The Closing the Nursing Education Practice-Readiness Gap survey provides insights into the preparedness of new nurses from the perspectives of nursing faculty and practice nurses. Data from this survey, which was conducted multiple times from 2012 to today, show that perceptions of the clinical preparedness of new nurses continues to decline. Faculty and practicing nurses agree that this group of new graduates lack clinical judgment; however, respondents are not aligned on how to get them practice-ready. It is imperative that they collaborate to ensure new nurses develop the critical thinking skills and confidence needed to make sound clinical decisions.

Faculty and Practicing Nurses Need to Synch Up on Nurse Graduate Readiness

A Growing Gap in Prep Perception
New graduates are completely unprepared or minimally prepared as they start practice.

A Decade Makes a Difference
Today’s nurse graduates are less prepared to enter practice than those from 5-10 years ago.

Why Are New Nurses Falling Behind?
New graduates are less prepared compared to 5-10 years ago

The Path to Preparedness
Why new graduates are more prepared compared to 5-10 years ago

A New Alliance
Partnership between practice nurses and faculty is critical in getting new nurses ready for practice. When new nurses lack clinical judgment, patient health is at risk. Lack of confidence is also key as it affects their ability to handle stress and adapt to evolving clinical situations.

There are several opportunities for both those in practice settings and those in academia to come together to help close the education-practice gap. Through collaboration, planning and open dialogue, both practice nurses and faculty can develop strategies to prepare new nurses and build their clinical judgment skills.

Nursing Faculty
- Foster clinical judgment confidence
- Support a smooth transition to practice
- Offer mentoring to promote resilience and a positive workplace culture
- Personalize education programs based on performance

Nurse Educators in Practice
- Blend orientation with ongoing education

The survey shows that lack of clinical judgment is a factor for nurses being less prepared to enter practice. But when nurses have better skills in this area, it’s a top factor for preparedness.

Why Are New Nurses Falling Behind?

Why new graduates are less prepared compared to 5-10 years ago

Better clinical judgment skills

Worse clinical judgment skills

Over-reliance on technology

View nursing as just another job

Better technology

Better nursing curriculum/teaching

Better clinical judgment skills

Create cohesion with clinical counterparts

Contribute a consultative model for clinical judgment

Build a strong Foundation through longitudinal curricular design

Blend clinical judgment and other educational learning

Personalized education programs based on performance

1 Faculty agree
2 Practicing nurses agree
3 Faculty and practicing nurses

Faculty and practicing nurses agree that this group of new graduates lack clinical judgment; however, respondents are not aligned on how to get them practice-ready. It is imperative that they collaborate to ensure new nurses develop the critical thinking skills and confidence needed to make sound clinical decisions.

The survey shows that lack of clinical judgment is a factor for nurses being less prepared to enter practice. But when nurses have better skills in this area, it’s a top factor for preparedness.