a slight increase from an average age of 21.8 in 2006 and 20.8 years in 2005. The proportion of students entering the NEPS program when they were over 30 has increased over the past three years to 10.1% this year from 4.5% in 2005 and 4.8% in 2006.

**Figure 3 - Age when entering NEPS**



The average age at NEPS graduation was notable higher in Prince Albert with a mean of 27.0 years followed by Saskatoon with a mean of 22.7 years and Regina with a mean of 22.3 years.

**Table 5 - Age started by program site at graduation**

|                            | Program site at NEPS graduation |        |           |        |               |        |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|---------------|--------|
|                            | Regina                          |        | Saskatoon |        | Prince Albert |        |
|                            | Mean                            | Median | Mean      | Median | Mean          | Median |
| <b>Age started program</b> | 22.3                            | 20.0   | 22.7      | 21.0   | 27.0          | 27.0   |

**9. What was your marital status when you entered the NEPS program?**

Almost three quarters of respondents (73.6%) were single when they entered the NEPS program, but this number had decreased from previous years by more than 5%. Perhaps this is a result of the average age of those starting the NEPS program having increased.

**Table 6 - Marital status when entering the NEPS program**

| Marital status when entering the NEPS program | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|---|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|   | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| Single  | 113        | 84.3           | 84         | 80.0           | 131        | 73.6           |
| Married or Common Law                         | 18         | 13.4           | 20         | 19.0           | 41         | 23.0           |
| Separated                                     | 2          | 1.5            | 0          | 0.0            | 2          | 1.1            |
| Divorced                                      | 1          | 0.7            | 1          | 1.0            | 4          | 2.2            |
| Widow(er)                                     | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>134</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>105</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>178</b> | <b>100</b>     |

One half of NEPS graduates (56.3%) who attended the program in Prince Albert were married or common law compared to 24.2% in Regina and 17.9% in Saskatoon.

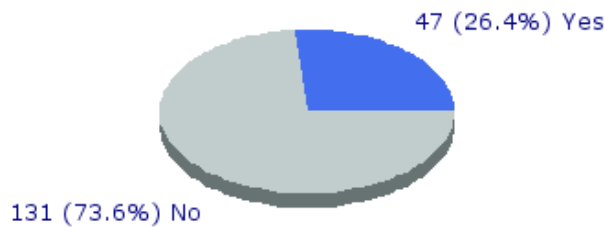
**Table 7 - Marital status by program site at graduation**

| Marital status        | Program site at NEPS graduation |            |           |            |               |            |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
|                       | Regina                          |            | Saskatoon |            | Prince Albert |            |
|                       | Count                           | Column N % | Count     | Column N % | Count         | Column N % |
| Single                | 48                              | 72.7%      | 75        | 78.9%      | 8             | 47.1%      |
| Married or Common Law | 16                              | 24.2%      | 17        | 17.9%      | 8             | 47.1%      |
| Separated             | 0                               | .0%        | 1         | 1.1%       | 1             | 5.9%       |
| Divorced              | 2                               | 3.0%       | 2         | 2.1%       | 0             | .0%        |
| Widow(er)             | 0                               | .0%        | 0         | .0%        | 0             | .0%        |

**9b. Did you have dependents during the program?**

Approximately one quarter (26.4%) had dependents during the program.

**Figure 4 - Had dependents during the program**



178 responses



Seven in ten NEPS graduates from Prince Albert had dependents during the program (70.6%) compared to less than one third in Regina (31.8%) and 14.7% in Saskatoon.

**Table 8 - Had dependents during program by program site at NEPS graduation**

| Had dependents during program | Program site at NEPS graduation |                  |           |                  |               |                  |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
|                               | Regina                          |                  | Saskatoon |                  | Prince Albert |                  |
|                               | Count                           | Column Total N % | Count     | Column Total N % | Count         | Column Total N % |
| Yes                           | 21                              | 31.8%            | 14        | 14.7%            | 12            | 70.6%            |
| No                            | 45                              | 68.2%            | 81        | 85.3%            | 5             | 29.4%            |

### 9b. How many dependents and what is their current age?

Of those respondents who have dependents, the average number of dependents is 2.0 per respondent; however, when averaged over all NEPS graduates, the number of dependents per person is 0.5. The range of ages for dependents runs from 1 to 23 with an overall average age of all dependents of 8.5 with a median of 8.

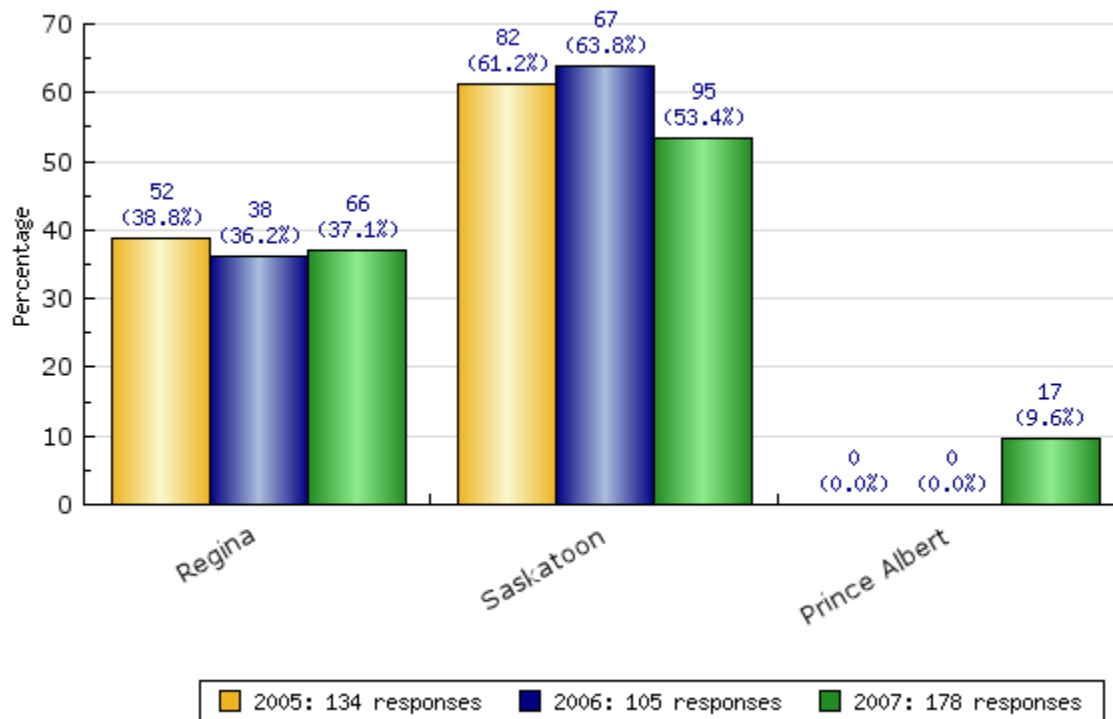
**Table 9 - Age of dependents**

| Age of Dependents       | Minimum | Maximum | Median | Mean |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|--------|------|
| First Dependent (n=47)  | 1       | 23      | 8      | 9.2  |
| Second Dependent (n=28) | 1       | 21      | 7      | 7.6  |
| Third Dependent (n=13)  | 1       | 19      | 5      | 6.8  |
| Fourth Dependent (n=5)  | 4       | 13      | 11     | 9.2  |
| Fifth Dependent (n=3)   | 11      | 14      | 12     | 12.3 |
| Total (n=96)            | 1       | 23      | 8      | 8.5  |

### 10. What was the program site at entry to the NEPS program?

This is the first year for which there have been graduates from Prince Albert. The most common program site at entry to the NEPS program was Saskatoon with just over one half of respondents (53.4%). Just over one third (37.1%) were in Regina and 9.6% were in Prince Albert. The ratio of those who entered through Saskatoon to those who entered in Regina has remained approximately constant with 1.4 to 1 this year compared to 1.8 to 1 in 2006 and 1.6 to 1 in 2005.

Figure 5 - Program site at entry



**11. Please indicate if you experienced any of the following significant life changes during the NEPS program? (check all that apply)**

Just over one half of respondents (50.6%) relocated during the NEPS program, almost four in ten (38.2%) experienced the illness or death of a family member or friend and almost one quarter (24.7%) went through a change in marital status. Just over one in five (21.3%) experienced no significant life changes during this time.

Table 10 - Life changes during NEPS

| Life changes during NEPS                      | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|---|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|   | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| Home relocation                               | 64         | 47.8           | 48         | 45.7           | 90         | 50.6           |
| Illness or death of a family member or friend | 67         | 50.0           | 59         | 56.2           | 68         | 38.2           |
| Change in marital status                      | 26         | 19.4           | 26         | 24.8           | 44         | 24.7           |
| Care giving for dependent children or adults  | 17         | 12.7           | 21         | 20.0           | 38         | 21.3           |
| Uncertainty of Nursing as your profession     | 29         | 21.6           | 29         | 27.6           | 36         | 20.2           |
| Birth of child                                | 3          | 2.2            | 5          | 4.8            | 16         | 9.0            |
| Major personal illness or disability          | 15         | 11.2           | 15         | 14.3           | 14         | 7.9            |
| Other, (please specify)                       | 14         | 10.4           | 2          | 1.9            | 12         | 6.7            |
| None  | 27         | 20.1           | 13         | 12.4           | 38         | 21.3           |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>134</b> |                | <b>105</b> |                | <b>178</b> |                |

The number of NEPS graduates who underwent major life changes while in the program differed significantly by program exit site, with 100% of Prince Albert graduates and more than three quarters of graduates in Regina (76.6%) and Saskatoon (76.5%) going through major life changes. Those graduates from Prince Albert were considerably more likely to have had a child (37.5%) than students in Regina (14.1%) and Saskatoon (1.0%). They were also more likely to have given care to dependent children or adults (43.8%) than those in Regina (23.4%) or Saskatoon (14.3%).

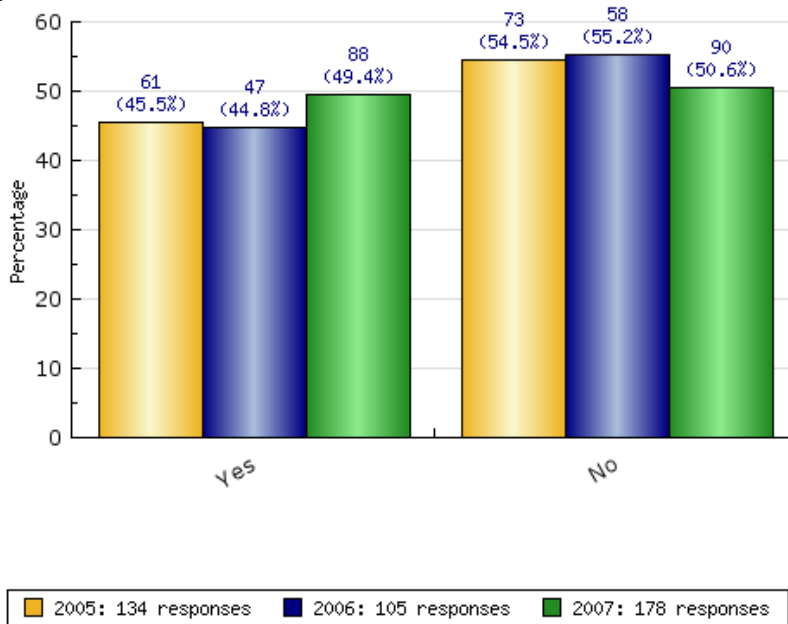
**Table 11 - Major life changes by program site at NEPS graduation**

| Major life changes while in the NEPS program           | Program site at NEPS graduation |                  |           |                  |               |                  |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
|  | Regina                          |                  | Saskatoon |                  | Prince Albert |                  |
|  | Count                           | Column Total N % | Count     | Column Total N % | Count         | Column Total N % |
|  | Change in marital status        | 17               | 26.6%     | 24               | 24.5%         | 3                |
| Birth of Child   | 9                               | 14.1%            | 1         | 1.0%             | 6             | 37.5%            |
| Illness or death of family member or friend            | 22                              | 34.4%            | 40        | 40.8%            | 6             | 37.5%            |
| Major personal illness or disability                   | 4                               | 6.3%             | 7         | 7.1%             | 3             | 18.8%            |
| Major uncertainty of Nursing as your profession        | 10                              | 15.6%            | 23        | 23.5%            | 5             | 31.3%            |
| Home relocation  | 30                              | 46.9%            | 53        | 54.1%            | 7             | 43.8%            |
| Care giving for dependent children or dependent adults | 15                              | 23.4%            | 14        | 14.3%            | 7             | 43.8%            |
| Other  | 7                               | 10.9%            | 4         | 4.1%             | 1             | 6.3%             |
| None   | 15                              | 23.4%            | 23        | 23.5%            | 0             | 0.0%             |

**12. Did you work as a Senior Assistant during your NEPS program?**

One half of respondents (50.6%) worked as a senior assistant during their NEPS program. This number has remained approximately constant over the last three years.

**Figure 6 - Worked at senior assistant**



Two thirds (66.3%) of students in Saskatoon have worked as a senior assistant compared to just over one quarter (26.6%) of students in Regina.

**Table 12 - Program site at NEPS graduation by worked as senior assistant**

| Program site at NEPS graduation | Worked as senior assistant during program |               |       |               |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------|-------|---------------|
|                                 | Yes                                       |               | No    |               |
|                                 | Count                                     | Row Total N % | Count | Row Total N % |
| Regina                          | 17  | 26.6%         | 47    | 73.4%         |
| Saskatoon                       | 65  | 66.3%         | 33    | 33.7%         |
| Prince Albert                   | 6   | 37.5%         | 10    | 62.5%         |

Those who had not previously attended any post-secondary were significantly more likely to work as a senior assistant during the NEPS program. Those who attended SIAST were least likely to work as a senior assistant.

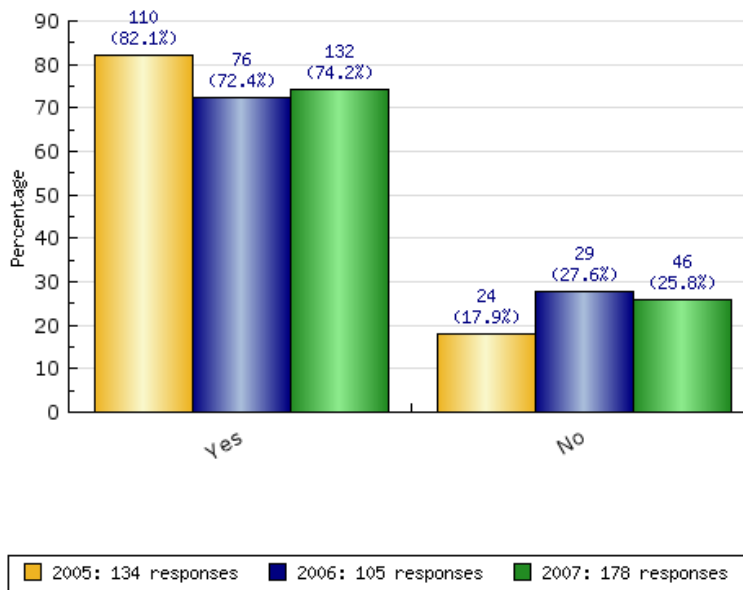
**Table 13 - Highest level of education pre-NEPS by worked as senior assistant**

| Highest level education pre-NEPS           | Worked as senior assistant during program |               |       |               |
|--|---|---------------|-------|---------------|
|  | Yes                                       |               | No    |               |
|  | Count                                     | Row Total N % | Count | Row Total N % |
| High School Diploma                        | 43  | 61.4%         | 27    | 38.6%         |
| SIAST courses or diploma                   | 10  | 32.3%         | 21    | 67.7%         |
| University courses or undergraduate degree | 35  | 45.5%         | 42    | 54.5%         |

**13. Did you have a job, other than as a Senior Assistant, while in the NEPS program?**

Three quarters of respondents (74.2%) had a job while they were in the NEPS program. The percentage of employed students in the NEPS program has remained approximately constant over the last three years.

**Figure 7 - Had a job while in NEPS**



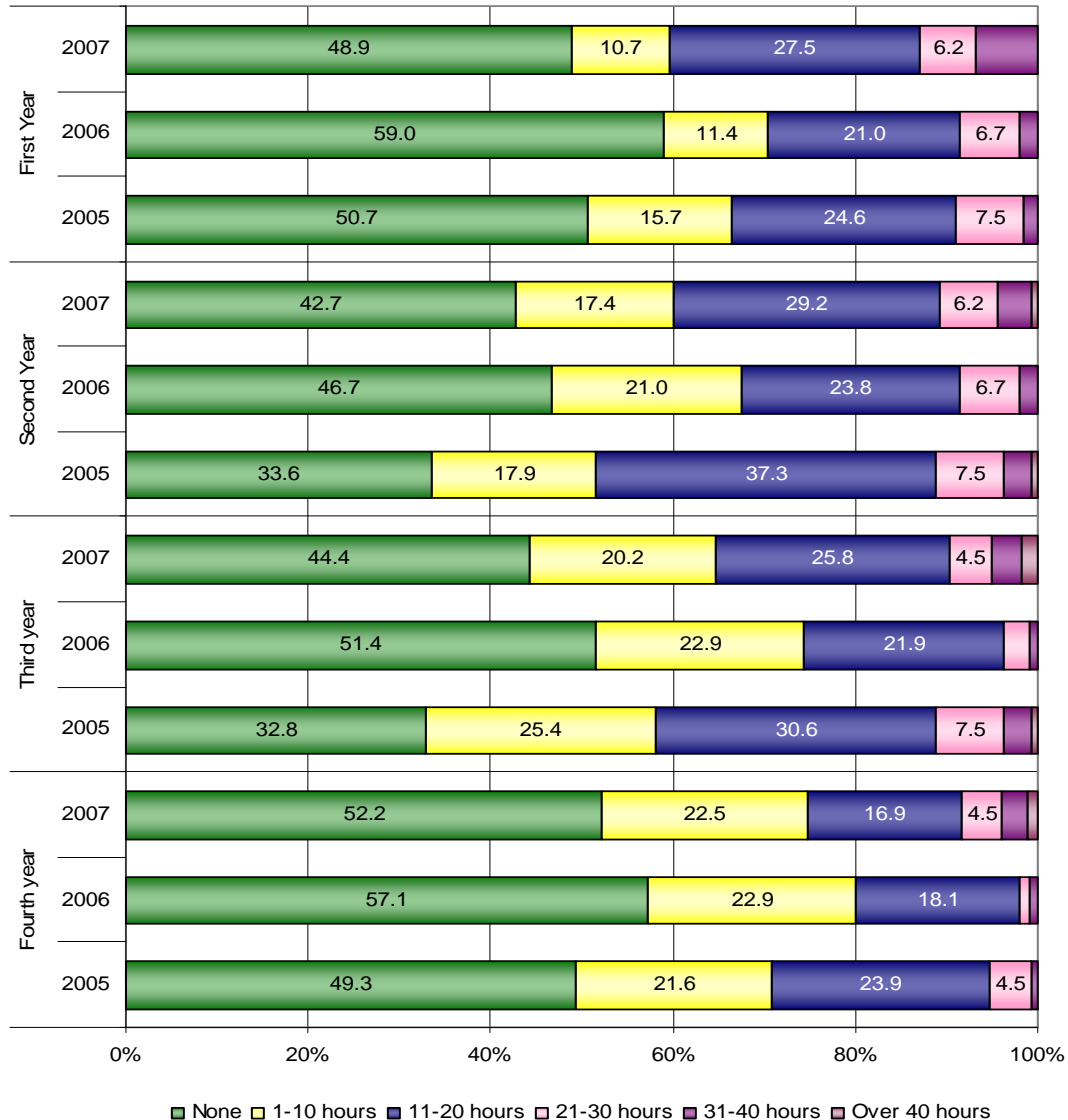
**14-17. On average, how many hours a week did you work at your job?**

More than one half of students worked their first to third year, peaking at 57.3% in their second year. The least number of students worked during their fourth year of NEPS with 47.8% working an average of 14.7 hours per week, and a mean of 7.0 hours over all students, including those who did not work. There was not a significant difference in the proportion of those who did work to those who did not work by age.

**Table 14 - Hours worked per week**

|             | Of those who worked |                     | Overall           |                     | % working in given year |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
|             | Mean hours worked   | Median hours worked | Mean hours worked | Median hours worked |                         |
| First Year  | 18.5                | 16                  | 9.5               | 4                   | 51.1%                   |
| Second Year | 16.5                | 15                  | 9.4               | 8                   | 57.3%                   |
| Third Year  | 16.3                | 12                  | 9.1               | 6                   | 55.6%                   |
| Fourth Year | 14.7                | 12                  | 7.0               | 0                   | 47.8%                   |

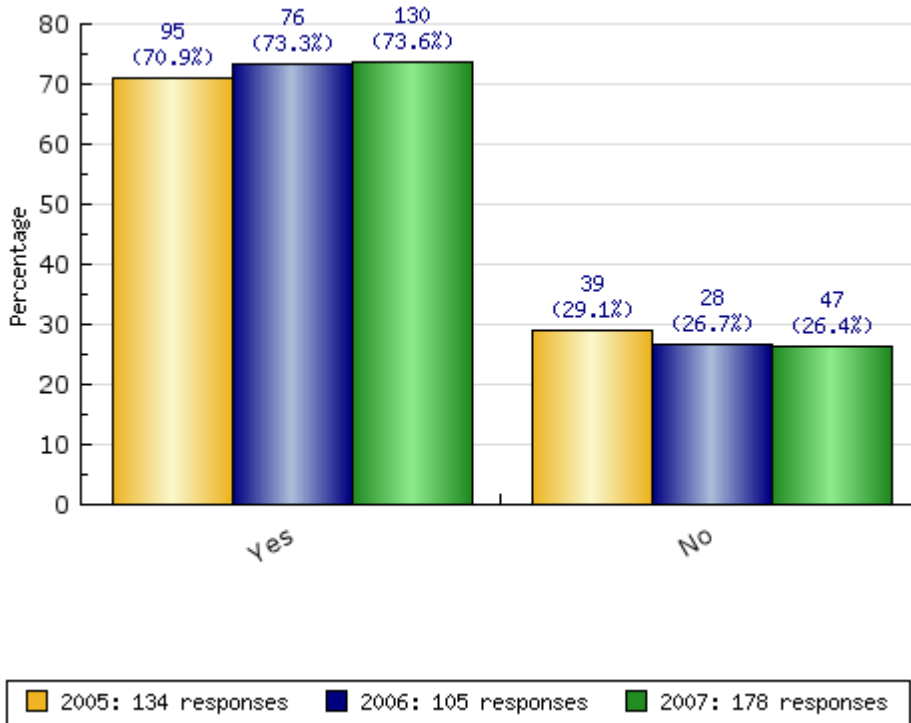
**Figure 8 - Working during NEPS program**



**18. Did you receive any scholarships or bursaries during the program?**

Similarly to years past, almost three quarters of NEPS students (73.6%) have received a scholarship or bursary.

**Figure 9 - Received scholarships during the program**



**19. What was the total dollar value of scholarships or bursaries you received during the NEPS program?**

The mean dollar amount of scholarships received by NEPS students during their program is \$7848 with a median of \$6000. When the dollar amount of scholarships received is averaged over all students, including those who did not receive a scholarship, the mean drops to \$5688 with a median of \$5350. NEPS graduates from Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert received approximately the same average dollar amount of scholarships.

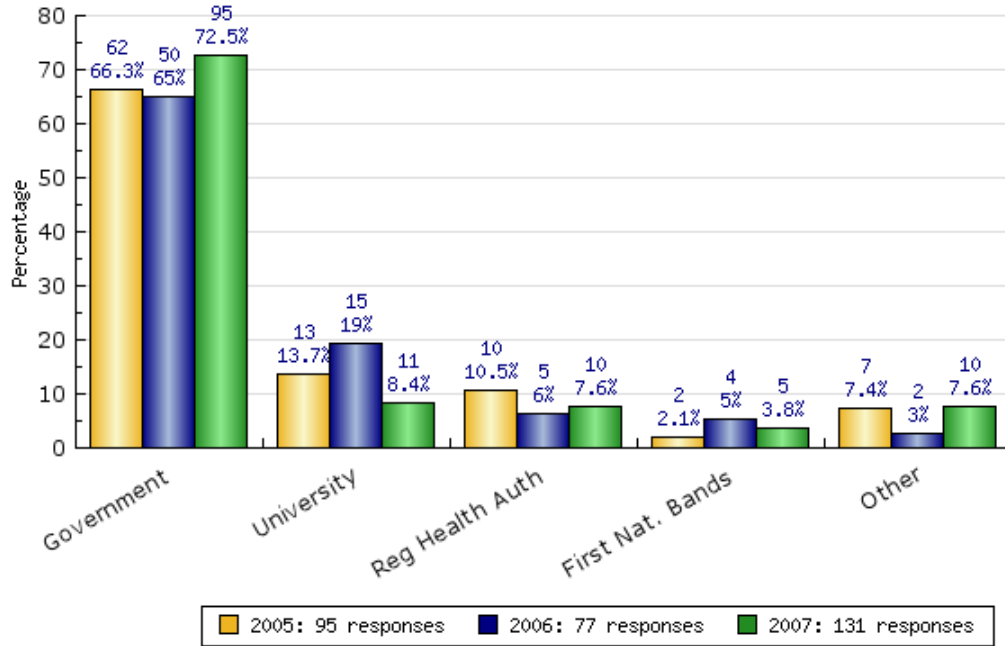
**Table 15 - Dollar amount of scholarships received**

| Total dollar amount of scholarships received | Frequency | Overall percent (n=195) | Percent of recipients (n=130) |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| No Scholarships                              | 48        | 27.0%                   | -                             |
| Less than \$3000                             | 10        | 5.6%                    | 7.7%                          |
| \$3000 to \$4999                             | 27        | 15.2%                   | 20.8%                         |
| \$5000 to \$6999                             | 36        | 20.2%                   | 27.7%                         |
| \$7000 to \$9999                             | 32        | 18.0%                   | 24.6%                         |
| \$10000 and up                               | 25        | 14.0%                   | 19.2%                         |
| Total  | 178       | 100.0%                  | 100.0                         |

**20. What was the major source of your scholarship/bursary support?**

Seven in ten respondents' major scholarship or bursary support is from the government (72.5%). This figure has increased slightly over the past few years. See appendix A for other scholarships mentioned.

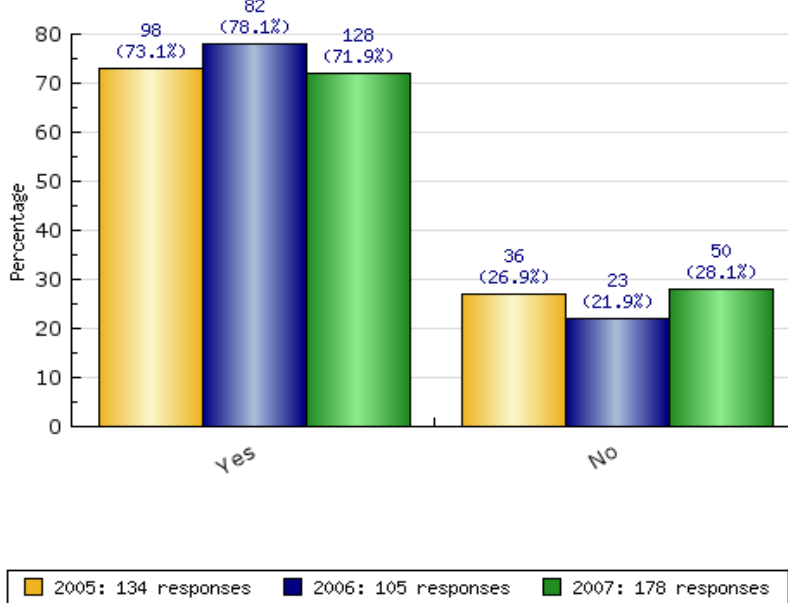
**Figure 10 - Major source of scholarship or bursary support**



**21. Did you obtain any student or educational loans during the program?**

More than seven in ten respondents (71.9%) obtained student or educational loans. This figure is approximately the same as in years past.

**Figure 11 - Obtained student loans during the program**



**22. What was the total dollar value of your student or educational loans at completion of the NEPS program?**

The average value of student loans for those who had them is \$30 692 with a median of \$30 000. The average value of loans across all students, including those who didn't have any, is \$21 553 with a median of \$23 000.

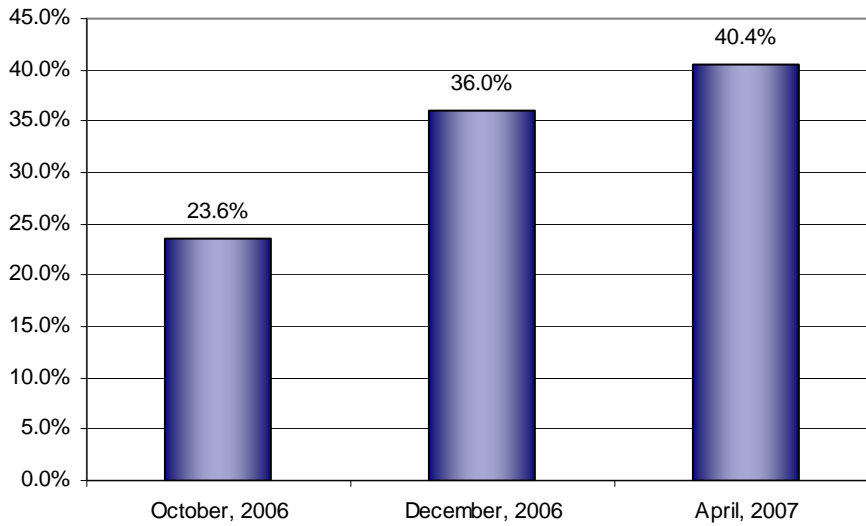
**Table 16 - Total value of student loan**

| Total value of student loan | Frequency | Percent of total (n=178) | Percent of those with loans (n=125) |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| None                        | 53        | 29.8%                    | -                                   |
| Less than \$10 000          | 10        | 5.6%                     | 8.0%                                |
| \$10 000 to \$19 999        | 20        | 11.2%                    | 16.0%                               |
| \$20 000 to \$29 999        | 22        | 12.4%                    | 17.6%                               |
| \$30 000 to \$39 999        | 33        | 18.5%                    | 26.4%                               |
| \$40 000 to \$49 999        | 25        | 14.0%                    | 20.0%                               |
| \$50 000 and over           | 15        | 8.4%                     | 12.0%                               |

**23. What date did you complete your NEPS program?**

Four in ten (40.4%) completed their program in April of 2007.

**Figure 12 - Date of completion of NEPS program**

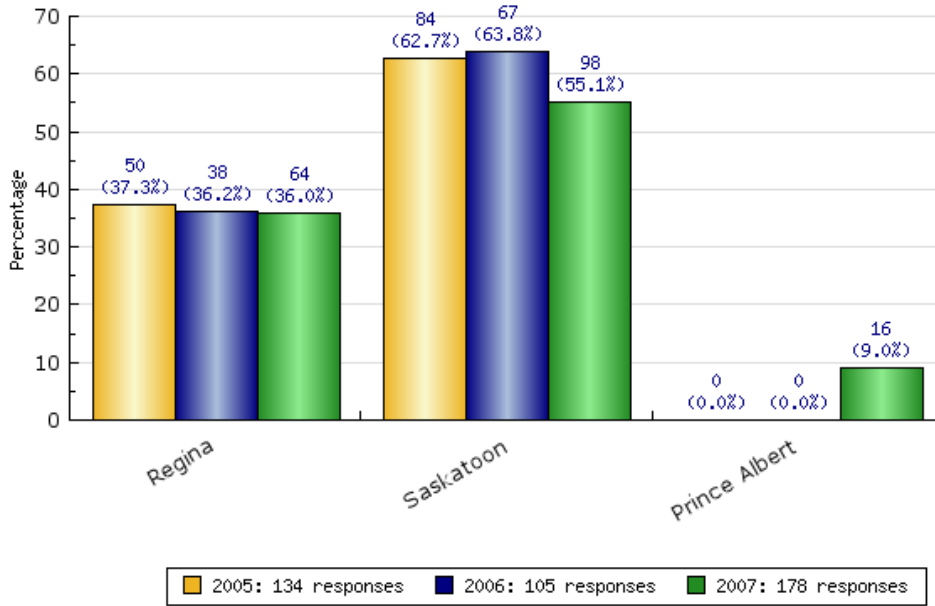




**24. What was your program site at graduation from the NEPS program?**

The addition of the site in Prince Albert has reduced the overall percentage of graduates from Saskatoon and Regina, and the ratio of Saskatoon grads to Regina grads is slightly lower (1.5 to 1 in 2007 compared to 1.8 to 1 in 2006 and 1.7 to 1 in 2005)

**Figure 13 - Program site at graduation**



As expected, respondents were very likely to stay in the same city as they had entered NEPS to complete their program, with only 5.6% changing cities.

**Table 17 - Program site at NEPS graduation by site at entry**

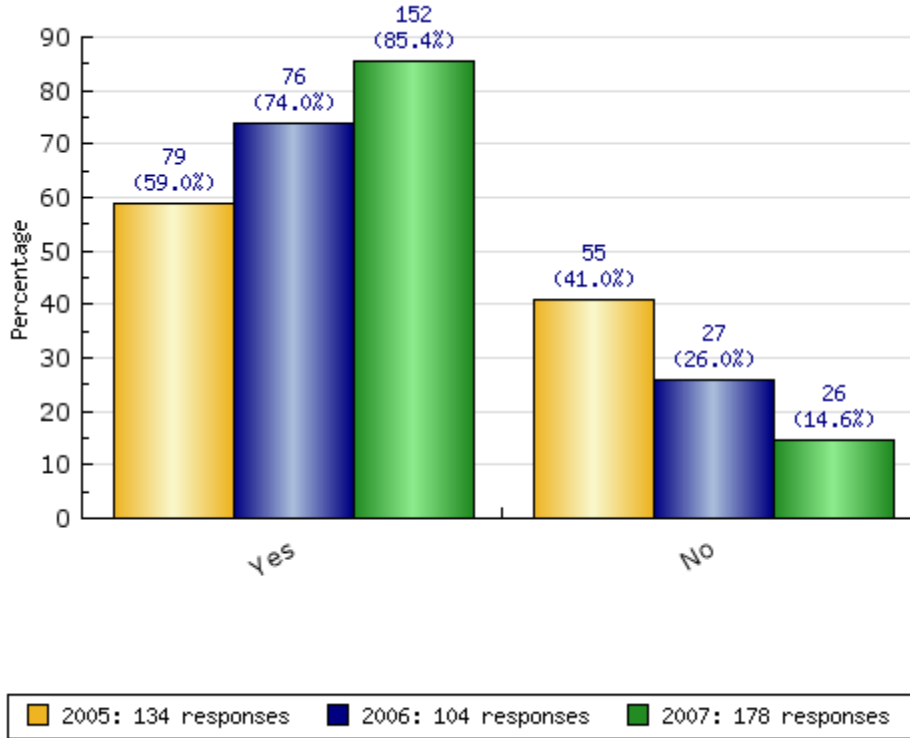
| Program site at NEPS graduation | Program site at NEPS entry |                  |           |                  |               |                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
|                                 | Regina                     |                  | Saskatoon |                  | Prince Albert |                  |
|                                 | Count                      | Column Total N % | Count     | Column Total N % | Count         | Column Total N % |
| Regina                          | 61                         | 92.4%            | 3         | 3.2%             | 0             | .0%              |
| Saskatoon                       | 4                          | 6.1%             | 92        | 96.8%            | 2             | 11.8%            |
| Prince Albert                   | 1                          | 1.5%             | 0         | .0%              | 15            | 88.2%            |

### Section 3: Your Job Search and Anticipated Employment

**25. At this time, do you have a job as a graduate nurse confirmed?**

The number of respondents who have confirmed a job as a graduate nurse has increased to approximately 17 in 20 (85.4%) from 12 in 20 (59.0%) in 2005 and 15 in 20 (74.0%) in 2006.

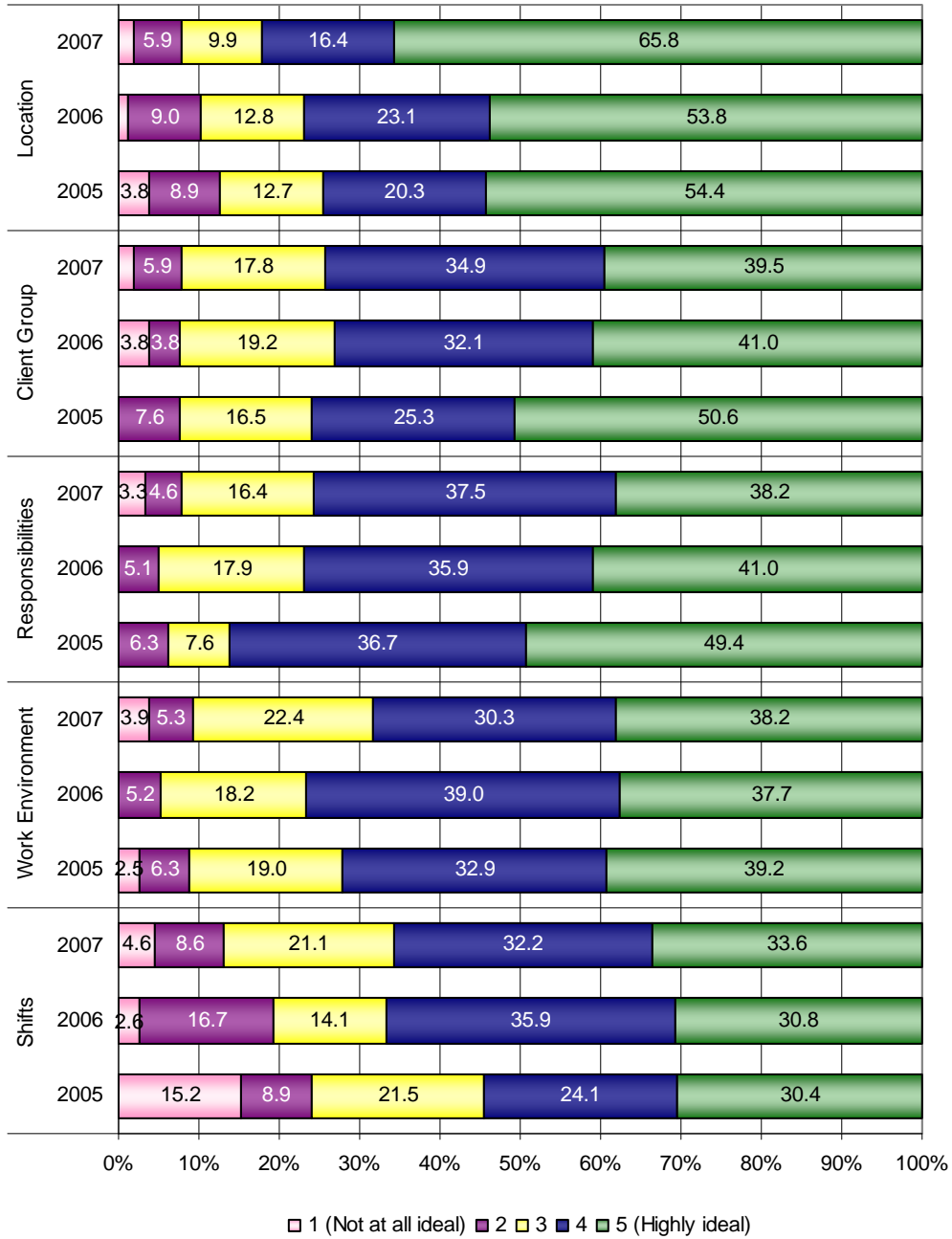
**Figure 14 - Have a graduate job confirmed**



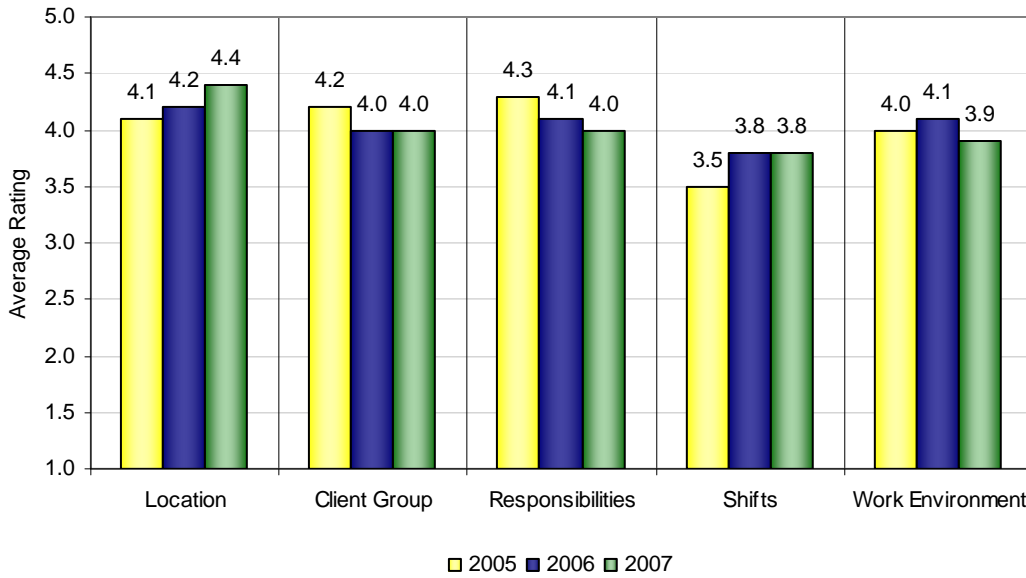
**26-30. If you have confirmed employment, to what extent does your first job meet your ideal preferences, where '1' is not at all to '5' being highly ideal?**

For all factors combined, graduates rate their first job as being mostly ideal (an overall average rating of 4.0 out of 5). Location was rated as the most ideal factor with an average rating of 4.4 out of 5. The proportion of respondents ranking shifts as not ideal and not at all ideal (1 or 2 out of 5) has reduced notably to 13.2% in 2007 from 24.1% in 2005 and 19.3% in 2006.

Figure 15 - Extent to which first job meets ideal preferences



**Figure 16 - Average ratings of aspects of first job**



**31. Name the (one) most positive aspect of your first job.**

Overall, experience and great staff are ranked as the most positive aspect of 2007 NEPS graduates' first job (ranked as most positive by 19.3% and 18.7% of respondents respectively). Full time employment is ranked as most positive by only 6.0% of graduates this year compared to 27.6% in 2006 and 11.4% in 2005, and working in their area of interest is ranked as most positive by only 15.3% of respondents versus 25.0% in 2006 and 25.3% in 2005. By contrast, work environment is ranked most positive more often this year than in past years (12.0% compared to 2.6% in 2006 and 7.6% in 2005). Please see appendix A for a complete list of comments.

*"Being hired into Critical Care in Prince Albert will give me the opportunity to increase my knowledge base and critical thinking skills"*

*"I love working with the little kids. That is my highlight."*

*"The staff support there is great. There is a good mix of experienced nurses to help out new nurses."*

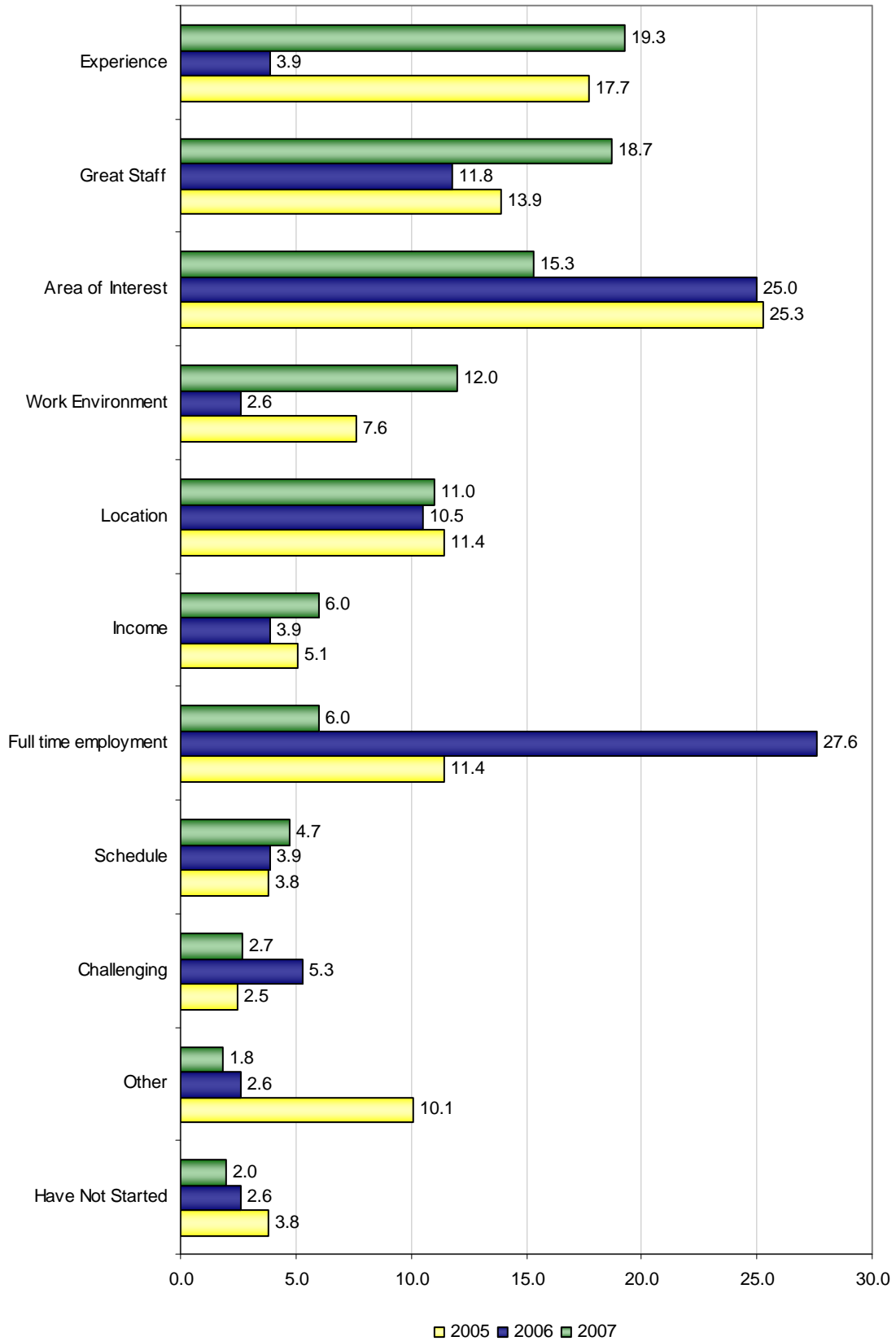
*"The work environment is supportive of new nurses"*

*"The flexibility of hours"*

*"Being able to make strategic decisions, which is challenging and gives me an opportunity to influence health care in this province."*

*"I think the positive aspect is the personal satisfaction it gives me."*

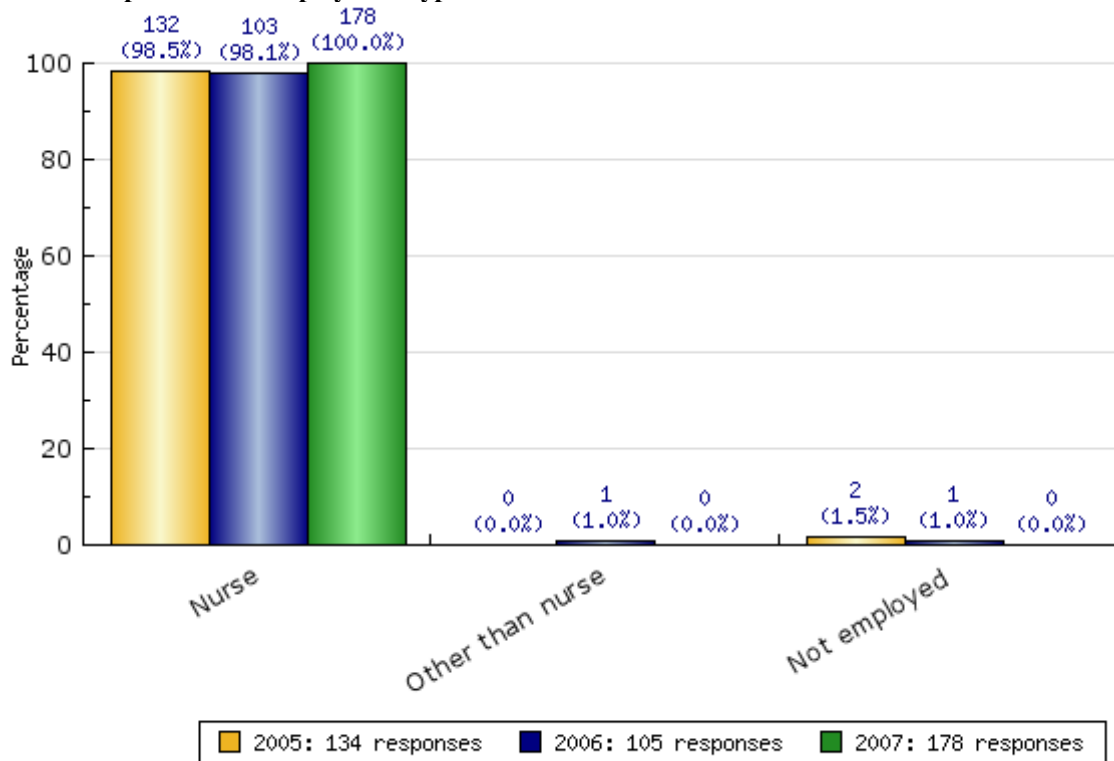
Figure 17 - Most positive aspect of first job



**32. Within the first 6 months after graduation, do you expect to be:**

All respondents believe that they will be employed as a nurse 6 months after graduation.

**Figure 18 - Expectation of employment type**



**33. If you do not expect to be employed as a nurse in the first 6 months after completing the NEPS program, what is the MAIN reason why?**

All respondents expect to be employed as a nurse.

**34. What is/would likely be the geographical location of your first job as a graduate nurse?**

Less than one in twenty graduates (3.4%) expect to leave Saskatchewan for their first job. None plan to leave the country.

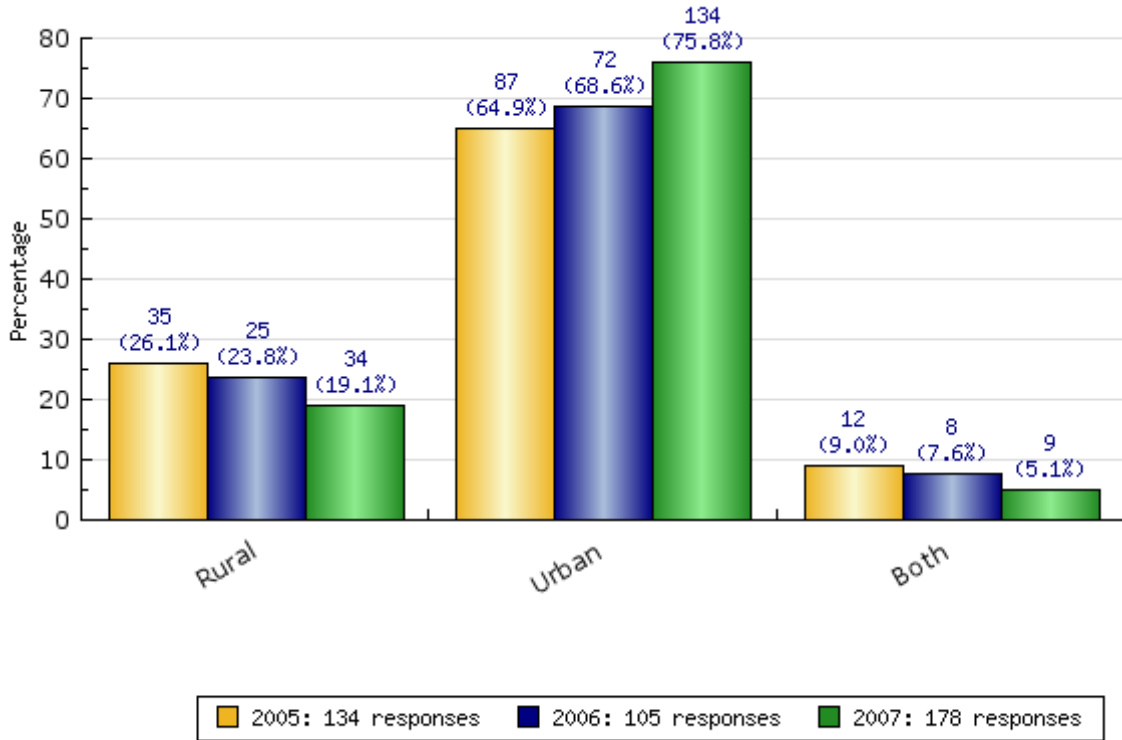
**Table 18 - Location of first nursing job**

| Location of first nursing job | 2005    |                | 2006    |                | 2007    |                |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|
|                               | Total # | % of Responses | Total # | % of Responses | Total # | % of Responses |
| Saskatchewan                  | 121     | 90.3           | 94      | 89.5           | 172     | 96.6           |
| Manitoba or Eastern Canada    | 3       | 2.2            | 3       | 2.9            | 1       | 0.6            |
| Alberta or British Columbia   | 8       | 6              | 8       | 7.6            | 5       | 2.8            |
| Total                         | 134     | 100            | 105     | 100            | 178     | 100            |

**35. Please specify whether the location of your first job as a graduate nurse is/would likely be:**

Three quarters (75.8%) of graduate nurses will likely have their first job in an urban centre only.

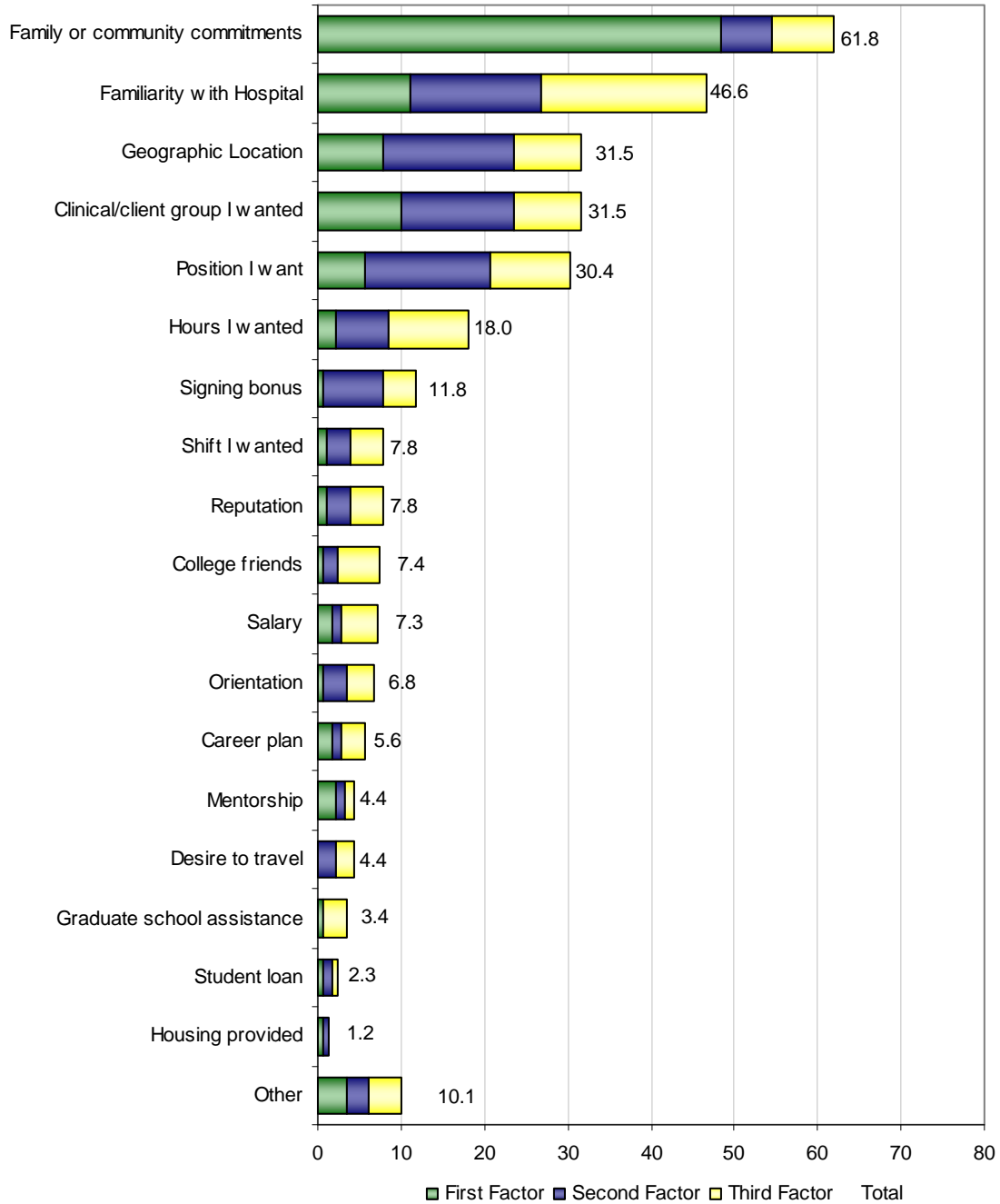
**Figure 19 - Location of first job as a graduate nurse**



**36. Please rank the top 3 factors that influenced your choice of work location for your first job as a nurse, with 1 being most important and 3 being least important:**

The most important factor influencing the choice of work location is family or community commitments with 61.5% mentioning it in their top three and almost one half (48.3%) ranking it first.

**Figure 20 - Top 3 factors influencing choice of work location**





**Table 19 - Factors affecting choice of work location**

| Factors affecting choice of work location | First Factor       |         | Second Factor      |         | Third Factor       |         | Total              |         |
|---|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
|   | Number of mentions | Percent | Number of mentions | Percent | Number of mentions | Percent | Number of mentions | Percent |
| Family or community commitments           | 86                 | 48.3    | 11                 | 6.2     | 13                 | 7.3     | 110                | 61.8    |
| Familiarity with Hospital                 | 20                 | 11.2    | 28                 | 15.7    | 35                 | 19.7    | 83                 | 46.6    |
| Clinical/client group I wanted            | 18                 | 10.1    | 24                 | 13.5    | 14                 | 7.9     | 56                 | 31.5    |
| Geographic Location                       | 14                 | 7.9     | 28                 | 15.7    | 14                 | 7.9     | 56                 | 31.5    |
| Position I want                           | 10                 | 5.6     | 27                 | 15.2    | 17                 | 9.6     | 54                 | 30.4    |
| Hours I wanted                            | 4                  | 2.2     | 11                 | 6.2     | 17                 | 9.6     | 32                 | 18.0    |
| Signing bonus                             | 1                  | 0.6     | 13                 | 7.3     | 7                  | 3.9     | 21                 | 11.8    |
| Reputation                                | 2                  | 1.1     | 5                  | 2.8     | 7                  | 3.9     | 14                 | 7.8     |
| Shift I wanted                            | 2                  | 1.1     | 5                  | 2.8     | 7                  | 3.9     | 14                 | 7.8     |
| Coll. friends                             | 1                  | 0.6     | 3                  | 1.7     | 9                  | 5.1     | 13                 | 7.4     |
| Salary                                    | 3                  | 1.7     | 2                  | 1.1     | 8                  | 4.5     | 13                 | 7.3     |
| Orientation                               | 1                  | 0.6     | 5                  | 2.8     | 6                  | 3.4     | 12                 | 6.8     |
| Career plan                               | 3                  | 1.7     | 2                  | 1.1     | 5                  | 2.8     | 10                 | 5.6     |
| Desire to travel                          | 0                  | 0.0     | 4                  | 2.2     | 4                  | 2.2     | 8                  | 4.4     |
| Mentorship                                | 4                  | 2.2     | 2                  | 1.1     | 2                  | 1.1     | 8                  | 4.4     |
| Graduate school assistance                | 1                  | 0.6     | 0                  | 0.0     | 5                  | 2.8     | 6                  | 3.4     |
| Student loan                              | 1                  | 0.6     | 2                  | 1.1     | 1                  | 0.6     | 4                  | 2.3     |
| Housing provided                          | 1                  | 0.6     | 1                  | 0.6     | 0                  | 0.0     | 2                  | 1.2     |
| Other                                     | 6                  | 3.4     | 5                  | 2.8     | 7                  | 3.9     | 18                 | 10.1    |

**37. Which strategy has been most useful in your job search?**

Two thirds of respondents (67.4%) found that clinical work was the most useful element in their job search. Another 14.6% found word of mouth to be most useful.

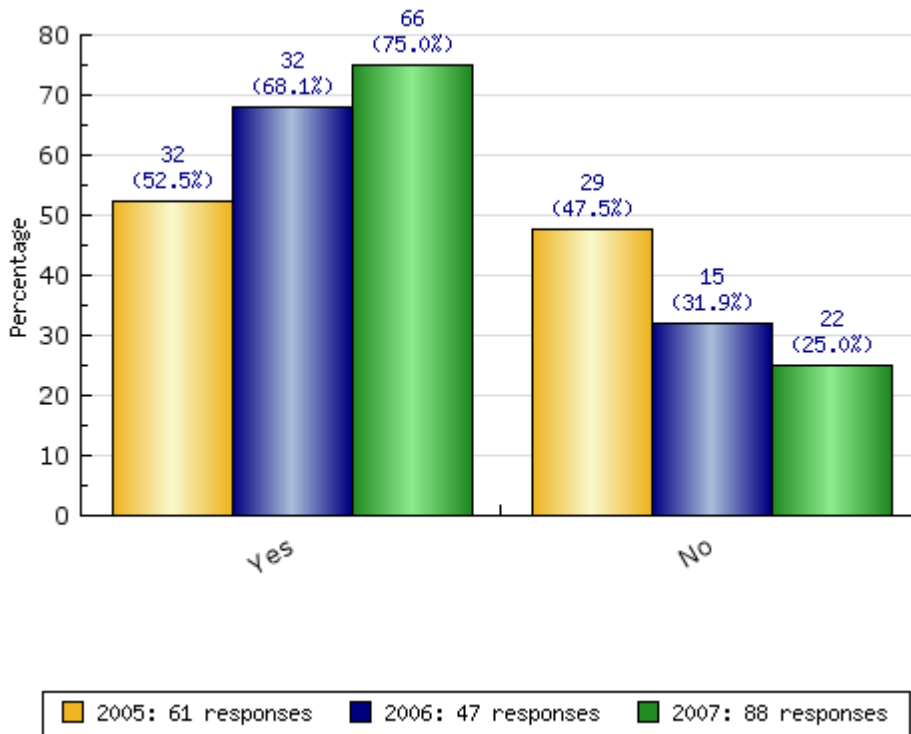
**Table 20 - Job search strategy**

| Job search strategy | Frequency (n=178) | Percent    |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Clinical work       | 120               | 67.4       |
| Word of mouth       | 26                | 14.6       |
| Internet directory  | 9                 | 5.1        |
| Other               | 9                 | 5.1        |
| Employer visits     | 6                 | 3.4        |
| Advertisements      | 4                 | 2.2        |
| Recruitment Fair    | 4                 | 2.2        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>178</b>        | <b>100</b> |

**38. Did you get a job offer from a unit where you were employed as a Senior Assistant?**

The number of students who received a job offer from where they were employed as a student assistant has increased in the last few years to three quarters (75.0%).

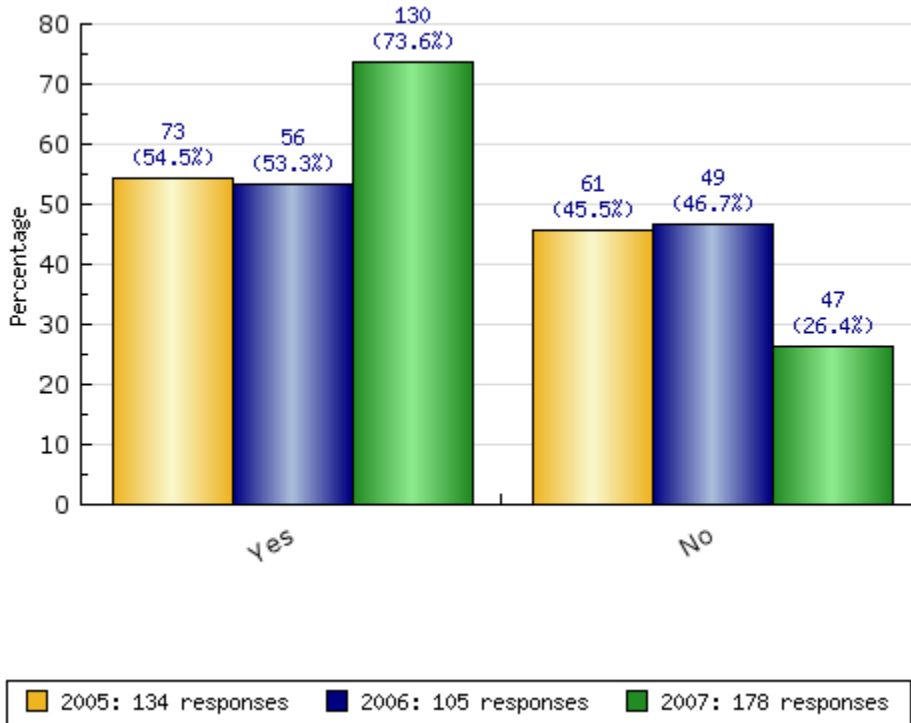
**Figure 21 - Received a job offer from unit where employed as a senior assistant**



**39. Did you get a job offer from a unit where you had your 4<sup>th</sup> year senior practicum experiences?**

Almost three quarters of respondents (73.6%) received a job offer from a unit where they had their 4<sup>th</sup> year senior practicum experience. This number has increased within the past few years from just over one half the previous two years (53.3% in 2006 and 54.5% in 2005).

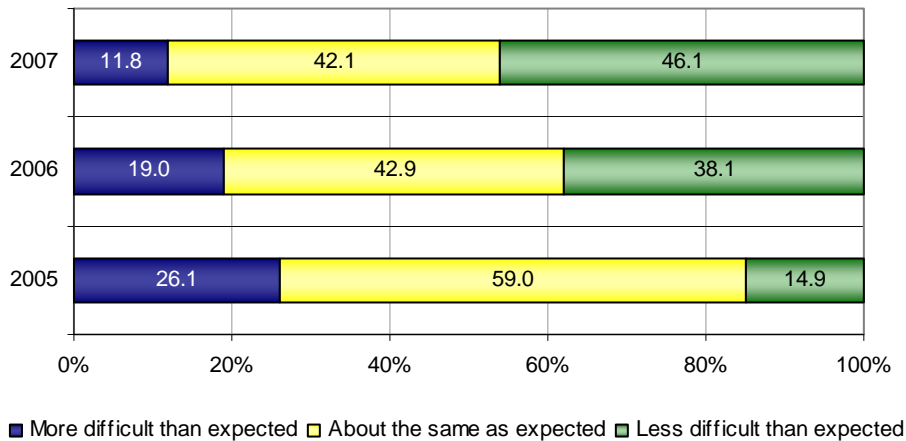
Figure 22 - Received job offer from where completed 4th year practicum



**40. How does your experience in finding your first job compare with your expectations?**

A total of 46.1% rate their experience finding their first job as easier than expected while only 11.8% rate their experience as more difficult than they expected. Generally, finding their first job has become less difficult for graduates within the past few years.

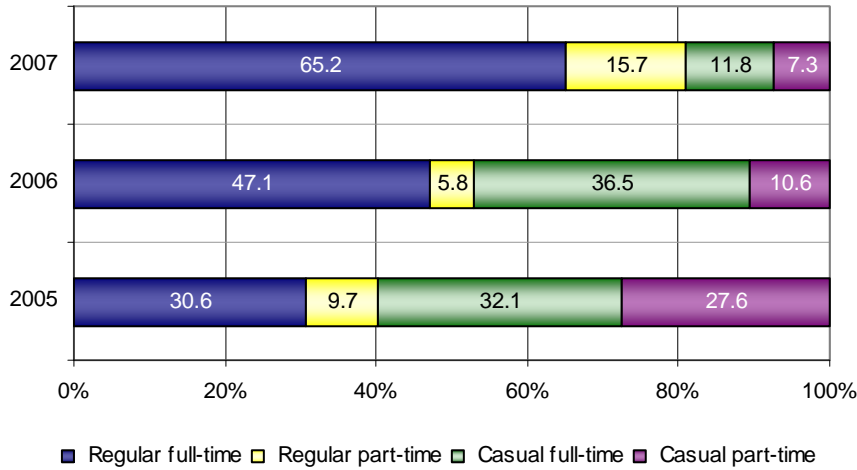
Figure 23 - Difficulty finding first job



**41. What will be the work hours of your first job as a graduate nurse?**

Almost two thirds of NEPS graduates (65.2%) will work or expect to work regular full time hours. The proportion of respondents that are working regular hours has increased significantly over the past few years to a total of 80.9% this year from 52.9% in 2006 and 40.3% in 2005. More than Three quarters (77.0%) have been hired for either type of full time hours this year.

**Figure 24 - Work hours of first job**



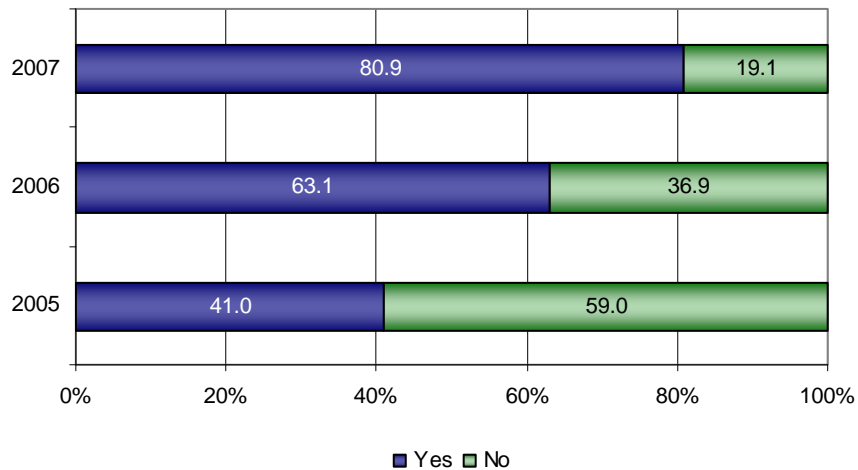
**Definitions**

**"Regular"** reflects permanent employment, even though it may be time limited;  
**"Casual"** reflects the fact that the employment does not guarantee a fixed number of hours of work per pay period. (It also would include occasional, on call, on demand, or seasonal work.)

**42. Is being employed on this basis your preference?**

More than 4 in 5 (80.9%) are happy with the number of hours they are employed to work. There is a steady increase in these numbers from 2005 when less than half (41.0%) were happy with the hours of their employment.

**Figure 25 - Employment preference**



As expected, those who are employed to work regular full or part time hours are also much more likely to be happy with their hours than those employed on a casual basis

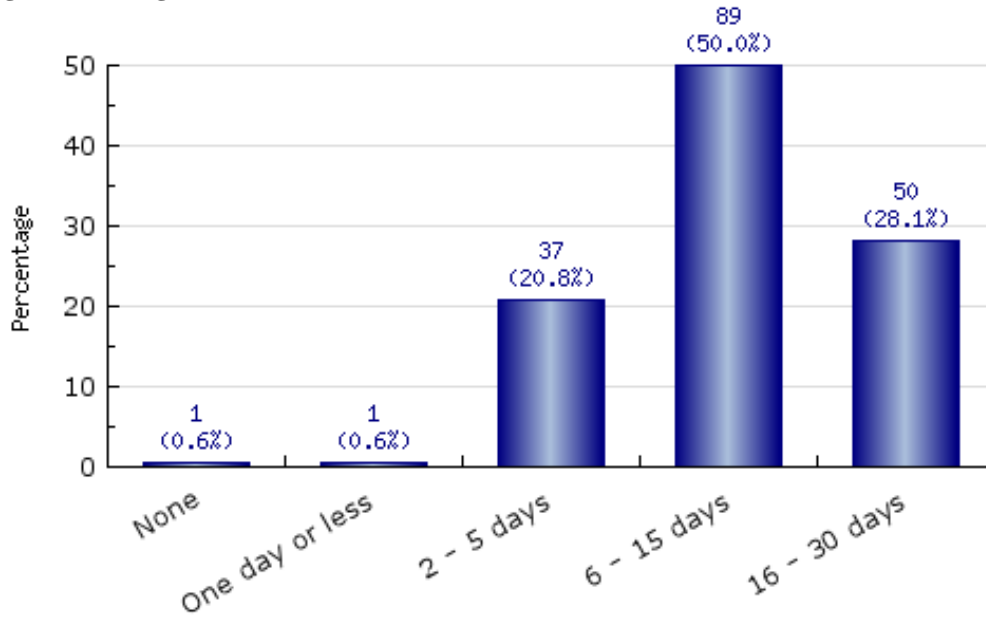
**Table 21 - Expected work hours by preference for hours**

| Expected work hours of first job as graduate nurse | Hours worked at expected first job their preference |               |       |               |
|--|---|---------------|-------|---------------|
|  | Yes   |               | No    |               |
|  | Count   | Row Total N % | Count | Row Total N % |
| Regular full-time                                  | 112   | 96.6%         | 4     | 3.4%          |
| Casual full-time                                   | 12  | 42.9%         | 16    | 57.1%         |
| Regular part-time                                  | 16  | 76.2%         | 5     | 23.8%         |
| Casual part-time                                   | 4   | 30.8%         | 9     | 69.2%         |

**43. When you start your first nursing job, what do you expect will be the length of your orientation (including "buddy" shifts)?**

The most common length of orientation expected is between 6 and 15 days with one half (50.0%) indicating this is the length they expect.

**Figure 26 - Length of orientation**



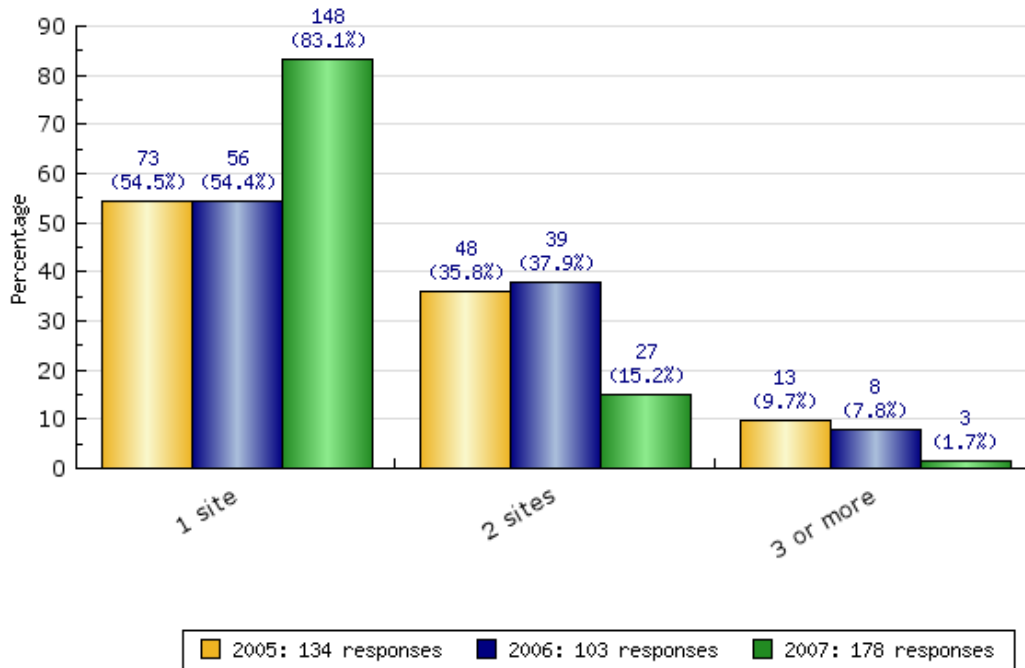
**44. How many sites will you/do you expect to work at for your first job as a graduate nurse?**

**Sites include:**

- Different work sites but same employer
- Different units but same employer
- Different employers with same or different units
- For public health nurses, many schools would be one unit

More than 4 in 5 (83.1%) expect to work at only one site as a graduate nurse. This is a significant increase from just over one half (54.4% in 2006 and 54.3% in 2005) in the two previous years.

**Figure 27 - Number of sites**



**45. What type of organization will you be working at?**

**(Note: The primary site is the site where you had the most hours per week)**

Almost three quarters (73.5%) will be working in a general hospital with 100 beds or more in their first site which is an increase from 44.9% in 2006 and 45.6% in 2005. Almost nineteen in twenty (94.0%) will be working at some kind of general hospital in their first site.

Figure 28 - Type of organisation

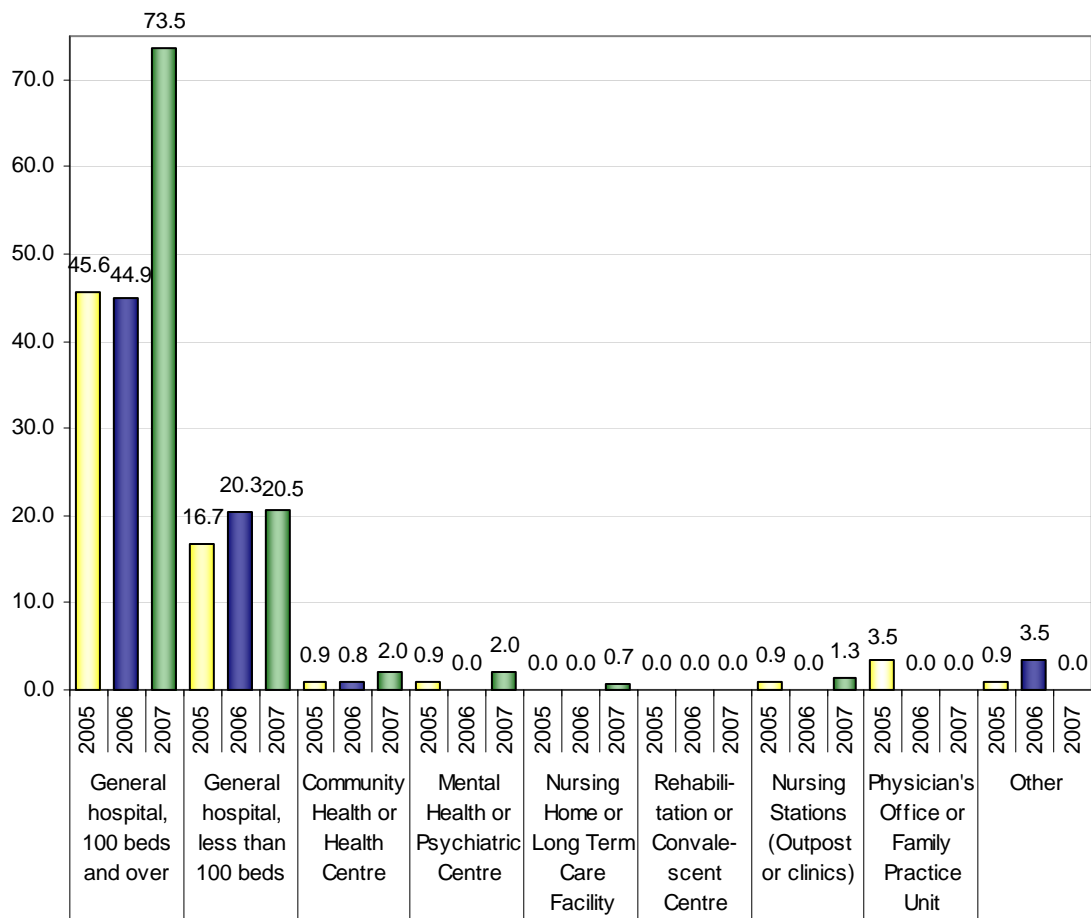


Table 22 - Site of nursing jobs

| Site of nursing jobs                    | First site        |         | Second site (n=23) | Third site (n=2) |
|---|-------------------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
|   | Frequency (n=151) | Percent |                    |                  |
| General hospital, 100 beds and over     | 111               | 73.5%   | 11                 | 1                |
| General hospital, less than 100 beds    | 31                | 20.5%   | 7                  | 1                |
| Community Health/Health Centre          | 3                 | 2.0%    | 2                  | 0                |
| Mental Health/Psychiatric Centre/Agency | 3                 | 2.0%    | 2                  | 0                |
| Nursing Home/Long Term Care Facility    | 1                 | 0.7%    | 0                  | 0                |
| Association/Government                  | 2                 | 1.3%    | 0                  | 0                |
| Nursing stations (Outpost or clinic)    | 0                 | 0.0%    | 1                  | 0                |

**46. What is your position?**

Almost all of 99.3% of NEPS graduates surveyed hold the position of staff nurse or community health nurse their first site and all who work at multiple sites work as a staff nurse or community health nurse at their second and third site.

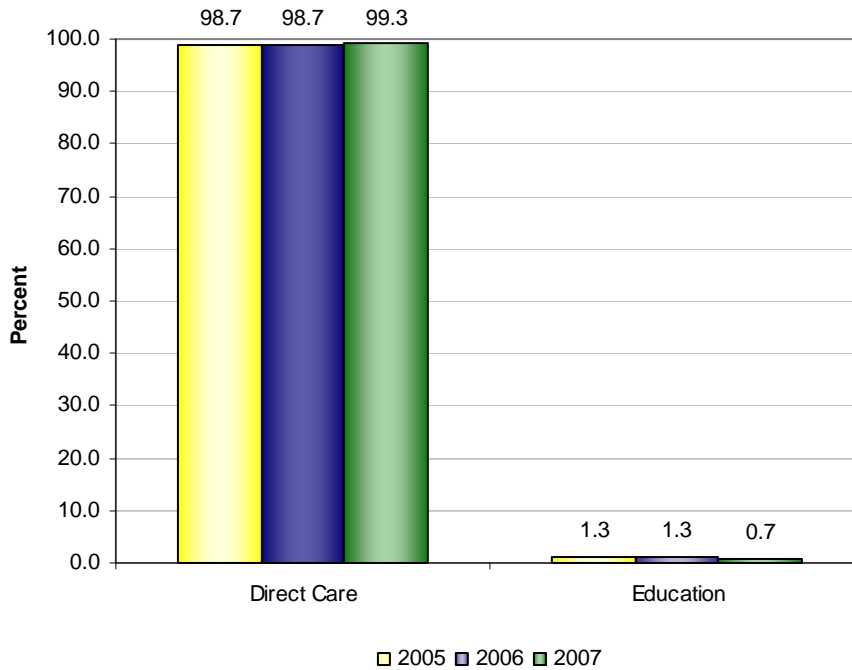
**Table 23 - Position at site**

| Position at any site               | First Site        |         | Second Site | Third Site |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|-------------|------------|
|                                    | Frequency (n=151) | Percent |             |            |
| Staff Nurse/Community Health Nurse | 150               | 99.3%   | 23          | 2          |
| Clinical Nurse Specialist          | 1                 | 0.7%    | 0           | 0          |

**47. What is your main area of responsibility?**

At their first site, almost all respondents' main area of responsibility is direct care (99.3%). At their second or third site, all graduates worked in direct care.

**Figure 29 - Area of responsibility**



**47a. In what area will you provide nursing care:**

More than seven in ten (71.5%) graduates working in direct care will work in the medical or surgical area.



**Table 24 - Area providing care**

| Main Area           | Specific Area             | Frequency<br>in First<br>site<br>(n=151) | Frequency<br>in Second<br>Site (n=23) | Frequency<br>in Third<br>Site (n=2) | Total<br>% |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Direct Care (n=151) | Medical/Surgical          | 99                                       | 8                                     | 1                                   | 71.5%      |
|                     | Maternal/Newborn          | 22                                       | 1                                     | 0                                   | 15.2%      |
|                     | Pediatric                 | 16                                       | 2                                     | 0                                   | 11.9%      |
|                     | Emergency care            | 10                                       | 0                                     | 0                                   | 6.6%       |
|                     | Geriatric/Long term care  | 10                                       | 2                                     | 0                                   | 7.9%       |
|                     | Psychiatric/Mental Health | 6  | 2                                     | 0                                   | 5.3%       |
|                     | Community Health          | 5  | 3                                     | 0                                   | 5.3%       |
|                     | Oncology                  | 4  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 2.6%       |
|                     | Home care                 | 3  | 0                                     | 1                                   | 2.6%       |
|                     | Operating Room/RR         | 3  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 2.0%       |
|                     | Several clinical areas    | 2  | 2                                     | 0                                   | 2.6%       |
|                     | Ambulatory Care           | 2  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 1.3%       |
|                     | Critical Care             | 2  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 1.3%       |
|                     | Rehabilitation            | 2  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 1.3%       |
|                     | Other, (please specify)   | 10                                       | 3                                     | 0                                   | 8.6%       |
| Education (n=1)     |                           | 1  | 0                                     | 0                                   | 0.7%       |

**48. On average, how many hours per week will you work?**

Respondents will receive an average of 36.7 hours per week in total with a median of 36 hours at their first site and a mean of 39.1 hours and median of 39 hours in total.

**Table 25 - Number of hours worked per week at site**

| Number of hours worked per week at site | First Site | Second Site | Third Site | Total |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Mean number of hours                    | 36.7       | 17.3        | 4          | 39.1  |
| Median number of hours                  | 36         | 12          | 4          | 39    |
| Total number of responses               | 148        | 20          | 1          | 148   |

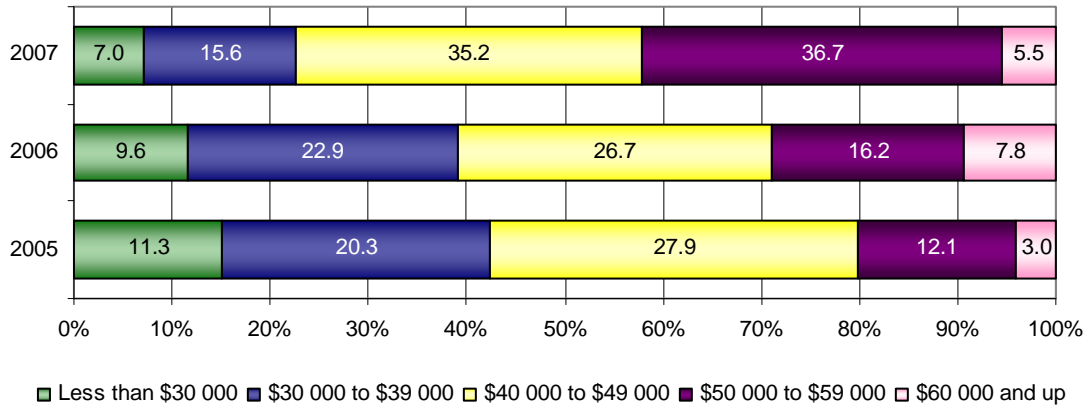
**Table 26 - Number of hours worked per week overall**

| Number of hours worked per week overall | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Less than 20 hrs/wk                     | 3         | 2.1     |
| 20 to 29 hrs/wk                         | 11        | 7.4     |
| 30 to 39 hrs/wk                         | 60        | 40.5    |
| 40 to 49 hrs/wk                         | 60        | 40.5    |
| 50 or more hrs/wk                       | 14        | 9.5     |
| Total                                   | 148       | 100.0   |

**49. What do you expect will be your total annual earnings per year before taxes and deductions (Canadian Dollars)?**

Graduates in 2007 expect their annual income to be greater than in years past with more than four in ten (42.2%) of those who responded expecting to make more than \$50 000 per year compared to 24.0% in 2006 and 15.1% in 2005. One quarter (25.8%) of NEPS graduates do not know what to expect their total annual earnings will be.

**Figure 30 - Expected average annual income**



## Section 4: General Questions

### 50. Are you registering with any of the following associations (check all that apply)?

More than nine in ten respondents (94.4%) are registering with SNRA. See Appendix A for other nursing licensure mentioned.

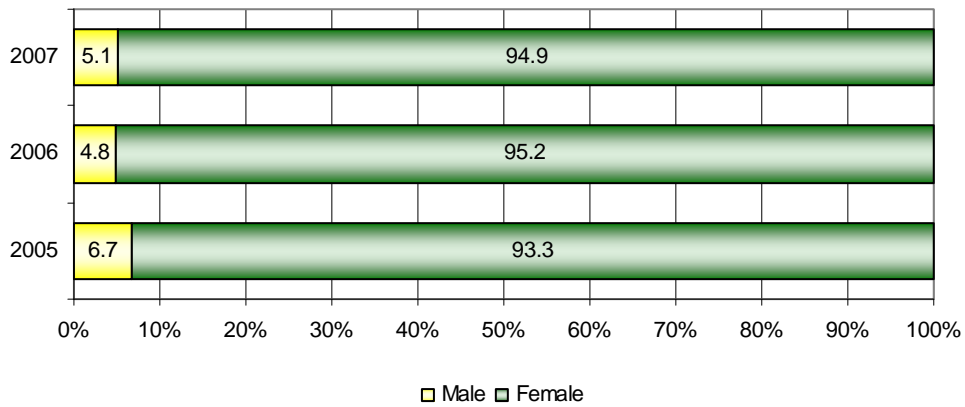
**Table 27 - Nursing associations**

| Nursing Associations    | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|                         | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| SRNA only               | 123        | 92.5           | 96         | 91.4           | 168        | 94.4           |
| RPNAS only              | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            |
| SRNA & RPNAS            | 1          | 0.8            | 1          | 1.0            | 3          | 1.6            |
| Neither                 | 7          | 5.3            | 5          | 4.8            | 6          | 3.4            |
| Other nursing licensure | 8          | 6.0            | 8          | 7.6            | 7          | 3.9            |
| Don't know              | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            | 1          | .6             |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>133</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>105</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>177</b> | <b>100</b>     |

### 51. What is your gender?

Approximately 1 in 20 (5.1%) NEPS graduates are male. This is consistent over the last three years.

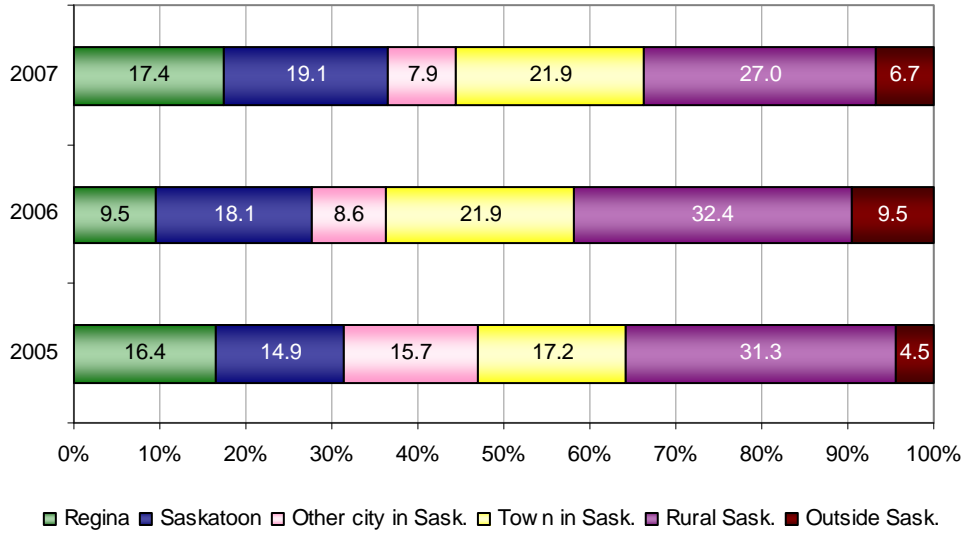
**Figure 31 - Gender**



### 52. Where did you grow up?

Over one quarter (27.2%) of NEPS graduates grew up in rural Saskatchewan and over one third (34.9%) grew up in either Saskatoon or Regina. A large majority (92.8%) grew up somewhere in Saskatchewan. See Appendix A for areas outside of Saskatchewan.

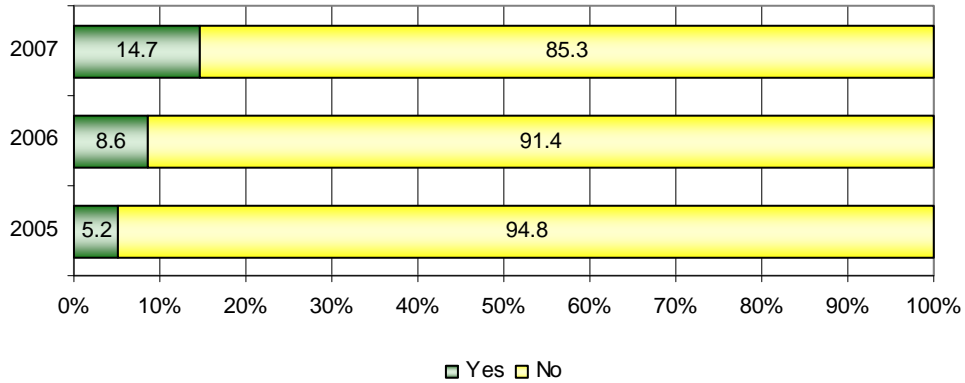
**Figure 32 - Location**



**53. Are you of Aboriginal ancestry?**

The proportion of NEPS graduates who are of aboriginal ancestry has grown to 14.7% this year from 8.6% in 2006 and 5.2% in 2005.

**Figure 33 - Aboriginal ancestry**



**54. You indicated you are of Aboriginal ancestry; please indicate if you are:**

Of the 26 respondents who indicated that they are of aboriginal ancestry, thirteen are Métis (51.9%), eleven have treaty status and two were non-status.

**55. What is your current marital status?**

Upon finishing the NEPS program, one half were married or common law (49.4%) compared to just over one quarter (23.0%) when they started the program.

Figure 34 - Current marital status

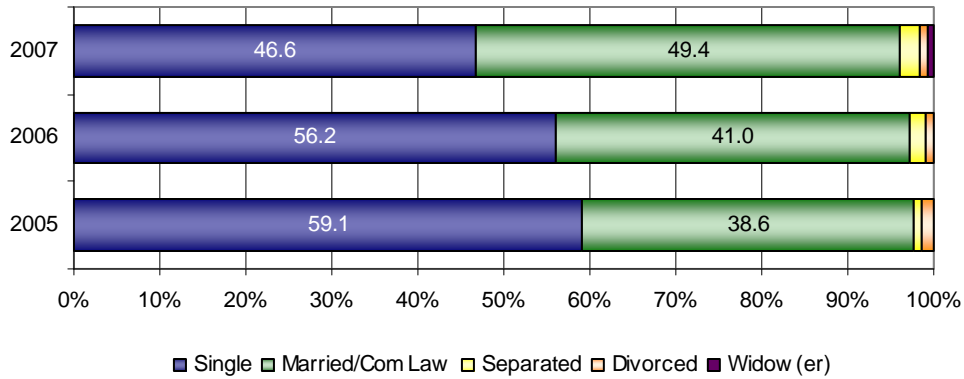


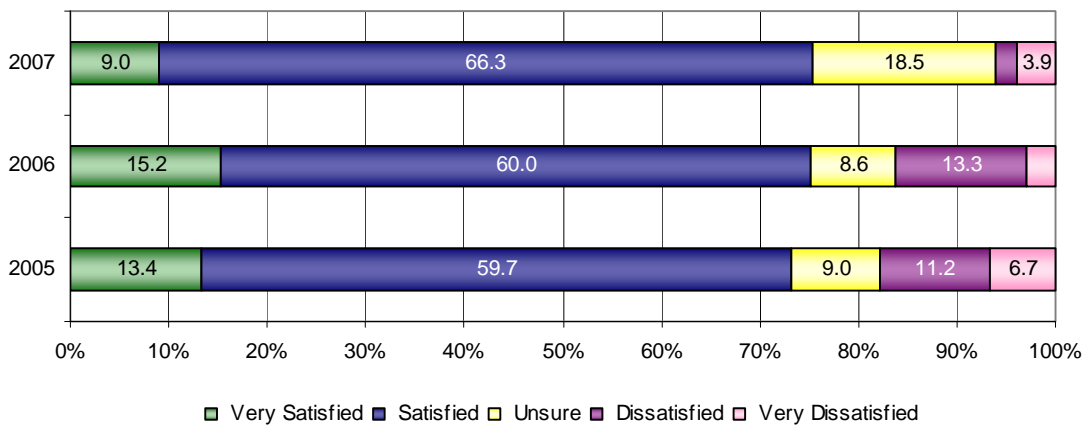
Table 28 - Marital status

| Marital Status                     | 2005       |                | 2006       |                | 2007       |                |
|------------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|                                    | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses | Total #    | % of Responses |
| Single                             | 78         | 59.1           | 59         | 56.2           | 83         | 46.6           |
| Married/Common Law/Living Together | 51         | 38.6           | 43         | 41.0           | 88         | 49.4           |
| Separated                          | 1          | 0.8            | 2          | 1.9            | 4          | 2.2            |
| Divorced                           | 2          | 1.5            | 1          | 1.0            | 2          | 1.1            |
| Widow(er)                          | 0          | 0.0            | 0          | 0.0            | 1          | 0.6            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>132</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>105</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>195</b> | <b>100</b>     |

56. How satisfied are you with your educational experience in the NEPS program?

Three quarters of NEPS graduates (75.3%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their educational experience in the program.

Figure 35 - Satisfaction with NEPS



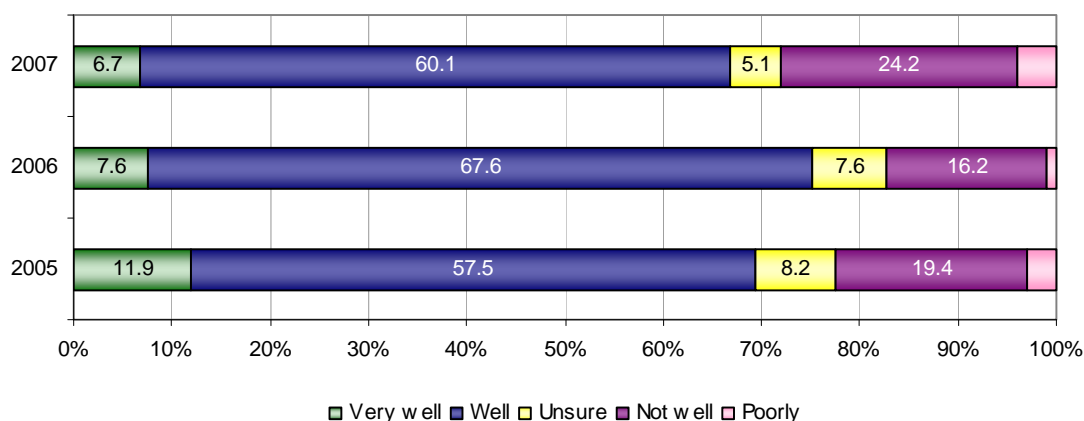
The proportion of respondents of aboriginal ancestry that are satisfied or very satisfied with the NEPS program is much greater than the proportion of other respondents.

**Table 29 - Aboriginal ancestry by satisfaction with NEPS**

| Aboriginal Ancestry | Satisfaction with NEPS education |                                     |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                     | % Satisfied or Very Satisfied    | % Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied |
| Yes                 | 92.0%                            | 8.0%                                |
| No                  | 76.6%                            | 23.4%                               |

### 57. How well do you believe your educational program has prepared you for nursing practice?

Two thirds (66.8%) of respondents believe that the NEPS program has well or very well prepared them for nursing practice.

**Figure 36 - How well NEPS prepared for nursing practice**

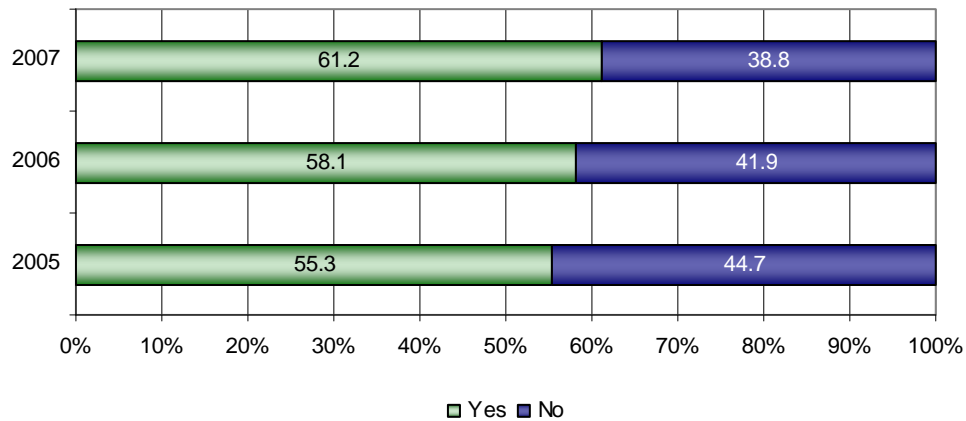
Not surprisingly, those respondents who replied that NEPS prepared them well or very well for a nursing job rated their satisfaction with NEPS much more highly than those who did not.

**Table 30 - Quality of job preparation by satisfaction with NEPS**

| Quality of job preparation by NEPS program | Satisfaction with NEPS education |               |                                   |               |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
|  | Satisfied or very satisfied      |               | Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied |               |
|  | Count                            | Row Total N % | Count                             | Row Total N % |
| Well or very well                          | 127                              | 95.0%         | 6                                 | 5.0%          |
| Not well or poorly                         | 16                               | 32.6%         | 33                                | 67.4%         |

### 58. Do you plan to pursue graduate studies (Masters/PhD) at some time in the future?

More than six in ten respondents (61.2%) plan to pursue graduate studies in the future. This is a small increase from 58.1% in 2006 and 55.3% in 2005. No other factors were strongly associated with the desire to pursue graduate studies.

**Figure 37 - Plan to pursue graduate studies**

**59. Do you have any additional comments regarding the education you received in the NEPS program?**

Of those who provided comments, a total of 47.5% of the respondents indicated that they feel like more clinical time during the NEPS program would have been very useful to them, and 36.2% suggested changes to the curriculum, classes or practicum. Please see appendix A for the complete list of additional comments.

**Table 31 - General comments about the NEPS program**

| General Comments about the NEPS Program | Total #   | % of Responses |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| Require More Clinical/Practical Time    | 38        | 47.5           |
| Changes to Curriculum/Classes/Practicum | 29        | 36.2           |
| Instructors/Faculty/Preceptor Comments  | 18        | 22.5           |
| Unprepared for Work Force/Mentorship    | 10        | 12.5           |
| Overall Satisfaction With Program       | 10        | 12.5           |
| Native Studies/Integration              | 1         | 1.2            |
| Other                                   | 8         | 10.0           |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>78</b> | <b>100</b>     |

*"[A]fter 4th year - the pieces come together and it works - NEPS is credible, and I'm sure I'll be "okay" out there."*

*"Being a mature student and having some classes prior to coming in to the program, I feel that it would benefit everyone to take one year of university before being admitted to the program. It would give a good idea of what to expect for work load and would also help individuals decide if they really want to continue in the nursing program."*

*"Charting is very different in the real world and it is very difficult to adapt to the new way of doing everything we have learned."*

*"I believe that the admission process and criteria for entrance into NEPS could be improved. Also, I believe that NEPS should not be a direct-entry program (from high school). I appreciated the diverse range of clinical experiences I received during my education. I would like to see a supernumerary employee program instituted in Saskatchewan to ensure adequate orientation and training of new grads."*

*"I believe that there should be a greater focus on integrating theory into the nursing practice, rather than learning the theory in school and being expected to apply it to the practice at a later time."*

*"I did not like having to attend two different educational institutions (SIAS-T-Kelsey Campus & U of S). Even though both institutions operate under the same program (NEPS), I found the overall educational philosophies to be quite different. It seemed illogical to have to transfer to a new site as a third-year student."*

*"I find that now that I am working, there is an imbalance between the amount of time that NEPS allocates to teaching about counseling skills etc, compared to the actual amount of time spent doing this. I feel that NEPS should focus more on teaching around acute care issues, as this is where most of us are working, and in the incredible business of the wards today it's just simply a reality that we don't have the time we'd like to spend counseling etc."*

*"There are ups and downs in any program, there are a lot of great things in NEPS but there are always things that can be improved such as more clinical learning and less classroom. I learn the best with hands on, and things in a textbook or listening to a lecture isn't always the answer. Overall I really enjoyed the program and would recommend it."*

*"NEPS did not prepare me for the "real world" of nursing. The expectations of what was expected of me during school were not close to the realities of the expectations of bedside nursing. In my opinion, more clinical hours are needed to ensure a solid foundation for clinical nursing. Education alone, at least my education, did not prepare me for what I have faced or what I will face in the future."*

*"[I] feel that rural nursing is an important component missing from the NEPS program. I am from a rural community and lived in an urban setting for my post-secondary education, so I understand the vast difference between rural and urban life. [...] I feel that new grads are very unprepared for the realities of rural nursing."*



## Appendix A

### 2. Please identify your previous education in the health care field (check as many as apply):

Entries under "Other":

- (6) Dental Assistant
- (2) Kinesiology
- (1) Anatomy and Cell Biology degree.
- (1) Canadian Nursing Association
- (1) CCLXT, Pharmacy Technician
- (1) 1yr nursing in Calgary
- (1) Health Record Tech
- (1) Indian Health Certificate
- (1) Medical Terminology Class
- (1) Occupational Physical Therapy Assistant
- (1) Optometry
- (1) Pharmacy Technician

### 4. Please specify the degree(s)/diploma(s)/certificates (including field of study) you held prior to starting the program:

First degree/Diploma

- (6) Bachelor of Arts (General)
- (4) Certified Dental Assistant
- (3) Licensed Practical Nurse
- (2) High school Diploma
- (1) Agriculture Business Diploma
- (1) Bachelor of Arts (3 Yr) (English, U of S)
- (1) Bachelor of Arts (Liberal Arts)
- (1) Bachelor of Arts and Religion
- (1) Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- (1) Bachelor of Religious Education
- (1) Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- (1) Biblical Studies Diploma
- (1) BSc Physiology
- (1) Business Administration
- (1) Certified Combined Laboratory & Xray Technician
- (1) Diploma in Early Childhood Education - SIAST
- (1) Diploma in Television Production
- (1) EMT Certificate
- (1) EMTA diploma
- (1) Fine Arts
- (1) LPN Certificate From Medicine Hat College
- (1) Northern Health Science Access Program
- (1) Occupational Physical Therapy Assistant Certificat
- (1) Office Administration Diploma
- (1) Office Ed. Certificate
- (1) Practical Nursing Certificate
- (1) Professional Cooking Diploma
- (1) SIAST Truck and Transport mechanical repair
- (1) Travel and Toursim Certificate

Second Degree/Diploma

- (2) Dental Assisting Certificate
- (2) Licensed Practical Nurse
- (1) Canadian Bible College
- (1) Diploma (2 yr) Biological Sciences, Kelsey SIAST
- (1) Health Record Technician (Certificate)
- (1) Interpreting certificate
- (1) Medical Office Assistant Certificate
- (1) Personal care aide certificate
- (1) Pharmacy Technician
- (1) Travel and Tourism Diploma
- (1) Two Years of Arts & Science classes at U of S

**6. Was this work in the health care field? If yes, please specify:**

- (4) Dental Assistant
- (3) LPN
- (2) LPN Acute Care
- (2) Special Care Aide
- (1) Community Health Representative
- (1) Data Entry Clerk for Immunizations
- (1) Dental Office
- (1) EMT
- (1) Health Record Technician
- (1) Hospital Pharmacy Technician
- (1) Long Term Care
- (1) LPN Surgical ward
- (1) Medical Office Assistant- Family Physician
- (1) Medical Stenographer
- (1) Therapies

**11. Please indicate if you experienced any of the following significant life changes during the NEPS program? (check all that apply)**

Entries under "Other":

- (3) End of a long term relationship.
- (1) Bankruptcy and spouse loss of employment
- (1) Childcare, emotional abuse - former CL spouse
- (1) Engagement
- (1) Husband with new career
- (1) Missing person in family for 2.5 yrs.
- (1) Parental divorce
- (1) Very High Stress
- (1) Weight Gain
- (1) Younger brother moved in with me

**20. What was the major source of your scholarship/bursary support?**

Entries under "Other":

- (2) Garfield Weston Canadian Merit scholarship
- (1) Awards
- (1) Coop Refinery
- (1) Memorial Bursary from SIAST
- (1) Millennium Bursary
- (1) NAPN Scholarship
- (1) Oil company
- (1) Sk Health Bursary
- (1) Weyerhaeuser Scholarship Fund

**31. Name the (one) most positive aspect of your first job?**

**Experience - 31 responses (Experience)**

- (1) A great place to get a lot of nursing experience
- (1) Able to use many clinical skills and develop organizational habits
- (1) Being confident in my work.
- (1) *Being hired into Critical Care in Prince Albert will give me the opportunity to increase my knowledge base and critical thinking skills*
- (1) Can acquire lots of experience
- (1) Experience
- (1) Experience in that area (senior assist)
- (1) Experience working with interest group (infants)
- (1) Gain experience and build knowledge
- (1) Gaining experience as a grad nurse
- (1) Good learning experiences
- (1) Great learning experiences
- (1) I will have the opportunity to put my education into practice and have an ongoing opportunity to continue learning on the job.

- (1) It is a highly acute area, so it will help facilitate critical thinking skills.
- (1) It provides various experiences
- (1) It will be a great place to practice and master nursing skills
- (1) It will ease me into the nursing role.
- (1) It will give me a wide variety of experiences
- (1) Learning
- (1) Learning opportunities
- (1) Lots of different areas for experience, and many opportunities.
- (1) Lots of experience in different areas (rural)
- (1) Lower patient/nurse ratios - better able to know/care for/pay attention to individual clients and easier to learn as a new grad
- (1) The best part about my first job, is that I will be able to gain lots of experience that is critical to a new grad, as well as being able to hone my nursing skills
- (1) The job is on the same unit where I have experience as a senior assist
- (1) The patient population provides me with array of learning experiences.
- (1) Wide variety of patients- well rounded learning experience
- (1) Will be a great learning experience
- (1) Will be working on the same unit as an RN that I was as an LPN
- (1) Will give me a wide variety of experiences
- (1) Will give me an overall great experience (EMERG). Only place in clinical nursing I seem to really like.

#### Area of Interest - 29 responses (Area of Interest)

- (1) Area I was interested in from the start of the program.
- (1) Area of interest
- (1) Area of nursing of which I desired to work.
- (1) Being able help teenagers in need
- (1) Diversity in the areas you can work.
- (1) Diversity of clients (emergency, outpatient, geriatric (LTC), mental health, pediatric, palliative, etc)
- (1) Got my foot in the door with public health.
- (1) Helping people
- (1) I feel like I am meant to be an L&D nurse at this point in time, as I feel most confident and comfortable on that unit
- (1) I like being able to care for infants.
- (1) *I love working with the little kids. That is my highlight.*
- (1) In the department that I have always wanted to work in
- (1) In the field I want
- (1) In the field that I wanted to work
- (1) It deals with being with first nation people
- (1) It is exactly what I was looking for in my life and on the unit that I desired to work on.
- (1) It is in the field I intended on working in.
- (1) it is the job I was looking for when i went into nursing
- (1) Nursing for a population that I aspired to work with.
- (1) Rewarding to see patients get better quick and be able to go home (orthopedics)
- (1) Specialty of choice - Emergency
- (1) That I get to work with the age population that I am interested in working with.
- (1) The client group
- (1) The field I want to start in
- (1) The most positive aspect is that every day is different. I am a rural nurse and so I deal with everything.
- (1) This is the area that I have always wanted to work in since starting nursing
- (1) Working with adolescents
- (1) Working with kids
- (1) Working with the elderly population

#### Great Staff - 29 responses (Great Staff)

- (4) Staff
- (1) Amazing staff
- (1) Good colleagues
- (1) Good coworkers.
- (1) Good staff relations
- (1) Good staff.
- (1) Great people to work with and a good working environment
- (1) Great staff members
- (1) I find that the staff is very accommodating to new grads.
- (1) I previously know the staff and ward from working there as a LPN

- (1) I think the most positive aspect is that I work with a really great staff and its a great place for a new grad to learn.
- (1) I think the most positive aspect is the great people I work with. I think the people are very helpful to me as a starting-out nurse.
- (1) I think the most positive aspect is the staff that I will work with and the peer group relationships that I have developed.
- (1) I would say the team, the way the team works together, so team work.
- (1) People I work with very friendly and helpful (at least on this unit, not sure when I move to other units as I am a float)
- (1) Supportive staff
- (1) Team support and team work
- (1) The co-workers.
- (1) The Current Staff mix
- (1) The manager
- (1) The staff (some of them).
- (1) The staff are really helpful and appreciate me being there
- (1) The staff I work with
- (1) The staff I work with on my unit (Peds 3000-RUH) are really supportive and helpful
- (1) The staff is supportive
- (1) *The staff support there is great. There is a good mix of experienced nurses to help out new nurses.*

#### Work Environment - 23 responses (Work Environment)

- (1) Comfort with environment due to being an aide on Pediatrics from first year through to graduation (and Sr. assisting)
- (1) Good practice environment
- (1) Having independence and autonomy within the nursing role
- (1) I think the most positive aspect is the familiarity I have the facility and the staff are great to work with.
- (1) I worked on this unit throughout the summer as a senior assistant. I got to know the staff and routines of the unit well, as well as I continuously got to participate/observe new procedures almost every shift. I feel comfortable going to this unit to work with the hours of experience I have.
- (1) It was really dynamic and the patient turnover is really good.
- (1) Leadership of manager
- (1) Learning new things and having a good work environment in which i feel that i can continue to learn new things
- (1) Pace and the pay
- (1) Quality Work Environment (pleasant, non-stressed co-workers, adequate staff #'s, supportive manager, generous orientation, manageable work-load)
- (1) Surgical environment at a non-trauma centre is a great slower paced learning environment
- (1) Team environment
- (1) The environment
- (1) The environment - staff and the patients care load.
- (1) The independence in my particular job. I enjoy working on my own with lots of responsibility.
- (1) The patients are the most positive aspect of my job. I enjoy being able to interact with my patients.
- (1) The supportive accepting staff environment, which is rare.
- (1) The supportive environment I believe I am going to be working in.
- (1) *The work environment is supportive of new nurses*
- (1) The working environment.
- (1) Was my 4th year practicum placement so I'm already familiar with the type of surgeries and the staff - helps with feeling comfortable
- (1) Working in a supportive environment
- (1) Working in a team environment

#### Location - 19 responses (Location)

- (2) Location
- (1) Don't have to relocate
- (1) Familiar with the unit, staff, routine, etc
- (1) I am familiar with the ward because I senior assisted there. I know some of the staff and I know the manager.
- (1) I am familiar with this rural hospital and really enjoyed doing my practicum there.
- (1) I have received a job on the floor where I Sr. Assisted so I have an idea of the routine, the type of patients I will be working with, familiar with the layout of the unit and I know some of the staff members
- (1) I love the North.
- (1) I will be used to the unit already as I did my Med/surg rotation there.
- (1) I've senior assisted on here prior to starting as an RN
- (1) It is at City Hospital on a ward that I did my six week senior practicum

- (1) It is where I wanted to work
- (1) It will be in a great location with great people and I will have a huge opportunity to improve my skills as a nurse which I will be able to take anywhere once I move into other areas
- (1) Location, full time
- (1) Location- able to be with my family again
- (1) Location-relocated to be close to fiancée
- (1) Ward location
- (1) Within my home town
- (1) Working where I completed my final practicum, familiar with the routine, etc.

**Schedule - 13 responses (Schedule)**

- (1) Autonomy
- (1) Autonomy. I have more control of when and how I work. I can schedule my own time.
- (1) Continued to be employed in acute psychiatry as I was during the Post Registration Degree program. Commenced employment with Client/ patient access services in Saskatoon Dec./06, enjoying the day job much more than shifts.
- (1) Have a week off each month
- (1) I think the most positive aspect is flexible hours.
- (1) I think the most positive aspect is the flexibility that they have with shifts and working around my schedule and family commitments.
- (1) I work one weekend every month.
- (1) It is permanent part time 10 shifts a month which is perfect for my family.
- (1) My work shifts is good.
- (1) Now I am not working shift work which has improved my life dramatically.
- (1) Self-scheduling
- (1) *The flexibility of hours.*
- (1) They are willing to hire me for a short period of time (January and February) as I will be moving in March.

**Full Time Empl. - 11 responses (Full Time Employment)**

- (3) Full time employment
- (2) Permanent Full Time position
- (1) Benefits like vacation.
- (1) Full time RN position
- (1) I was offered a permanent fulltime position as a grad nurse, as well had a casual job on another ward.
- (1) It is a permanent full-time position
- (1) It is permanent full time.
- (1) My first job is a full time position on the ward in the hospital which I had as my first choice, with the ability to make my own schedule.

**Income - 9 responses (Income)**

- (6) Money
- (1) Finally having an income
- (1) I will be getting paid to do what I have been working for 3 1/2 years for free.
- (1) I'm making money instead of incurring debt

**Challenging - 7 responses (Challenging)**

- (1) *Being able to make strategic decisions, which is challenging and gives me an opportunity to influence health care in this province.*
- (1) *I think the positive aspect is the personal satisfaction it gives me.*
- (1) I'm not too sure, maybe the challenge of the ward. There are lots of different clients and conditions.
- (1) Opportunity for advancement
- (1) *Opportunity for growth*
- (1) *The rewarding feeling of a career helping others.*
- (1) The stuff I learned in school I finally get to put into action. Learning something new every day is really positive for me.

**Other - 3 responses (Other)**

- (1) Hard to Recruit Return for Service Grant from Saskatoon Health District
- (1) No scrub dress code

(1) Not applicable as have been a practicing RN since 1994

**Not Started - 3 responses (Not Started)**

- (1) Have not started yet but it will be having the chance to participate in the new mentorship program
- (1) I don't start until January, but it will be rewarding
- (1) I haven't started yet. But, I was given a permanent full time to start.

**36. Please rank the top 3 factors that influenced your choice of work location for your **first job** as a nurse, with 1 being most important and 3 being least important: (Other, please specify)**

- (2) Closer to boyfriend
- (1) Atmosphere of the hospital
- (1) Contract with the government
- (1) Familiarity with ward & staff, worked as LPN there
- (1) Familiarity with Ward b/c of Senior Assisting
- (1) Had to start somewhere
- (1) Knowing the unit & staff
- (1) Newer facility / equipment
- (1) Northern Grant from Sask Health
- (1) Nothing else.
- (1) Opportunity
- (1) Parking
- (1) Population
- (1) Reputation of the ward
- (1) Suitable for recently acquired injury
- (1) Unit staff told me I would do well if I came back!
- (1) Worked there previously

**37. Which strategy has been most useful in your job search?**

- Entries under "Other":
- (1) Applied directly to hospital
  - (1) Clinical experience abroad, area of interest
  - (1) Clinical within the same health district
  - (1) Frequent contact with HR personnel and unit manager
  - (1) Just dropped off a resume
  - (1) My own research and leg work
  - (1) Not applicable
  - (1) Nurse Manager Panel Interview
  - (1) Panel Interview

**50. Are you registering with any of the following associations (check all that apply)?**

- Entries under "Other":
- (3) CRNBC
  - (2) CARNA
  - (1) CRNM
  - (1) Grad licensure

**52. Where did you grow up?**

- Entries under "Other": (Outside of Saskatchewan)
- (3) Alberta
  - (2) Winnipeg, Manitoba
  - (1) Calgary, Alberta
  - (1) Edmonton Alberta
  - (1) Manitoba
  - (1) Medicine Hat, Alberta
  - (1) Philippines
  - (1) Sarajevo (Bosnia Herzegovina)
  - (1) Vancouver, BC