

# SUSPENSION



One Empire Drive  
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December 17, 2015

To: Members of the Erie County Legislature

This is in response to the communique from Sarah Buckley dated 12/16/15, citing the positive correlation between nurse staffing and quality of patient outcomes. It is important to note that each research finding does exactly that: it proves that with professional nurse staffing increases, outcomes improve. It does not prove the case for mandated ratios. There is a difference!

**NO ONE** argues with the relationship between nurse staffing and patient outcomes. All responsible administrators benchmark their staffing for each type of unit, and adjust it to the particular aspects of the organization: patient acuity, physical layout, and tenure (and mix thereof) of the professional nursing staff to name a few. And **EVERY** organization measures patient and staff outcomes (against national benchmarks) as an indicator of staffing effectiveness. This provides evidence of the need for adjustments **and is required by regulators.**

The facts are the facts: 1) safe staffing levels are needed; 2) the effectiveness of staffing is evaluated and reported by all organizations to regulatory agencies, which will not allow unsafe staffing to exist; 3) hospitals will not be able to afford the resources needed for mandated ratios without cutting back on other personnel – assistive, ancillary, other direct care services) which will result in an increased workload for nurses and poor outcomes for other services and for patients. Yes, Registered Nurse total hours will increase, but not hours/patient day. And non-nursing tasks will be added to the Registered Nurse's workload, which compromises the professional work of a nurse.

The New York Organization of Nurse Executives and Leaders' position statement, previously provided, has valid reference citations and details outcomes from the failed mandatory ratios model implemented in California. On behalf of my NYONEL colleagues, who are the individuals ultimately responsible for patient outcomes, I reiterate our position that safe staffing is the optimal alternative, and that mandated ratios and mandated reporting will be detrimental to patient care, nurse satisfaction and the fiscal viability of our hospitals.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director  
New York Organization of Nurse Executives and Leaders