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# Health Occupation Drilldowns for Milwaukee County

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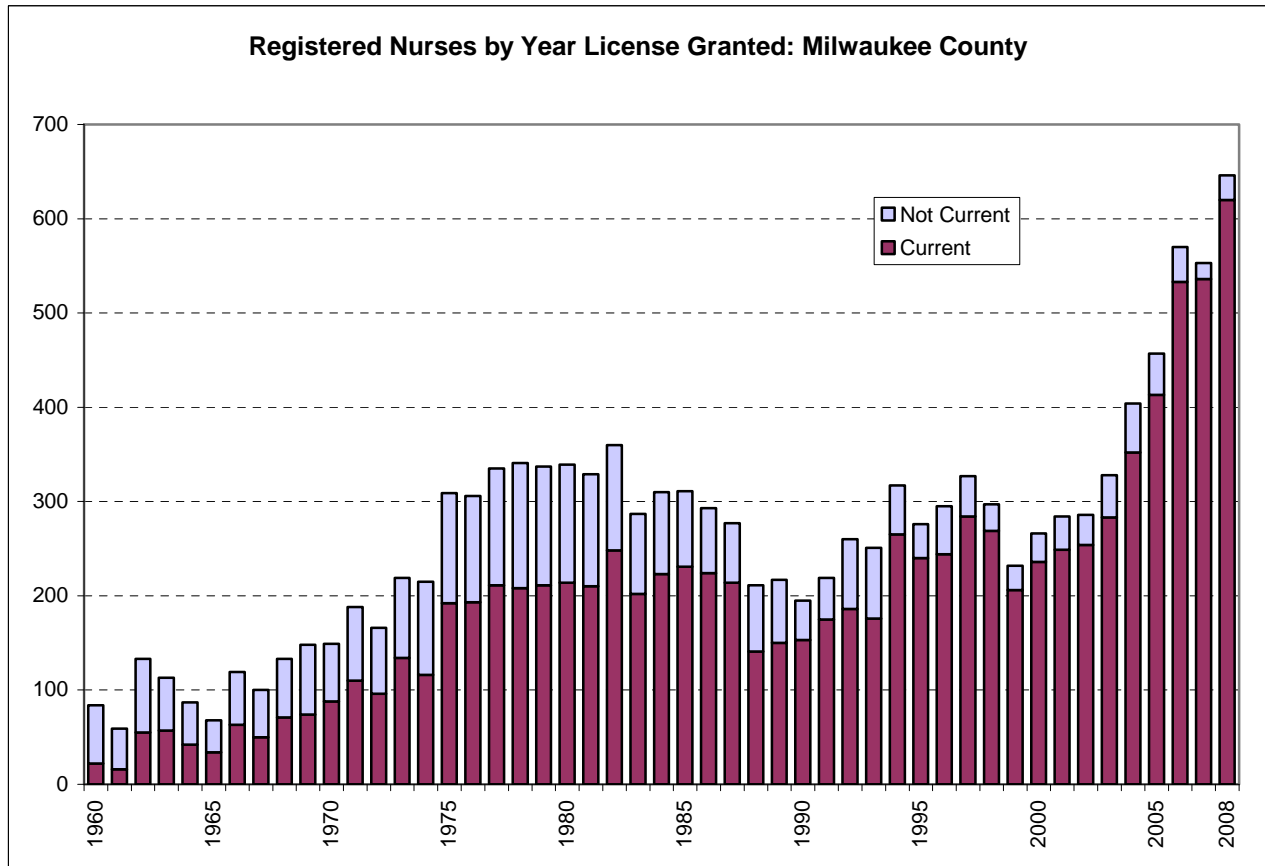
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# Health Occupation Drilldowns for Milwaukee County



*prepared for the  
Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board  
and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
by the Employment and Training Institute  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
2009*

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This report is one of a series of four studies prepared for the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation to describe the characteristics of the Milwaukee area labor force, identify the education and training needs of the workforce in key occupations, and detail barriers to employment for targeted populations. The work uses institutional, administrative and census databases to aid MAWIB in setting priorities and improving strategies for service to Milwaukee County workers during the difficult economic period the community is now facing. Research for this report was supported by the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, the Fitch Research Fund of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



The Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board works in partnership with local leaders from government, private industry and labor to develop workforce solutions to meet and anticipate regional economic development needs. For employers, MAWIB offers specialized training programs and innovative human resource services to provide the skilled workers they need to remain competitive and contribute to a robust economy. For job seekers, MAWIB provides the resources to keep pace with today's job market.



The Greater Milwaukee Foundation is a family of over 1,000 individual charitable funds, each created by donors to serve the charitable causes of their choice. Grants from these funds serve people throughout Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington counties and beyond. Started in 1915, the Foundation is one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the world.



The Employment and Training Institute addresses the workforce training, transportation, and education needs of low-income and unemployed workers in Wisconsin through applied research, policy development, and technical assistance. For more information, contact John Pawasarat, Director, Employment and Training Institute, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 161 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 6000, Milwaukee, WI 53203 ([eti@uwm.edu](mailto:eti@uwm.edu)). Website: [www.eti.uwm.edu](http://www.eti.uwm.edu).

## ***Introduction***

In cooperation with the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute examined credentialing records of Milwaukee County and Wisconsin workers regulated by the state Department of Regulation & Licensing. All licenses were reviewed to determine the credential status as of Spring 2009. *Credentials may be non-current because of death, relocation outside Wisconsin, non-renewal, revocation, voluntary surrender, suspension or denial.*

**This report uses the DRL databases to profile the Milwaukee County labor force in seven selected health occupations: registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, dental hygienists, occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, and physical therapist assistants.**

The health industry is the dominant force in the current job market. The Employment and Training Institute's May 2009 job openings survey of employers in the 7-county region found that one out of every four full-time job openings is in a health-related field (either directly providing health care or working for a health-care provider), and one out of every three part-time openings is in a health-related field. The week of May 25, 2009, health care-related occupations showed an estimated 2,497 openings, and other employment in hospitals, nursing homes, medical clinics, and other healthcare-providing agencies and businesses accounted for another 565 openings in the region. Nearly 90% of these jobs require training or experience beyond high school and almost none (1%) are available to workers who have not completed high school and who lack occupation-specific experience.

In May 2009 the largest numbers of openings (full-time and part-time) in the health field were for

- 731 registered nurses (RNs)
- 689 nursing assistants, aides and orderlies
- 274 health technologists and technicians
- 161 licensed practical nurses (LPNs)
- 121 health aides and
- 92 pharmacists.

## Registered Nurses: RN licenses up in the last 3 years

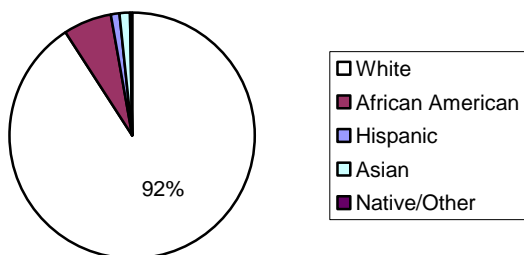
Wisconsin Department of Regulation & Licensing records show an increasing number of nurses being registered in Milwaukee County. The county's annual registrants more than doubled from 266 in 2000 to 646 RNs registered in 2008. These include newly trained nurses, LPNs upgrading to RN licensing, and in-migrants seeking a Wisconsin license.

A total of 11,963 residents of Milwaukee County obtained Registered Nurses credentials from 1970 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

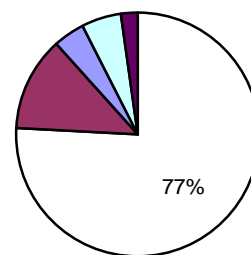
- Of these, 9,290 (78%) have current licenses.
- Only 61% of those obtaining their RN in the 1970s still have a current license. Of those obtaining their RN in the 1980s, 82% still have a current license. Of those obtaining their RN in the 1990, 92% still have current Wisconsin license.
- The annual number of people obtaining their RN degrees has more than doubled in the last few years and was over 500 in both 2007 and 2008.
- Prior to 2000 most (92%) of the RNs from Milwaukee County were whites. Since 2000, about a fourth of RNs have been minorities, including 12% African Americans, 5% Asians, and 4% Latinas.

### Race/Ethnicity of Registered Nurses in Milwaukee County

Licensed Before 2000

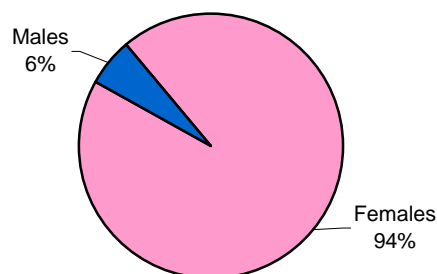


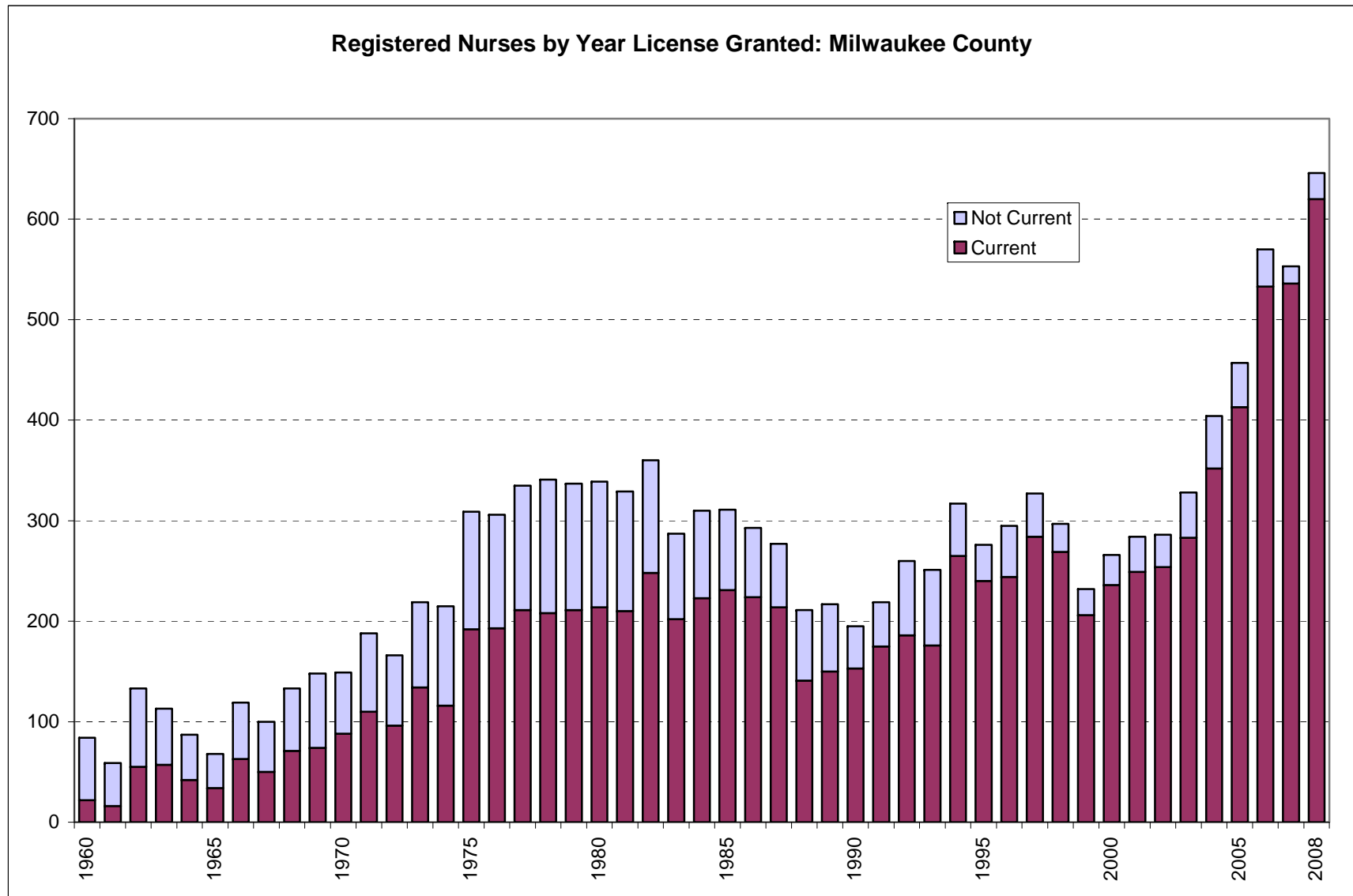
Licensed in 2000 and After



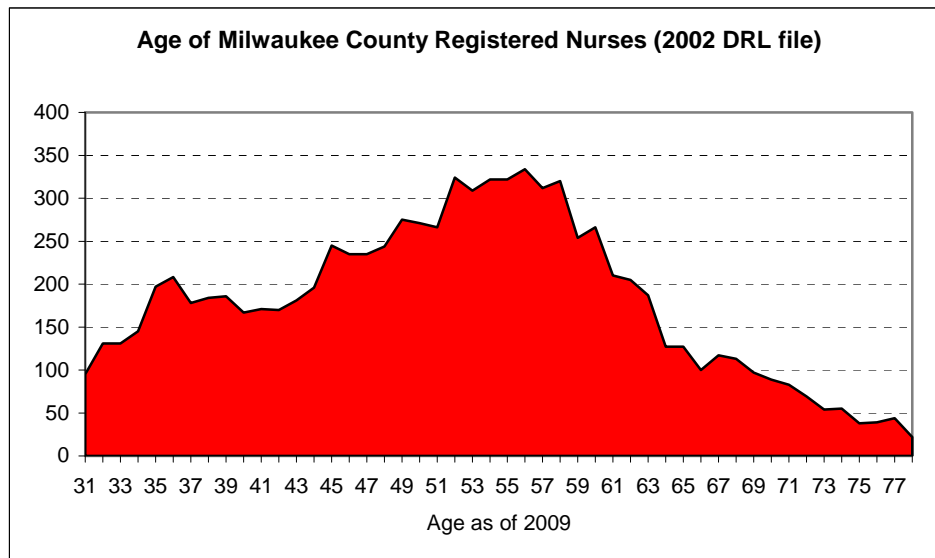
### Gender of Registered Nurses in Milwaukee County

- Most RNs (94%) are females.





Increases in registered nurses make up in part for the large number of RNs of baby-boomer age approaching retirement and declining numbers of employed RNs living in the county. The graph below shows the age of registered nurses according to the 2002 DRL file, when age data was made available for analysis.



### **Regional Job Openings for RNs in May 2009**

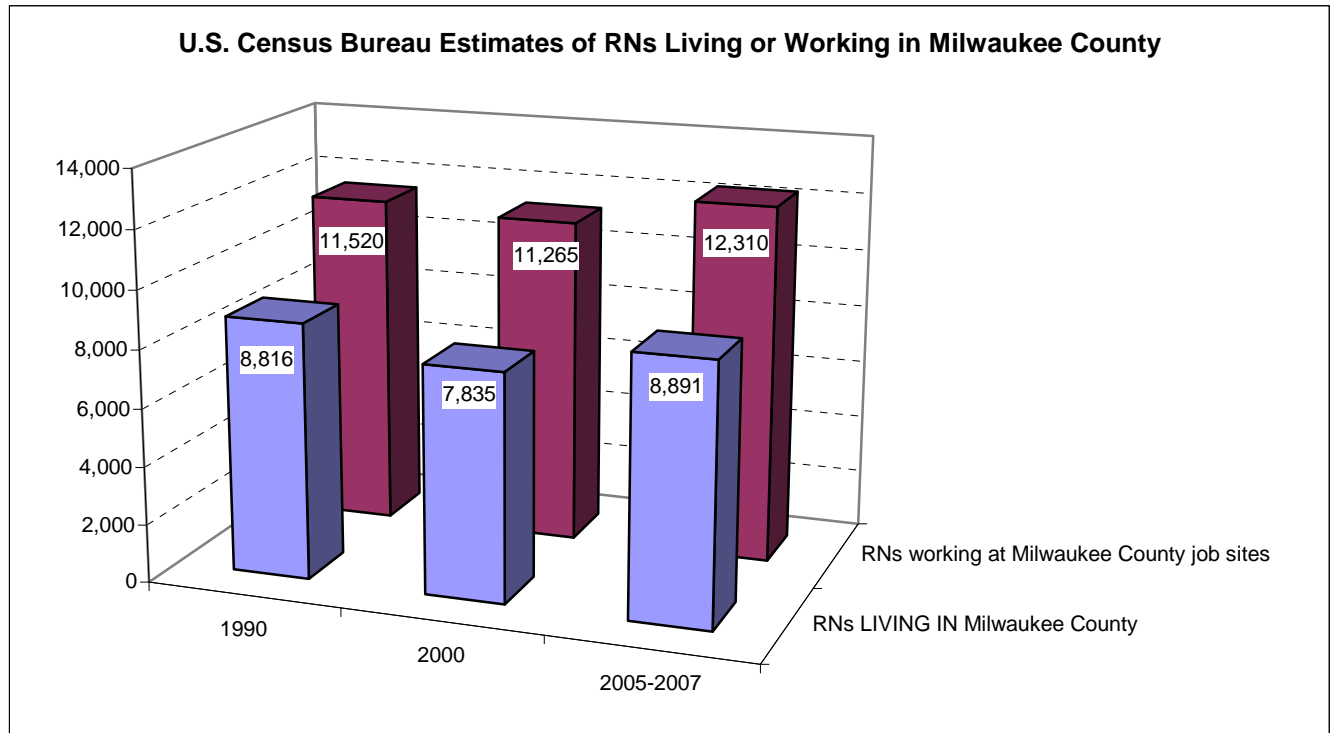
The ETI job openings surveys have consistently shown very high job demand for registered nurses – both for newly trained staff and for RNs and BSNs with considerable professional and supervisory experience. The May 2006 regional survey showed 1,403 openings for RNs (817 full-time and 586 part-time) in the region. Similarly high demand was seen in earlier surveys (2002-2005) of the Milwaukee metro area. The 2009 job opening survey, however, indicated that nursing demand was abating somewhat – with estimated openings in the region for 731 registered nurses (450 full-time and 281 part-time).

The decline in openings appears to be largely a result of an increase in supply; an ETI review of state Department of Regulation & Licensing records found a recent doubling of annual RN registrants in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, from 446 RN registrants in 2003 to 896 in 2008. The registrants include newly trained nurses, LPNs upgrading to RN licensing, and in-migrants seeking a Wisconsin license.

### **Census Bureau Estimates of the RN Population in Milwaukee County**

Nurses employed at jobsites within Milwaukee County totaled 11,520 in 1990, 11,265 in 2000 and surged to 12,310 in 2005-2007, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

Meanwhile the number of employed RNs **living** in Milwaukee County (regardless of their place of employment) declined from 8,816 in 1990 to 7,835 in 2000, and up to 8,891 in 2005-2007, according to the Census Bureau.





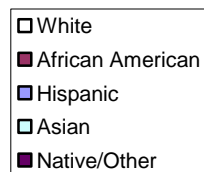
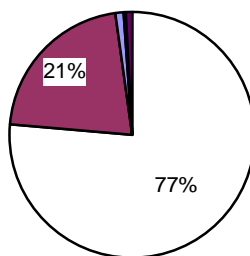
## ***Licensed Practical Nurses: Only 46% license renewal rate***

A total of 4,200 residents of Milwaukee County obtained Licensed Practical Nurses credentials from 1970 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

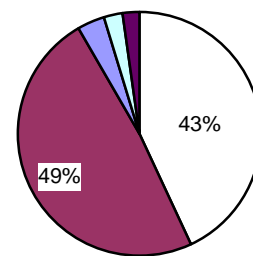
- Of these, 1,936 (46%) have current licenses.
- Less than a third of LPNs licensed in the 1970s have current LPN licenses and less than half of the LPNs licensed in the 1980s have current LPN licenses. Some may have obtained RN licenses; others have left the field or retired.
- For the last three years about 140 LPNs a year have been newly credentialed.
- Prior to 2000 most (77%) of the LPNs from Milwaukee County were whites. Since 2000, the majority of LPNs securing licenses have been minorities: 49% are African Americans, 3% are Hispanics, 3% Asians, and 2% Native Americans or other minorities.

**Race/Ethnicity of Licensed Practical Nurses in Milwaukee County**

**Licensed Before 2000**

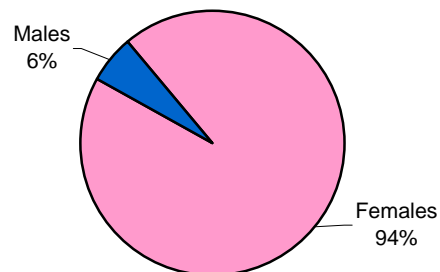


**Licensed in 2000 or After**



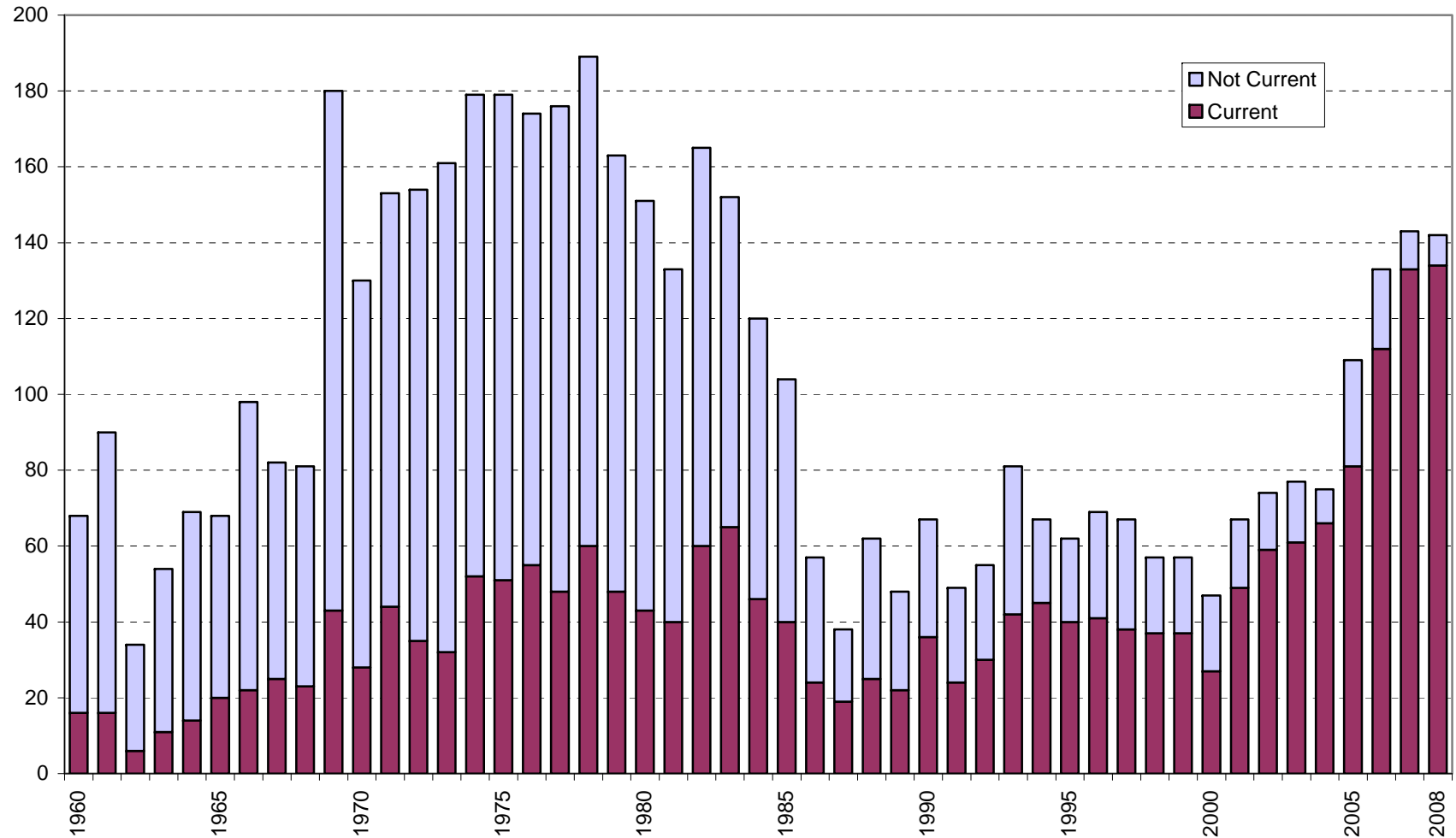
**Gender of Licensed Practical Nurses in Milwaukee County**

- Most (94%) LPNs are females.



**In May 2009 LPNs were accepted for about 1 in 5 job openings for nurses (161 of 892 openings, or 18%), according to the ETI regional job openings survey. In May 2006 LPNs were accepted for only 1 in 10 nursing positions (134 of 1,403 openings). Nearly all supervisory nursing positions require an RN or Bachelor of Science nursing degree.**

**Licensed Practical Nurses by Year License Granted: Milwaukee County**



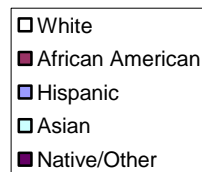
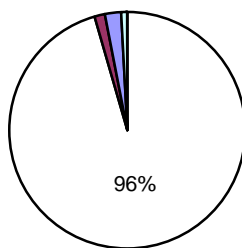
## ***Dental Hygienists: Progress toward racial/ethnic diversity***

A total of 542 residents of Milwaukee County obtained dental hygienist licenses from 1970 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

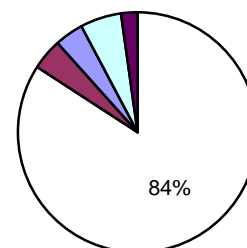
- Of these, 422 (78%) have current Wisconsin licenses.
- An average of 19 new dental hygienists has been newly credentialed each year since 2000. Nearly a fourth (23%) of the current licensed population received their license before 1980.
- This profession has shown progress toward racial/ethnic diversity since 2000. Prior to 2000, 96% of Milwaukee County residents licensed as dental hygienists were whites and 4% were minorities. Since 2000 minorities have comprised 16% of those obtaining licenses. These include 6% Asians, 4% African Americans, 4% Hispanics, and 2% Native Americans and other minorities.

**Race/Ethnicity of Dental Hygienists in Milwaukee County**

**Licensed Before 2000**

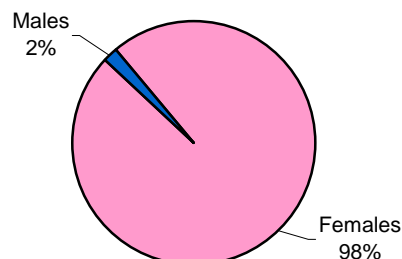


**Licensed in 2000 or After**

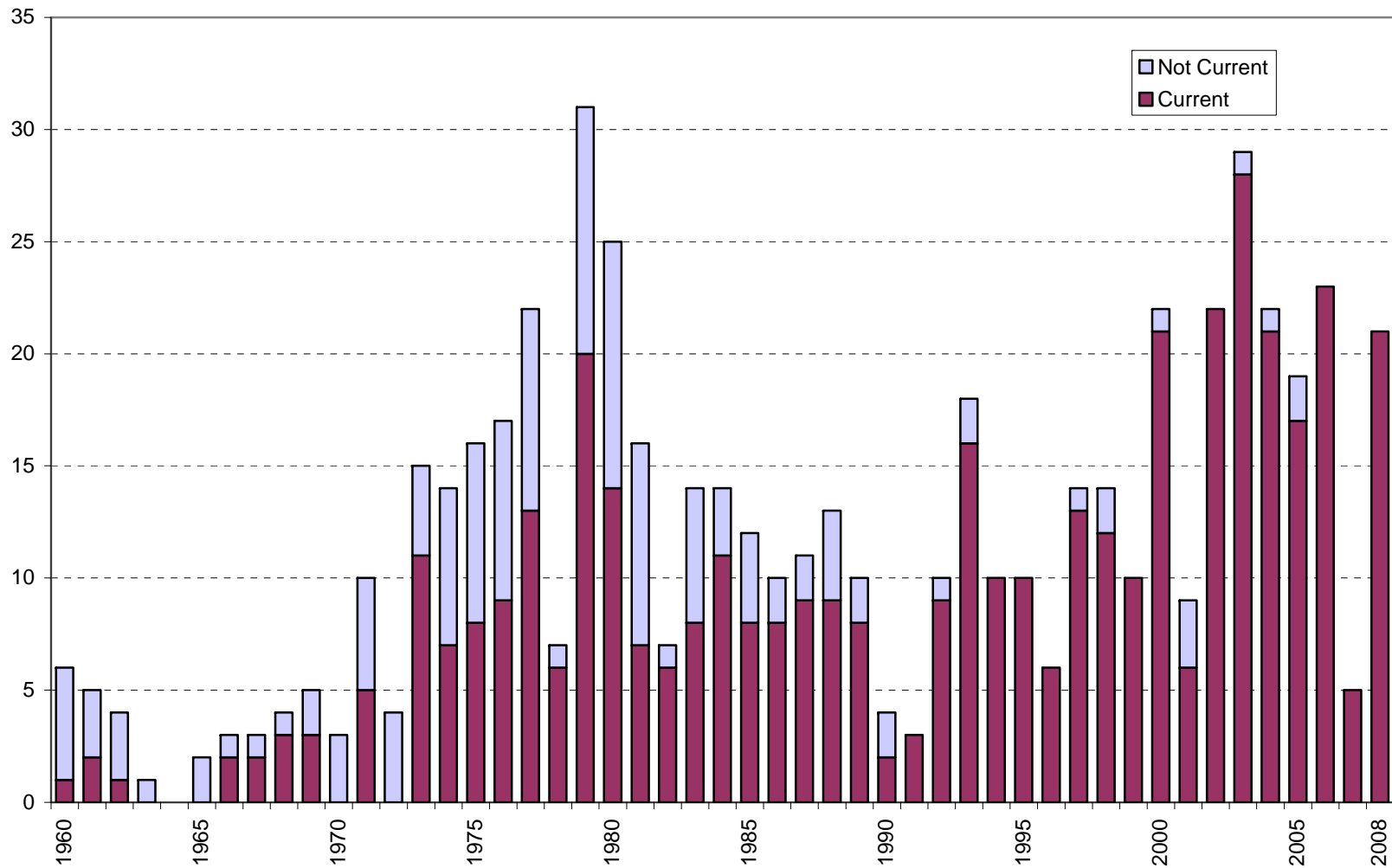


**Gender of Dental Hygienists in Milwaukee County**

- Almost all (98%) dental hygienists are females.



**Dental Hygienists by Year Credential Granted: Milwaukee County**



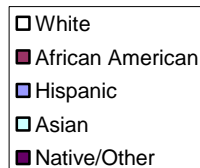
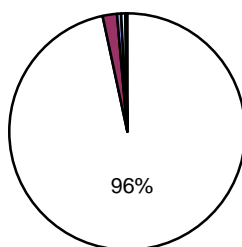
## ***Occupational Therapists: Average of 16 new licenses a year***

A total of 743 residents of Milwaukee County obtained Occupational Therapists credentials from 1990 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

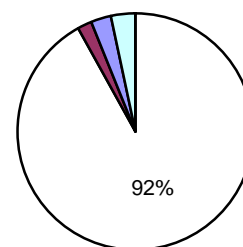
- Of these, 540 (73%) have current Wisconsin licenses.
- For the last five years an average of 17 new OTs a year have been newly credentialed. In 2000, 30 were credentialed.
- Nearly all of the occupational therapists from Milwaukee County are white. From 1990 to 1999, 96% of those licensed were whites. There has been a modest increase in diversity since 2000 with 92% of newly licensed OTs whites, 3% Asians, 3% Hispanics, and 2% African Americans.

**Race/Ethnicity of Occupational Therapists in Milwaukee County**

**Licensed Before 2000**

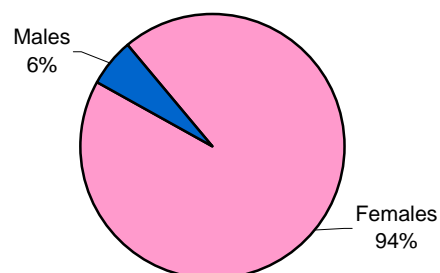


**Licensed in 2000 or After**

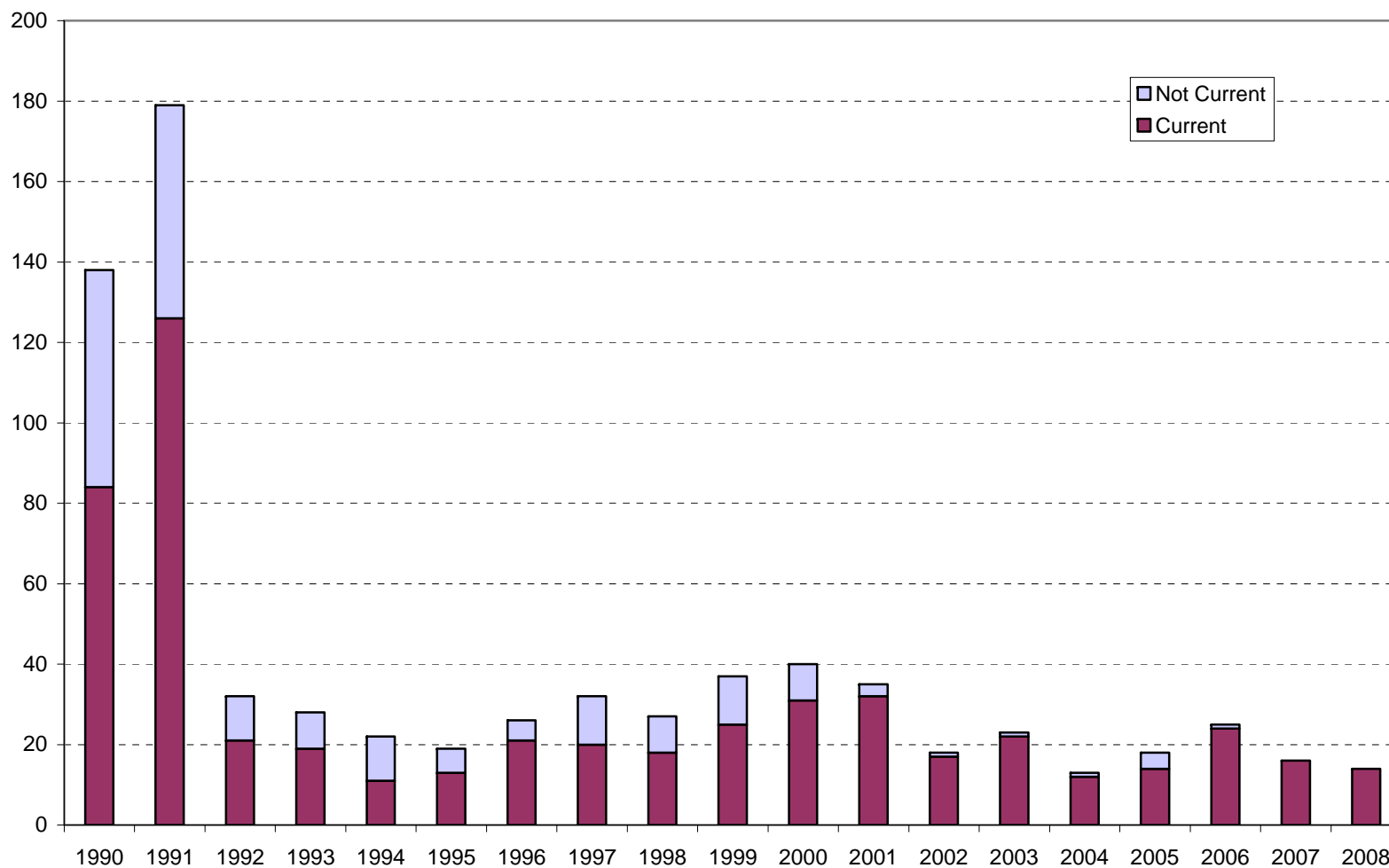


**Gender of Occupational Therapists in Milwaukee County**

- Most (94%) occupational therapists are females.



### Occupational Therapists by Year License Granted by Department of Regulation & Licensing: Milwaukee County



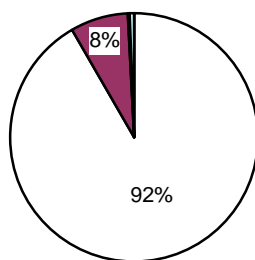
## ***Occupational Therapy Assistants: Average of 7 new credentials a year***

A total of 267 residents of Milwaukee County obtained occupational therapy assistant credentials from 1990 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

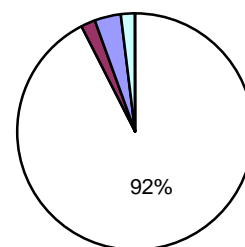
- Of these, 140 (52%) have current licenses.
- For the last three years 6-7 occupational therapy assistants a year from Milwaukee County have been newly credentialed.
- The racial/ethnic composition of this profession has remained at 92% white since 1990. Prior to 2000, 8% of credentials were granted to African Americans. Since 2000 only 2% of credentials were granted to African Americans.

### **Race/Ethnicity of Occupational Therapy Assistants in Milwaukee County**

**Licensed Before 2000**

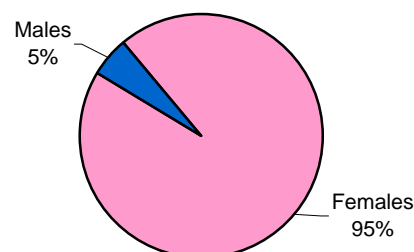


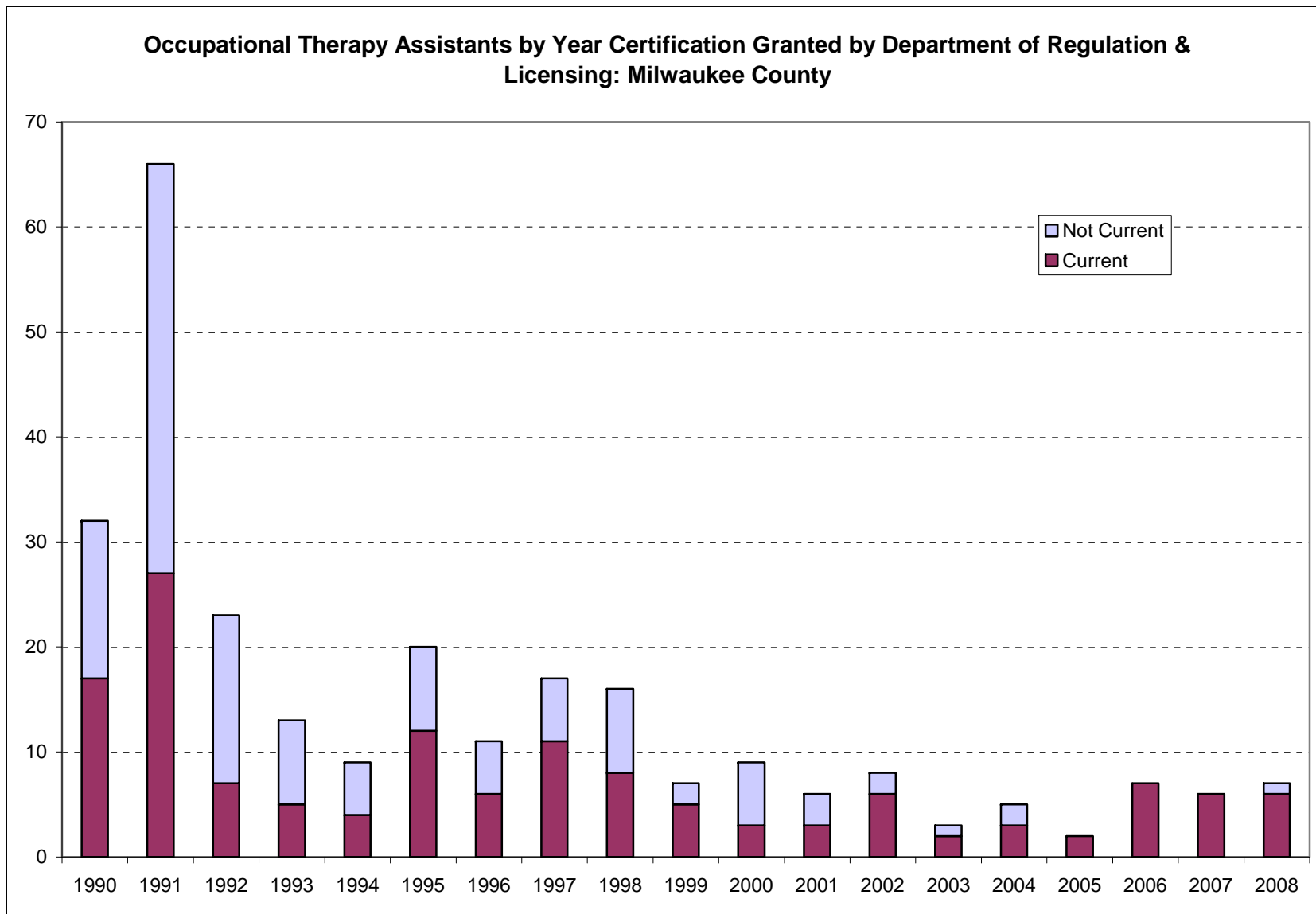
**Licensed in 2000 or After**



### **Gender of Occupational Therapy Assistants in Milwaukee County**

- Most (95%) occupational therapy assistants are females.







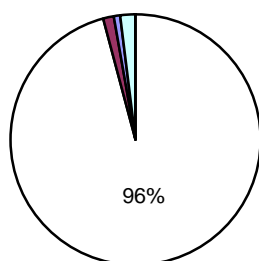
## ***Physical Therapists: 119 credentialed in last 3 years***

A total of 784 residents of Milwaukee County obtained physical therapist credentials from 1970 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

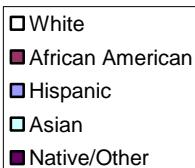
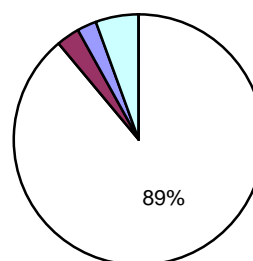
- Of these, 648 (83%) continue to have current Wisconsin licenses.
- In 2006 and in 2007 over 40 PTs were credentialed. In 2008 new credentials were issued to 32 PTs in Milwaukee County.
- The profession has shown some movement toward diversity. Prior to 2000 nearly all (96%) of the physical therapists credentialed from Milwaukee County were whites. Since 2000, 11% of those licensed have been minorities, including 6% Asians, 3% African Americans, and 2% Hispanics.

**Race/Ethnicity of Physical Therapists in Milwaukee County**

**Licensed Before 2000**

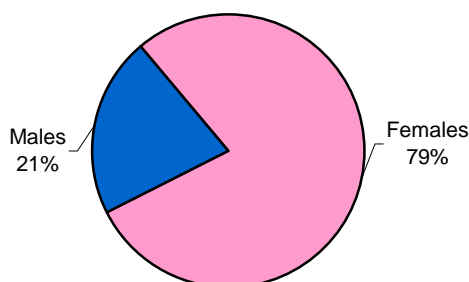


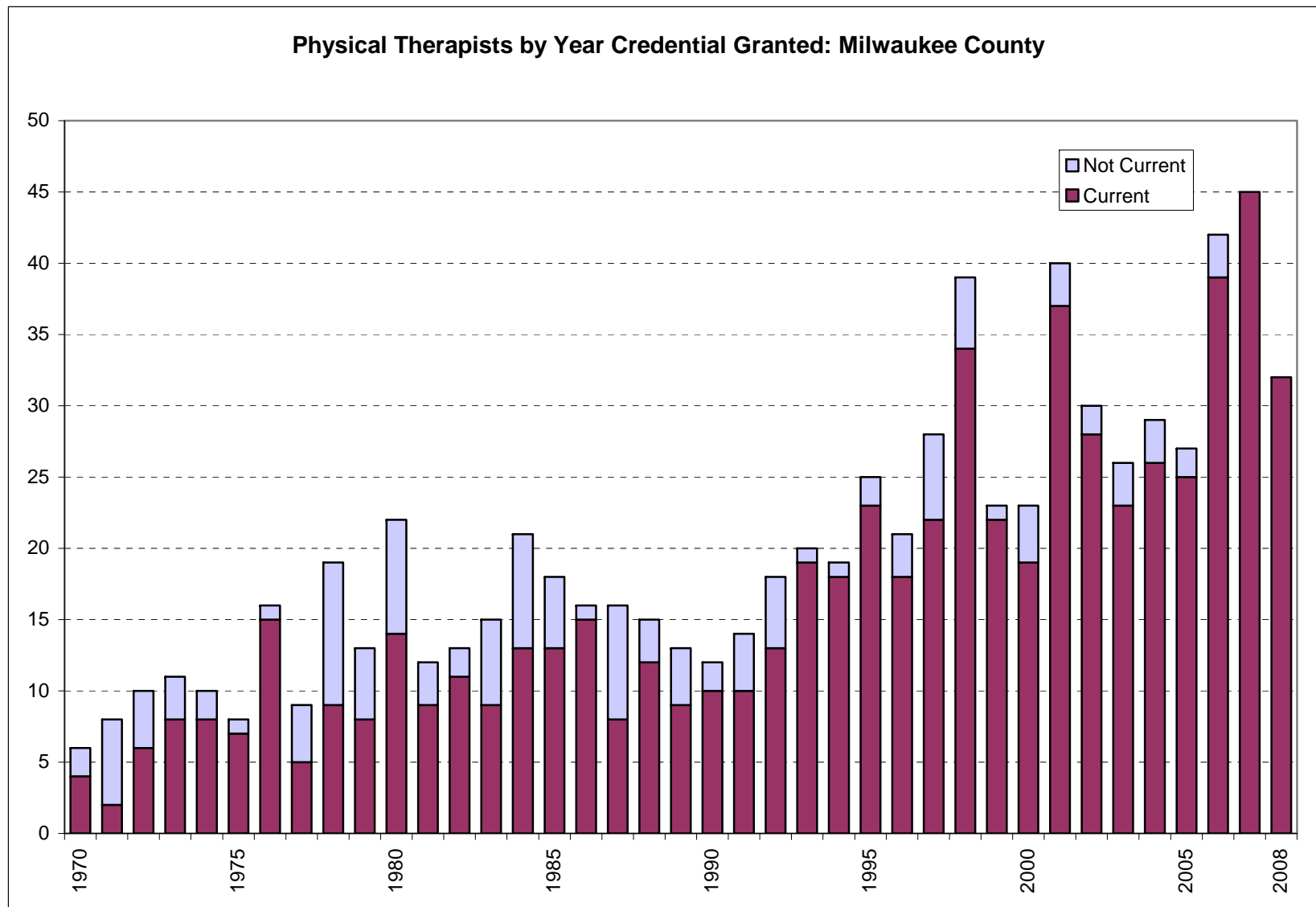
**Licensed in 2000 or After**



**Gender of Physical Therapists in Milwaukee County**

- Of physical therapists licensed from Milwaukee County, 79% are females and 21% males.



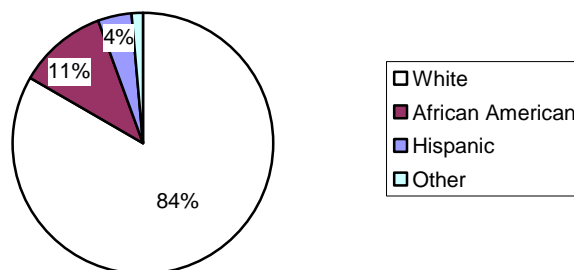


## ***Physical Therapist Assistants: Average of 12 per year since 2004***

A total of 216 residents of Milwaukee County obtained physical therapist assistant credentials from 2002 through 2008 from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

- Nearly all (95%) continue to have current Wisconsin licenses.
- In the last four years an average of 12 physical therapist assistants were newly credentialed each year.
- Minorities have received 17% of the credentials, with African Americans gaining 11% and Hispanics gaining 4%.

**Race/Ethnicity of Physical Therapist Assistants in Milwaukee County**



**Gender of Physical Therapist Assistants in Milwaukee County**

- Of physical therapist assistants licensed from Milwaukee County, 78% are females and 22% males.

