

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date

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West Virginia Nurses Earn Less than Neighbors

Charleston, WV -- The West Virginia Center for Nursing board of Directors announced the wages for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses fall below the national median of 16% - 20% respectively.

Based on the West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs, 2005 the National median hourly rate for RN's is \$25.79 and for LPN's \$16.66," said Duane F. Napier, Executive Director. In West Virginia the average median hourly rate for RN's is \$21.74 and for LPN's \$13.44.

In addition, the border states annual salaries are significantly higher than West Virginia. Based on 2005 data the annual mean salary for West Virginia RN's is \$48,340. Maryland - \$67,330, Pennsylvania - \$54,040, Virginia - \$54,480, Kentucky - \$50,370, Ohio - \$53,150, and the National - \$56,880. This discrepancy in salary may play a significant role in the recruitment and retention of nurses into West Virginia.

The areas of recruitment and retention drive the board of directors in the development of strategies and initiatives to address the nursing shortage. This Center will also provide a forum in which related professional organizations will communicate and collaborate to support revising initiatives to strengthen the workforce.

The West Virginia Center for Nursing was created by the legislature in March 2004 through the passage of HB 4143. The West Virginia Center for Nursing seeks to enhance and strengthen nursing excellence to optimize the health and healthcare of all West Virginians, through strategic workforce planning, education, research, and nurse practice development. The Center is funded through a \$10 surcharge paid by all licensed practical nurses and registered nurses at the time of their annual license renewal. For specific information regarding the West Virginia Center for Nursing and other work of the Center, or to read the annual report, please visit our website at [www.wvcenterfornursing.org](http://www.wvcenterfornursing.org), or contact Duane F. Napier, Executive Director, at 558-0838.