

PHARMACY SALARY & STAFFING SUPPLEMENT



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National Survey Results

By Deanne Halvorsen

With the continuing pressure on pharmacy directors to do more with less, frustration often mounts when the resources allocated toward building a stellar department are in competition with the acquisition of new automation programs to increase patient safety. Obviously, even the best-designed automation solutions are only as good as the staff behind them. Likewise, attracting and retaining a professional staff is often predicated on having the correct tools in place to support their efforts at providing excellent patient care. To manage this dichotomy in today's pharmacy, accurate data on staffing and salary practices in hospital pharmacy is necessary to establish benchmarks and set goals for improvements.

Survey Design

In the fourth quarter of 2010, *Pharmacy Purchasing & Products* polled a random, nationwide sampling of health system pharmacy directors. We asked about staffing levels, budget numbers, salaries, job satisfaction and recruitment efforts. Responses were solicited via email and we received a total of 604 responses, yielding a confidence interval of 3.77 (95% +/-3.77) based on the total population of pharmacy directors nationwide.

We intentionally surveyed a random sampling of pharmacy directors, not simply readers of *PP&P*, ensuring the data reflects trends across the entirety of hospital pharmacy practice.

Overall Results

In previous years, the shortage of pharmacists has been the bane of many facilities, particularly those in rural areas. Over the course of 2010, 34% of facilities reported a persistent problem with open positions, however the majority of those facilities had only one unfilled pharmacist position. The shortage of technicians mirrored that of pharmacists, as 34% of facilities also struggled with unfilled positions and the majority also had only one unfilled technician position. In addition, 10% of hospitals experienced lay-offs among their pharmacy staff in the past year. And while support staff positions were the most likely to be cut, pharmacist jobs have been lost as well.

On the pages that follow you will find in-depth data from the survey results examining staffing levels, budget amounts, and pharmacy staff reductions.

In the coming issues of *PP&P*, additional results from this survey will be available, including:

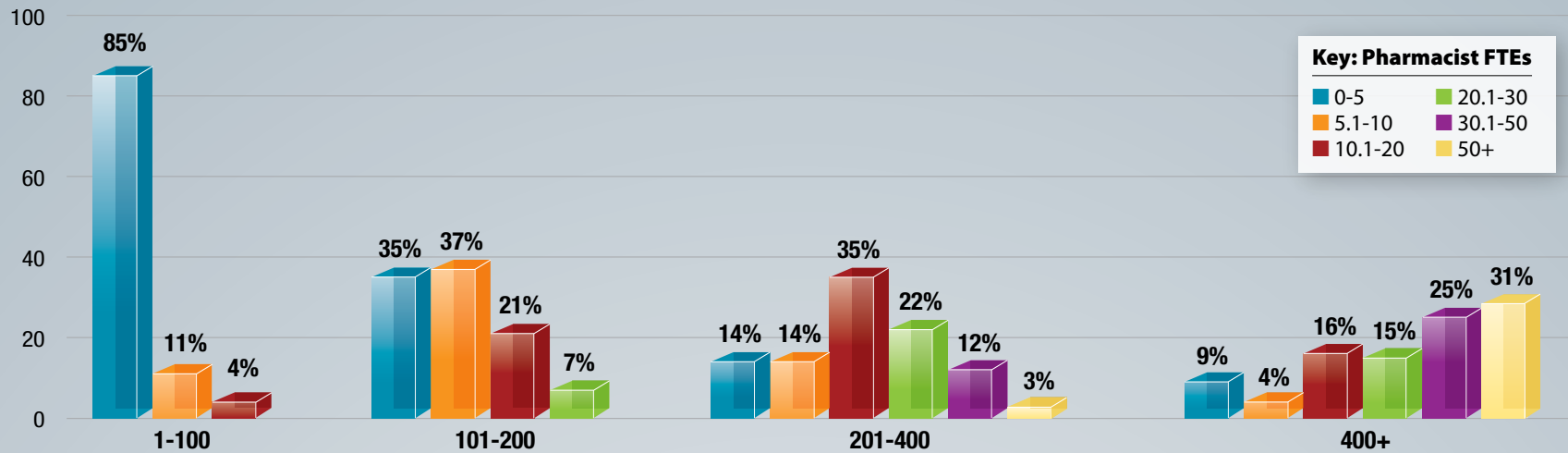
- Pharmacy Department Salaries
- Job Satisfaction
- Staff Recruitment

Keep an eye out for this additional data that will examine pharmacy department salaries by facility size and years of experience; job satisfaction both for pharmacy directors and their staff; and staff recruitment challenges, timelines, costs, and successful methods.

Many of today's significant budgeting challenges are exacerbated by the sense of insecurity that defines the current economy. Our hope is that the benchmarking data from this survey (both in the pages that follow and in our upcoming issues) provide you with information that is useful in planning your staffing budgets.

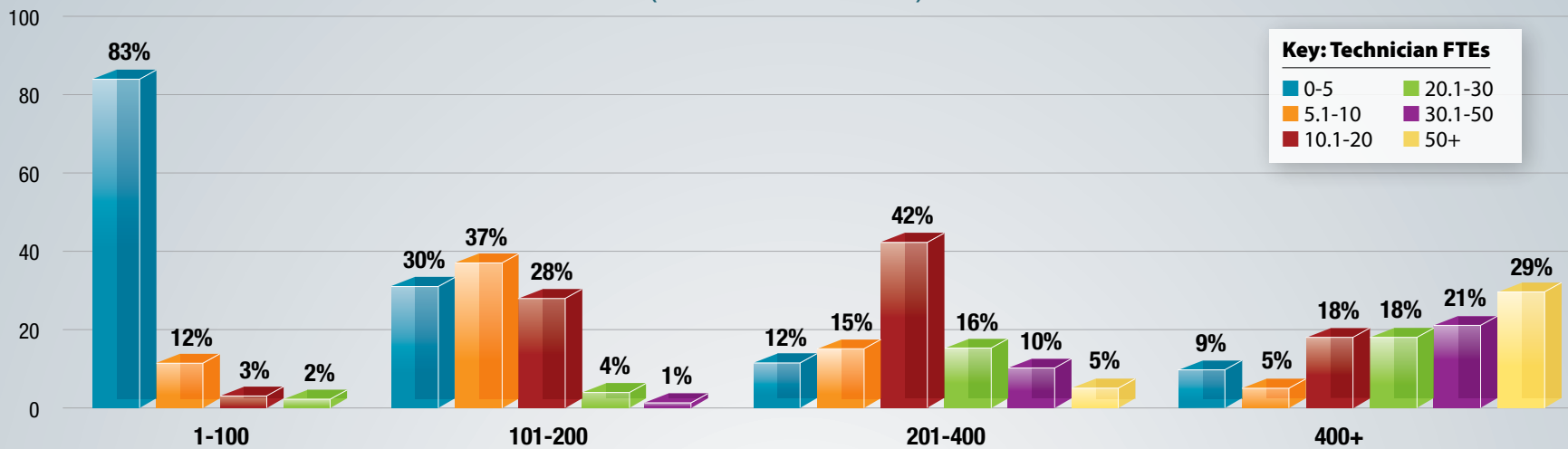
Staffing and Budget Levels

Number of Pharmacists by Facility Size (in number of beds)



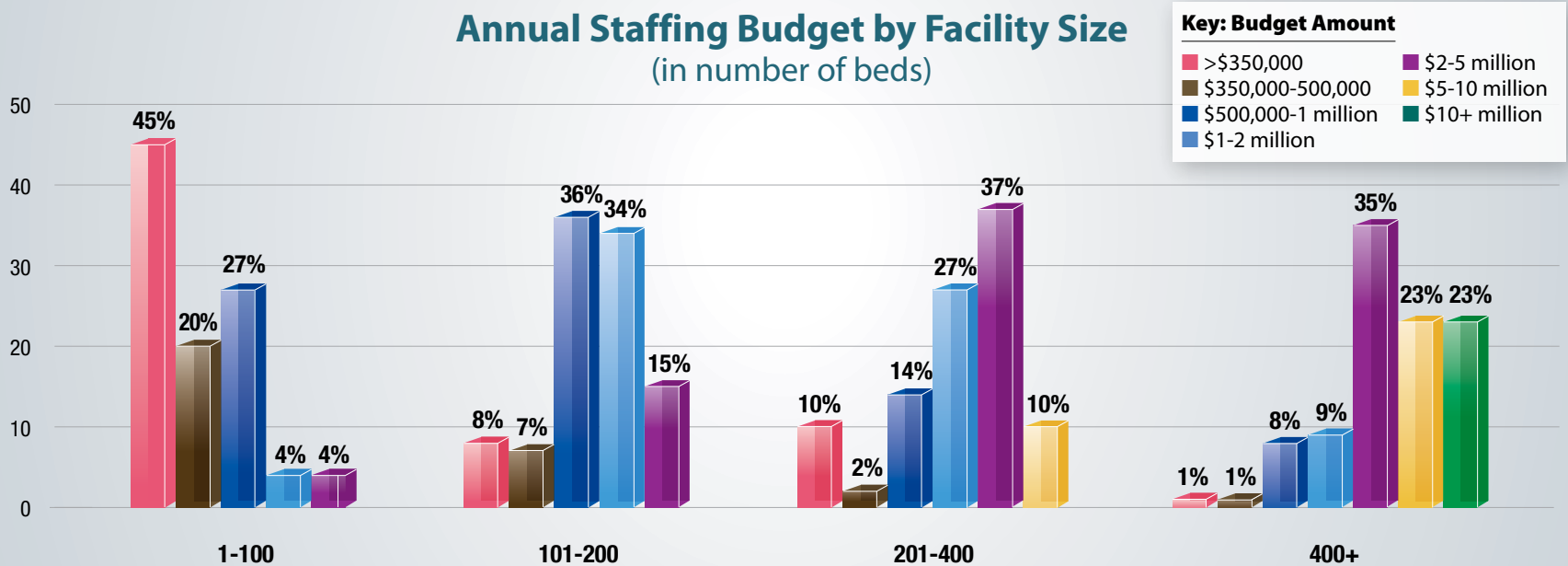
Diversity in pharmacy staffing approaches increases along with facility size.

Number of Technicians by Facility Size (in number of beds)



Across facilities of all sizes, pharmacist to technician ratios remain very similar.

Annual Staffing Budget by Facility Size (in number of beds)

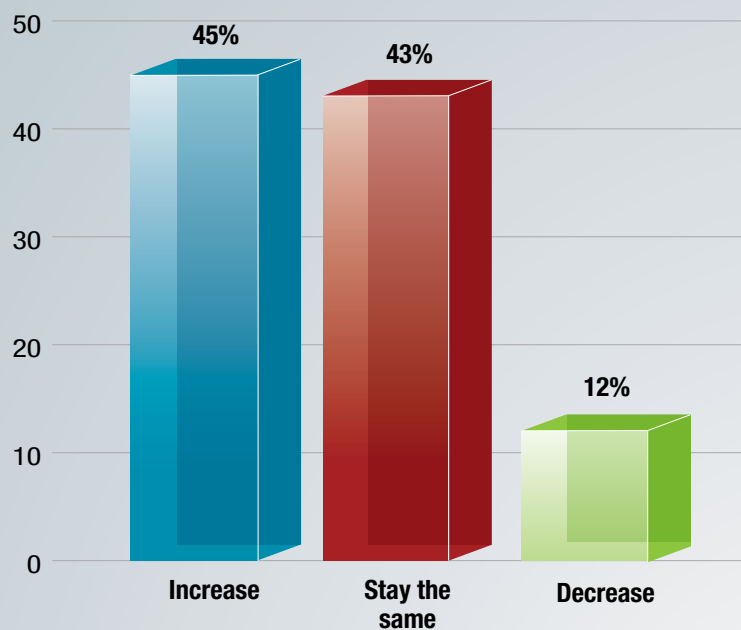


Budget amounts are primarily a reflection of hospital size.

Most pharmacy directors did not benefit from increases in their staffing budgets this year.

Budget reductions, while not commonplace, were somewhat more likely to occur at larger facilities: 19% of hospitals with more than 200 beds experienced decreased budgets versus just 15% of hospitals with fewer than 200 beds. Real improvements in staffing budgets are not expected for 2011, however the outlook improves over the longer term, as two thirds of pharmacy directors expect their budgets will grow over the next three to five years.

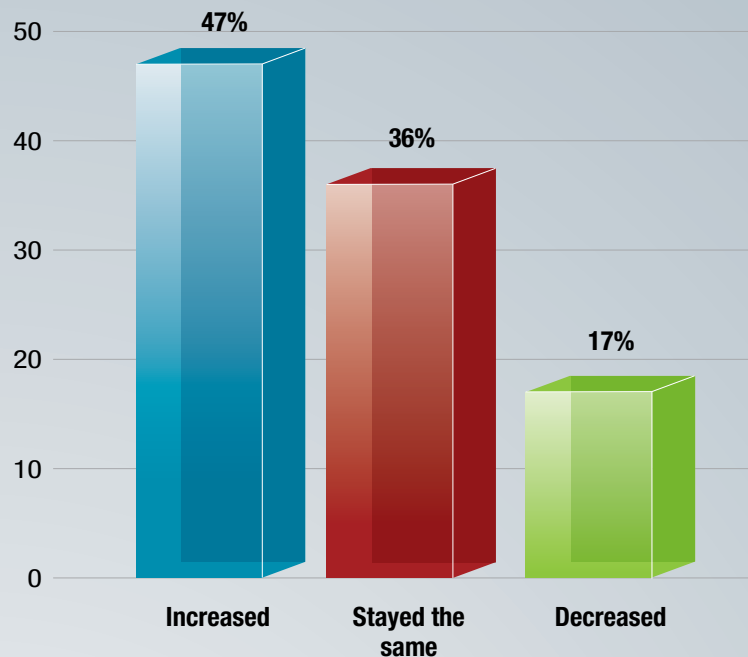
Projected Budget Changes for 2011



Pharmacy directors are not expecting any significant changes in their staffing budgets next year, although reductions are expected to decrease.

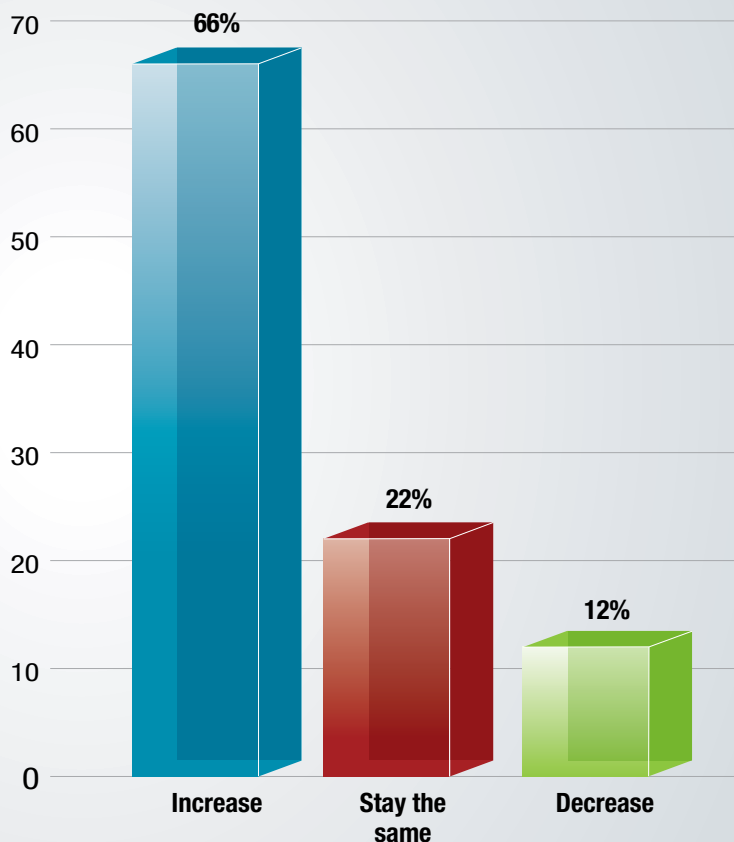
► Over the next three to five years, strong growth in staffing budgets is projected.

2010 Budget Changes



While budget decreases were not prevalent, fewer than half of all facilities enjoyed increases to their staffing budgets this year.

Future Budget Projections

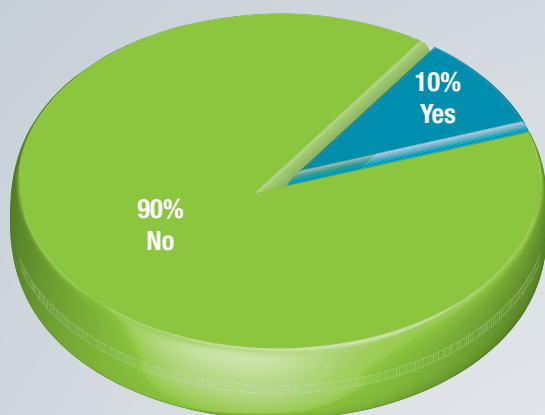


Pharmacy Reductions

While not widespread, lay-offs in the pharmacy over the past year were significant, with 10% of facilities reducing staff.

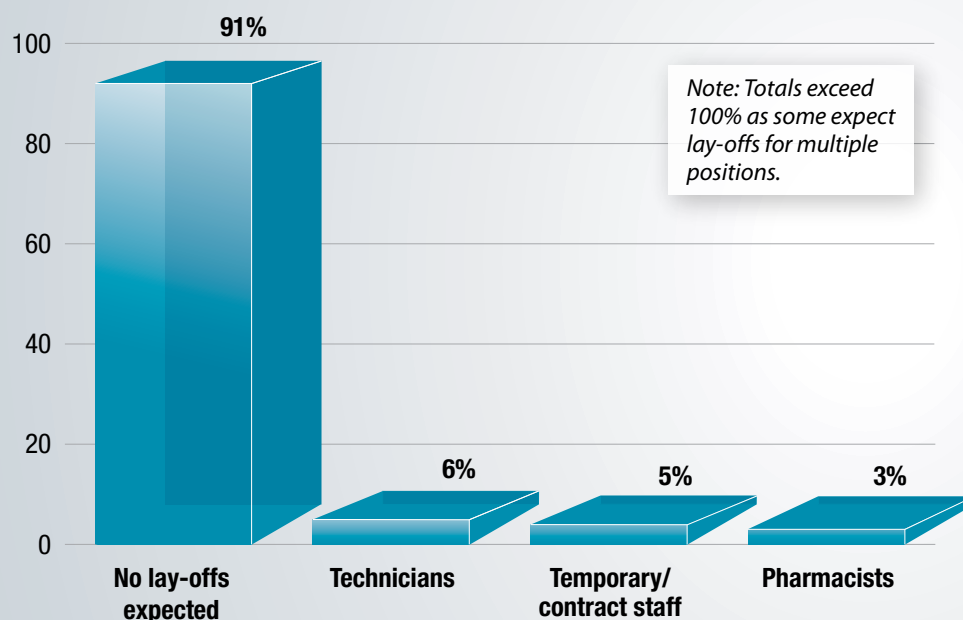
Unfortunately that number is forecast to drop only slightly in 2011 to 9%, yet pharmacists are the department members least likely to be laid off. Hiring freezes were more prevalent than lay-offs last year and most commonly seen in the largest facilities: 42% of 400+ bed hospitals experienced hiring freezes, while only 28% of those with less than 200 beds did so. In 2011, freezes will abate to 33% for 400+ beds and 26% for those with less than 200 beds.

Pharmacy Lay-offs in 2010



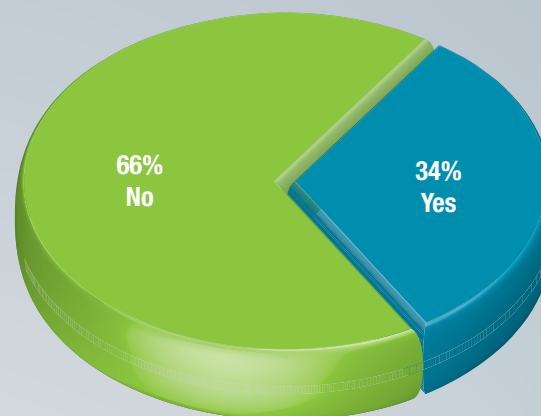
Pharmacy lay-offs were relatively rare over the past year, with technicians the most likely to have been let go.

Projected Lay-offs for 2011



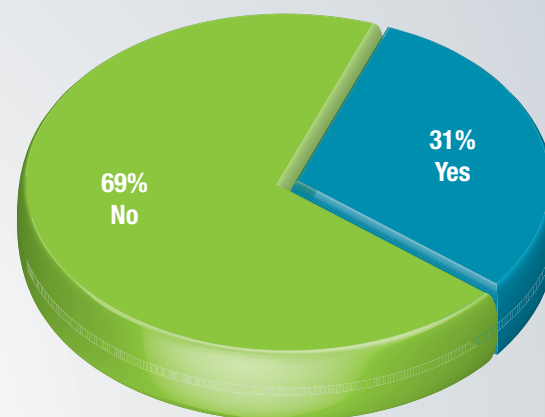
Just 8% of facilities nationwide are projecting lay-offs in pharmacy next year with technicians and temporary staffers expected to bear the brunt of these reductions.

Hiring Freezes in 2010



Hiring freezes were more common than lay-offs in 2010 as one third of all facilities refrained from filling vacant positions or hiring additional staff.

Projected Hiring Freezes for 2011



These freezes are expected to abate slightly in 2010, primarily in the largest (400+ beds) facilities.