When will winter end? Another storm seems to be brewing … in the nursing workforce
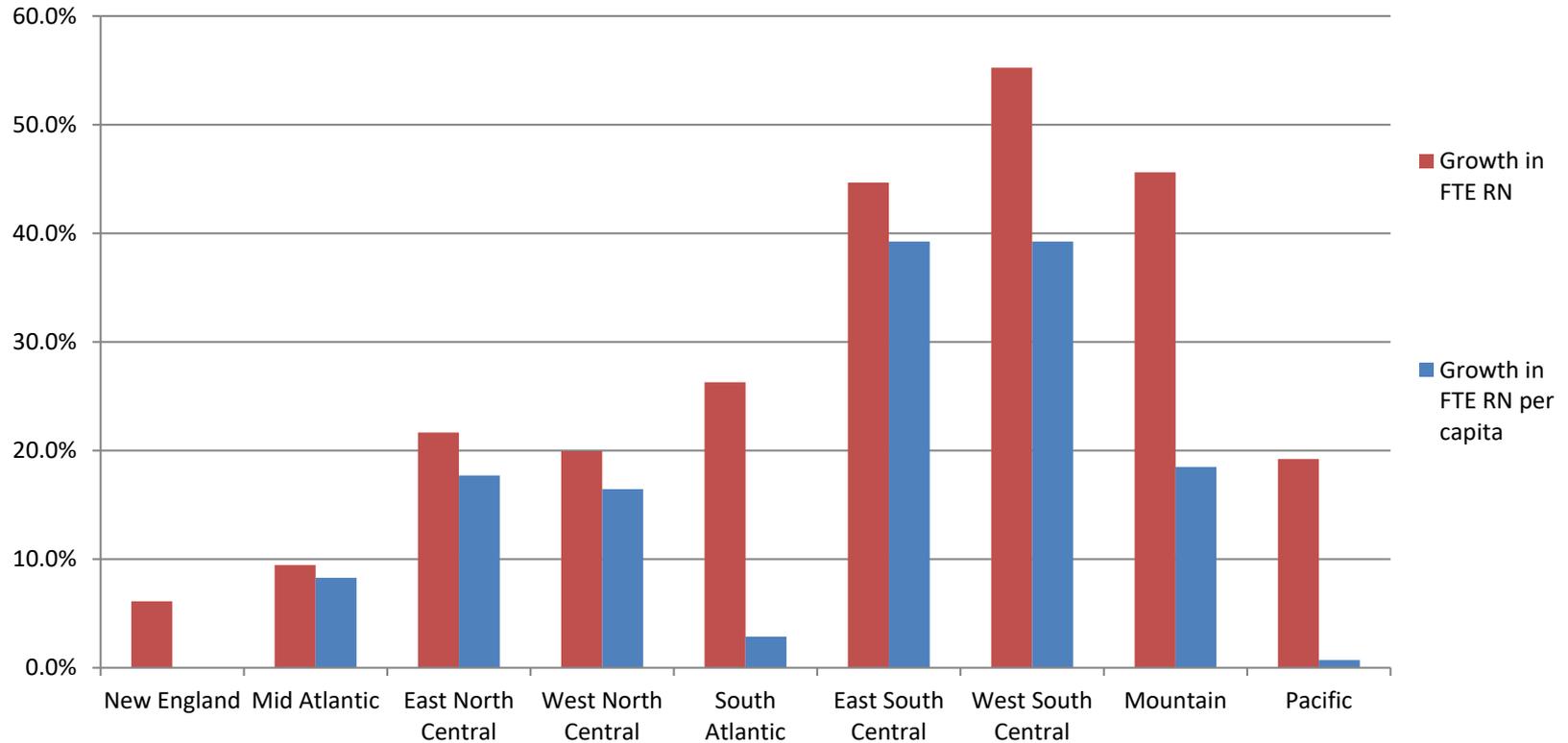
What Dr. Auerbach did not say

"Healthcare at a Crossroads: Where Do We Go From Here" April 6, 3018

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Professor of Nursing and Director
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Uneven growth of RN workforce across the US through 2030

- Much lower growth in New England, Mid Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Pacific regions which could lead to shortages in these regions

Auerbach, Buerhaus, & Staiger (2016). How Fast Will the RN Workforce Grow through 2030? Projections in Nine Regions of the Country. *Nursing Outlook,* 65(1):116-122.

Total and per capita growth in full time employed RNs, 2015-2030

Auerbach, Buerhaus, & Staiger (2016). How Fast Will the RN Workforce Grow through 2030? Projections in Nine Regions of the Country. *Nursing Outlook,* 65(1):116-122.
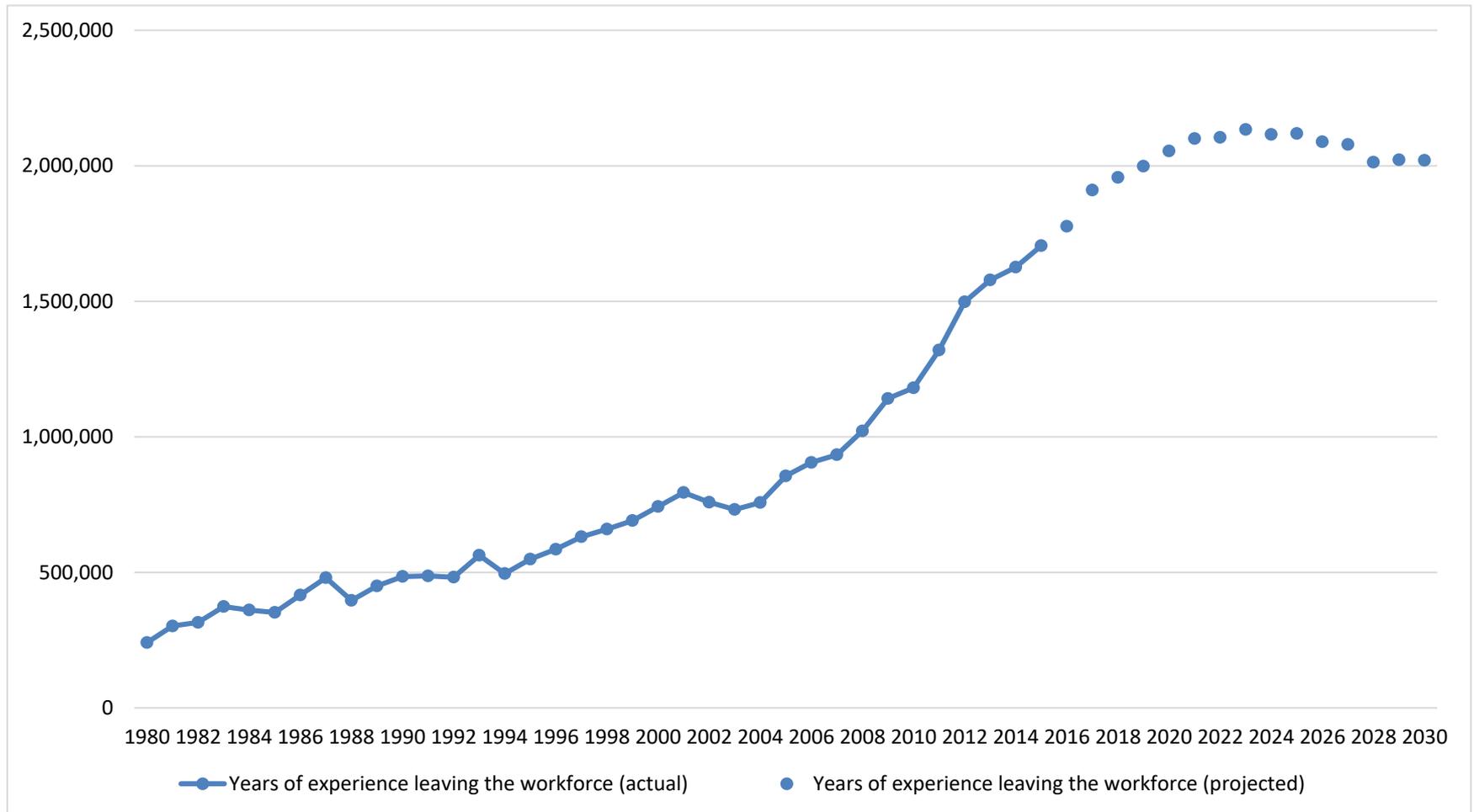
Demand: Aging of the baby boomers!

- 76 million Americans gaining eligibility for Medicare – about 10,000 each day
- Will go on for next 2 decades
- Medicare at 54m today, 80m by 2030
- Multiple chronic and degenerative conditions
- Will increase the overall demand for RNs and the *intensity* of nursing care required in inpatient, outpatient and community settings

By 2030, retirement of one million RNs born in the baby boom generation

- One-third of the RN workforce

Buerhaus, Auerbach, & Staiger, May 3, 2017. How should we prepare for the wave of retiring baby boomer nurses?http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/05/03/how-should-we-prepare-for-the-wave-of-retiring-baby-boomer-nurses/

Millions of years of nursing experience leaving the workforce each year

Legend: Years of experience leaving the workforce (actual) · Years of experience leaving the workforce (projected)

Buerhaus, Auerbach, & Staiger, May 3, 2017. http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/05/03/how-should-we-prepare-for-the-wave-of-retiring-baby-boomer-nurses/

This means

- Just as aging of the population is heating up, the most experienced and knowledgeable nurses are retiring

Shortages and uneven distribution of *primary care* physicians

- By 2030, shortages of between 25,000 and 36,000 primary care physicians[1]

- Yet, in 2018 an estimated 84 million people have inadequate access to primary care, 7,181 health professional shortage areas in the US[2]

[1] Kirch & Petelle (2017). Addressing the physician shortage. *JAMA* https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2017.2714

[2.] *Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics*.; 2018.
https://ersrs.hrsa.gov/ReportServer?/HGDW_Reports/BCD_HPSA/BCD_HPSA_SCR50_Smry_HTML&rc:Toolbar=false. Accessed March 1, 2018

Consequently

- Not only will the aging of the population heat up just as the most experienced and knowledgeable nurses are retiring, but

- Large shortages of primary and specialty care physicians are also expected … all of this falling onto

- Increasing numbers of less experienced Millennial RNs entering workforce

Oh, many (most?) nurses are unprepared for value based care/payment

- ***Stunningly*** nurses receive very little education on the core elements underpinning value based care
  - Improving quality of care
  - Reducing cost of care
  - Working in teams

Era of disruptions and consumerism

Disruptions arising from

- Implementation of federal and state health reforms
- New business models that do not include hospitals (e.g., CVS and Aetna, etc.)
- Consolidation of hospital and health systems
- Growing digital care

All leading to uncertainties and unknown effects on nurses and physicians

Almost forgot… the behavioral health workforce is in "crisis"

Further, despite the evidence of positive contributions of NPs, many states, local hospitals, medical groups, and insurers impose restrictions on the NP workforce, which …

- Decreases access to primary care for millions
- Increases health care costs
- Fuels tensions between physician and nurse workforces

Inability of the physician, nurse, and other workforces to come together to …

Jointly envision a different future built on better understanding each other and developing relationships that allow

- For the *evolution* of roles and care delivery practices that make sense to all clinicians
- *Respects* each other's strengths, and ultimately
- Leads to a *reconfiguration of the workforce* that is more responsive to the health needs of the population/community served, particularly in rural areas and among vulnerable populations

In Sum

Feels like storm clouds are gathering