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January 4, 2024

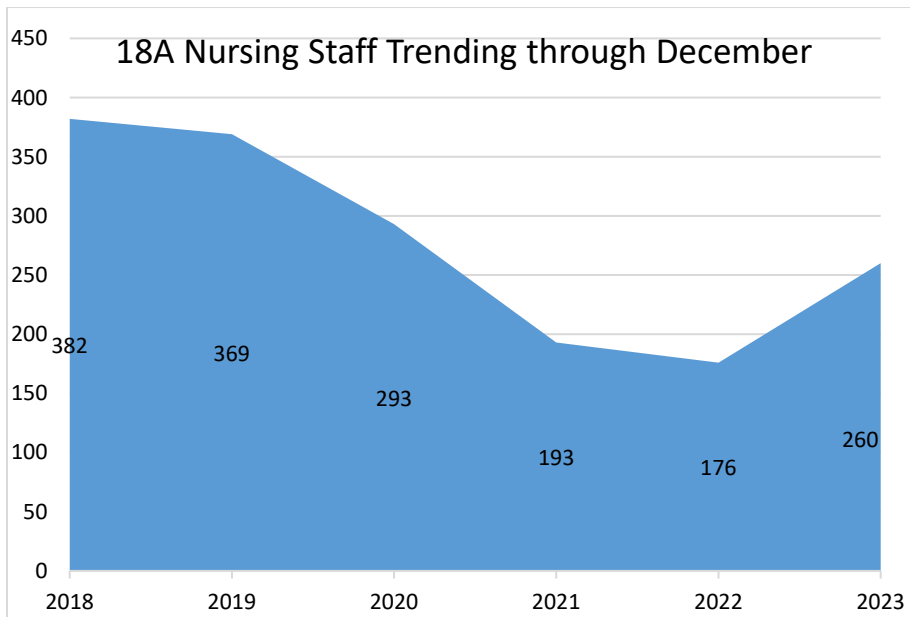
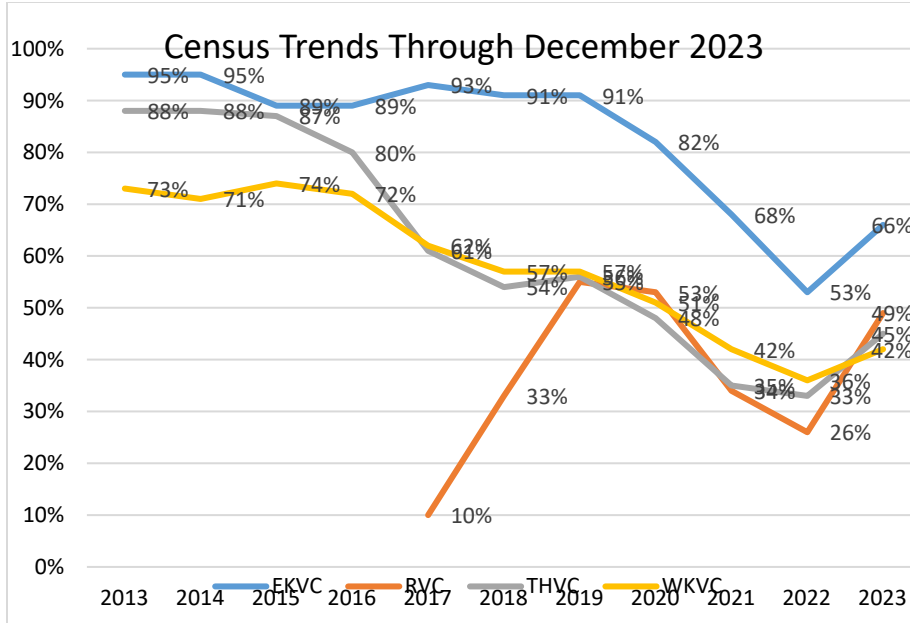
Chairman, Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee (VMAPP)

Subject: Information Request

In response to the request for information during the Interim Joint Committee VMAPP session on November 8, 2023, please find the included documents regarding the Veterans Centers and the nurse pay comparison.

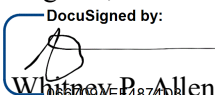
In addition, on the following page is a graph showing the correlation between nursing staff and census, both of which are currently trending positive.

As offered during our testimony, we have been addressing staffing issues as far back as 2017 when we received support to revise KRS 40.325 to include Personal Services Contracts for nurses. Based on the success of that effort, the program was expanded in 2020 to include nurse aides. In 2020 the Nurse Loan Repayment Program was created and implemented in effort to further enhance the recruitment and retention of licensed nursing staff. In March of 2023, we expanded and increased the use of locality premiums in order to offer more competitive wages in our local labor markets. With the approval and implementation of the Special Entry Rate for nursing staff in June of 2023, we were successful in filling even more positions. In 2023 we added 161 additional employees, 137 were 18A nursing staff along with 24 non nursing staff. We also had 46 personal services contract nursing staff convert over to 18A merit employment. Those additional hires have enabled us to provide access to more veterans, increasing our average daily census across all facilities by 48 veterans. We admitted 192 veterans and discharged 144, which helps explain the smaller net increase in total occupancy. Over the next biennium we are projecting a continued increase in census provided our hiring trends continue.



If there are any additional requests, please contact Deputy Commissioner Renaud for coordination at [juan.renaud@ky.gov](mailto:juan.renaud@ky.gov)

Regards,

DocuSigned by:  


Whitney P. Allen, Jr.  
 U.S. Army LTC (Retired)  
 Commissioner  
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