

## Introduction:

The purpose of this project was to help strengthen the relationship between volunteers and riverside staff. Since Covid, the CNU volunteer retention rate has been incredibly low. Students will register and either come to one shift or simply never show up.

To try to diagnose the issue, a survey was sent to CNU volunteers that had stopped showing up asking them why. The main complaint was a lack of tasks when volunteering and feeling as though their services are unwanted. Nursing staff was then asked if they knew what the role of volunteers was, to which many responded they did not know. Some even answered with tasks volunteers are not allowed to do which could cause the hospital liability, such as touching patients.

To remedy this issue, training videos were scripted and soon to be filmed. These videos unlike the orientation materials will be accessible at any point in time for both nurses and volunteers. These videos will clarify tasks and appropriate behavior for both volunteers and nurses.

## Community Partnership: Riverside

We worked with the volunteer department at Riverside Regional Medical Center. We partnered with director of the volunteer office Carolyn Smith, and volunteer coordinator Caleb Montemayor to complete our project. Our faculty partner at CNU was Vanessa Buehlman.

The mission statement of Riverside Hospital:

“To care for others as we would care for those we love - to enhance their well-being and improve their health.”

## Methods / Project Plan:

Fall semester:

We surveyed past and current volunteers to determine what the main problem with volunteer retention was. Then we talked with the nursing staff to see where the miscommunication between volunteers and staff occurs.

We outlined a script for our video and worked on finding a film location.



Figure One: The Riverside Regional Medical Center SIM lab where most of the filming will take place. This location provides an accurate hospital room without the danger of revealing PHI

Spring Semester:

The script was created and the SIM lab being the location of filming was confirmed. A request for actors was sent to CNU students.

Currently:

The video script is being approved through Riverside HR. The video will be filmed at the end of April. Filming will occur in the SIM lab and on a unit that is under construction.

## Project Goals:

- Strengthen the relationship between volunteers and health staff
- Providing volunteers with a better understanding of their roles
- Providing nurses with a better understanding of the volunteers role in the hospital
- Ease the anxiety of volunteers when working on a unit for the first time
- Limit hospital liability from the volunteer department



## Results:

The first step of the project was to assess why volunteer retention rates were so low. Students and nurses alike were asked about how the program. The survey was a success, and areas of weakness in the volunteer program were pinpointed. Using this information, a development plan was created.

The main places of concern in the hospital were identified and issues from each section were generalized. A script for one main video was designed and critiqued. We are currently waiting on hospital approval for the final script.

Filming will occur by the end of the year for the major video, and it will be a summer and future ferguson fellowship goal to edit and implement on the Riverside website.

Depending on the success of the main video, other short videos for specialized units will be made. It is the goal to make these videos sustainable and prevalent for years to come.

## Project Significance:

Volunteers are an essential part to Riverside Hospital. As a non profit in post COVID-19 times, volunteers are vital to the functionality of the hospital. COVID-19 also shut down the volunteer office at Riverside for over a year. Healthcare employee numbers significantly dropped during the coronavirus pandemic, making the need for volunteers even greater.

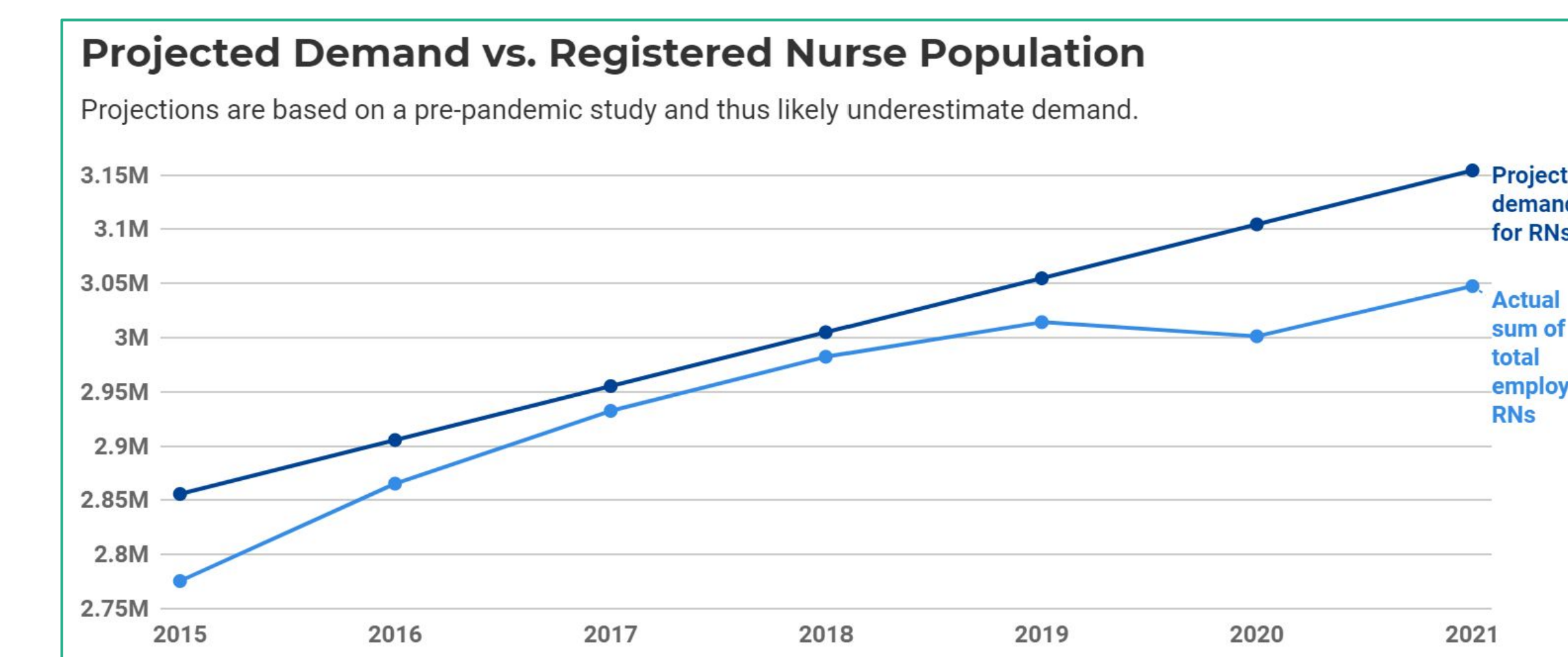


Figure 2: Shows the dip in nurses and the widening gap between needed healthcare professionals and amount there actually is. Volunteers help to lessen this gap.

After reopening the office the nursing staff no longer knew what tasks volunteers were allowed to do, leading to confusion. This was a major contribution to why volunteers stopped coming.

“They didn’t really let me do anything or teach me to do anything, I just kind of watched” -Student survey response

This project is important because it helps get the volunteers and nursing staff better understand the roles that they play in Riverside as it starts to return back to normal following the pandemic.

## Future Steps:

An application was submitted for another year of this Ferguson Fellowship project in which the video will be edited and put up. Depending on the success, other specialized videos for units may be made.

To determine the success of the project, surveys will be sent to nurses and volunteers to gauge the clarity and helpfulness of the videos. Volunteer retention rates will also be examined after a year of video implementation.

## References:

**Figure One -**

Riverside Regional Medical Center, Simulation Laboratories. ESa. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2023, from

<https://esarch.com/portfolio/riverside-regional-medical-center-simulation-laboratories/>

**Figure Two -**

The state of the nation’s Nursing Shortage. US News. (n.d.). Retrieved March 24, 2023, from

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2022-11-01/the-state-of-the-nations-nursing-shortage>

## Contact Information:

Riverside Volunteer Office - (757)594-2044

Carolyn Smith - Carolyn.Smith@rivhs.com

Caleb Montemayor - Caleb.montemayor@rivhs.com

**Christopher Newport University**

Rachel Fitzsimmons - Rachel.fitzsimmons.21@cnu.edu

Emery Moore - Emery.Moore.20@cnu.edu