



SAFE STAFFING SAVES LIVES

Mandated Nurse-to-Patient Ratios Will Not Work

Ratios are Expensive

Mandated ratios are required 24/7 – even during mandated breaks and lunch. Additional staff will need to be hired to cover these times. The cost to hire a temporary (agency) nurse is almost double the average hourly rate of a full-time nurse.

Ratios Lack Flexibility

Mandated ratios cannot be adjusted to meet the needs of the patient.

Ongoing flexibility matches staff to hospital and patient needs.

Staff to the Lowest Common Denominator

Mandated ratios allow for the possibility that the “minimum” ratio will become an average or maximum level of care.

Ratios Ignore the Intensity of Care

Mandated ratios ignore the intensity of nursing care required by a patient. For example, one RN can have 5 very sick new patients. In the meantime, their RN colleague can have 5 patients who are ready to be discharged.

Valued Support Staff will be Lost

Mandated ratios allow facilities to potentially reduce the number of ancillary staff to finance increased RN staff.

These staff members include LPNs and nursing assistants.

Unpredictable Events Can Have Consequences

Mandated ratios do not consider the impacts of unpredictable events.

These events include admissions, discharges, or patient emergencies.

The Solution | (HB 2092) SAFE NURSE STAFFING COMMITTEES

PSNA Legislation Sponsored by Rep. Judy Ward, RN

Legislated numerical ratios appear to offer a concrete solution. However, many variables – acuity of patients, levels of experience of nursing staff, unit layout, and mix of ancillary support – are key to establishing the right staffing levels for any one unit.

HB 2092 is not a “one-size-fits-all” solution. Instead, it is a necessary commonsense approach to a staffing solution. Strengthening relationships through committees will improve the work environment and retain experienced nurses.

Staffing Committees:

- 1 Offer Flexibility
- 2 Are Customizable
- 3 Allow for collaboration and dialogue between bedside nurses and hospital administrators