



Quality Care is Our Mutual Goal

Government-Mandated Staffing Ratios are the Wrong Approach

Quality, patient-centered care is the number one priority of New York's hospitals and nursing homes. Maintaining appropriate staffing to meet each patient's unique needs is critical to achieving this goal. Nurses and other healthcare professionals are vital to the care of patients.

Proposed legislation (A.8580 and A.1548/S.782) would impose arbitrary staffing ratios and would not improve care quality. Instead, it would prevent experienced local healthcare professionals from making appropriate staffing decisions to meet patient needs, jeopardize patient access to care, and add \$3 billion to the cost of care in New York.

One Size Does Not Fit All—Flexibility is Critical

- Staffing decisions should remain with local hospitals, nursing homes, and healthcare professionals.
- Every patient is different, every nurse is different, and every day is different—no single number works in every situation.
- Nursing assignments must be adapted to diverse patient/resident needs that can change rapidly.
- Nurses have different levels of experience and knowledge, as do other members of the care team.
- A one-size-fits-all approach jeopardizes patient care and could result, for example, in ambulance diversions, cancelled surgeries, and diminished flexibility to deploy staff as patient needs change.

Research Does Not Support Ratios—Many Factors Impact Quality Outcomes

- Only one state has mandated hospital-wide ratios: California.
- Peer-reviewed studies find no direct link between a set, mandated statewide staffing ratio and improved patient outcomes.
- The preparation and education of nurses, use of evidence-based patient care protocols, teamwork, and communication are critical to quality outcomes.

Measures to Ensure Appropriate Staffing are Already in Place

- Hospitals and nursing homes make information on patient safety and outcomes available to the public and report numerous quality measures to the government.
- Unannounced inspections make sure staffing is right for the needs of patients and residents.
- Hospitals, nursing homes, and healthcare professionals put significant resources into improving patient care.

Staffing Ratios Have Destructive Financial Impact

- Staffing ratios would cost New York's hospitals and nursing homes about \$3 billion annually.
- The fiscal condition of New York's hospitals and nursing homes is among the worst in the nation.

Five Recommendations to Support Nurses and Other Caregivers

- Require future nurses obtain a B.S. in Nursing (BSN) within 10 years of initial licensure.
- Provide scholarships and loan forgiveness; look at the needs of nursing schools.
- Increase the use of evidence-based protocols to improve patient outcomes.
- Ensure that registered nurses can work to the fullest extent of their education and preparation.
- Reduce unnecessary documentation to free up time for patient care.