ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN HEALTHCARE: NURSE STAFFING STANDARDS

PRESENTED BY:

- Sherry B. Perkins, PhD, RN, FAAN
- Matthew D. McHugh, PhD, JD, MPH, RN,
 FAAN
- Nancy Blake, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, FAONL, FAAN



Session Etiquette











FROM

DATA O+ACTION

We have the data.
We want change.
It's time for action.





Series Host

Nicole Anselme
MBA, MSN, RN, CCRN, SCRN,
GERO-BC
Senior Policy Advisor
Nursing Programs
American Nurses Association







Series Overview





1 Sept. 14, 2023

Creating a Healthy & Supportive Nurse Work Environment: Key Steps





Sept. 28, 2023

Innovative Care Delivery in Nursing: A Paradigm Shift in Healthcare







(5)

Oct. 19, 2023

Achieving Excellence in Healthcare: Nurse Staffing Standards

Transforming Cost into Value: Recognizing Nurses' Unique Contribution



Sept. 21, 2023





Maximizing Nursing Efficiency: The Future of Regulatory Innovation



Oct. 05, 2023











Speaker Introductions

Sherry B. Perkins PhD, RN, FAAN

President, Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center Chief of Hospital Integration, Luminis Health

Sherry B. Perkins, PhD, RN, FAAN, NEA-BC is President of Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center and Chief of Hospital Integration at Luminis Health, one of the busiest hospitals in Maryland with excellence in behavioral health, cancer, emergency, obstetrics, orthopedic, and surgical specialties. She oversees business operations at the system's Medical Center (LHAAMC), behavioral health facility, alcohol and substance use facility. Dr. Perkins served as the Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Operating Officer for Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center from 2006 until 2016 and led the system to top decile results and Magnet recognition.







Speaker Introductions

Matthew D. McHughPhD, JD, MPH, RN, FAAN

Professor and Independence Chair for Nursing, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing Senior Fellow, Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics at Penn.

Matthew D. McHugh, PhD, JD, MPH, RN, FAAN is Professor and Independence Chair for Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, and Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics at Penn. Dr. McHugh is the Director of the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR) at Penn Nursing where he conducts highly visible studies that draw on his expertise in nursing, law, public health, and health services research to evaluate how nursing can be a force for quality, equity, and innovation in health services. A fundamental goal of Dr. McHugh's program of research is to bring evidence to bear upon the health system, law, and policy reforms needed to facilitate effective nursing practice and achieve the best patient outcomes, health equity, clinician well-being, and important national and international health policy goals. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine, Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, Faculty







Speaker Introductions

PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, FAONL, FAAN

Chief Nursing Officer, Los Angeles General Medical Center

Dr. Nancy Blake is the Chief Nursing Officer at Los Angeles General Medical Center. She was the Chief Nursing Officer at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center from March of 2019 until June of 2021. Prior to that she was the director of critical care services at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) for over 30 years where she helped CHLA achieve Magnet designation. Nancy has been an active member of ANA, SPN, ACNL, AONL and AACN, where she was a national board member from 2003-2006. She is a national speaker on pediatric disaster preparedness, staffing and healthy work environments.

Nancy has numerous publications on Healthy Work Environments in healthcare. She is an Associate Adjunct Professor at UCLA School of Nursing and was named the Distinguished Alumni Member for 2021







SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- By the end of this session, participants will:
 - Describe the evidence base for establishing staffing standards.
 - Identify ways to advocate for the adoption of enforceable policies that support staffing standards
 - Discuss strategies for implementing staffing standards in their own work environment







When do you remember learning about staffing challenges in the US?







Advanced

Save

Email

> Hospitals. 1982 Feb 1;56(3):53-6.

The nurse shortage: how can we turn the exodus around?

S G Kernaghan

PMID: 7054094

Abstract

The nurse shortage can be seen as a symptom of the problems caused by the unwillingness of most hospital power groups to share their control of both resources and decision making. Nurses will continue to leave hospital work if hospitals persist in ignoring nurses' pleas for a share of the rewards and power that should be commensurate with the enormous contributions they make to patient care.





On a scale of 1 to 5:

(1 = Not aware; 5 = Know 'em by heart)

What is your awareness of the recommendations of the National Nurse Staffing Task Force?







Think Tank Task **Force**





Nurse Staffing Think Tank	Nurse Staffing Task Force
Implementable in 12-18 months Asked: What can we do right now?	Long term, sustainable solutions Asked: How to address ongoing challenges?
Process included voting and affirming Practical consensus "Move forward on all"	Iterative process with discussions and surveys Inclusive of diverse expertise "Yes, and"
Every 2 weeks for 3 months, 26-page document	Every 3 weeks for 9 months, 19-page document
Some policy implications, mostly focuses on organizational changes	Some organizational change, a greater focus on policy, regulation and payment structures
Identifies accountable entities and action steps to implement each recommendation	Identifies partners and options for actions; need to consider context and select among actions







Reform the Work Environment



Value the Unique Contributions of Nurse



Innovate the Models for Care Delivery



Improve Regulatory Efficiency



Establish Staffing Standards that EnsureQuality Care





Definition Of Appropriate Nurse Staffing

Appropriate staffing is a dynamic process that aligns the number of nurses, their workload, expertise, and resources with patient needs to achieve quality patient outcomes within a healthy work environment.





Establish Staffing Standards that EnsureQuality Care

- Support Think Tank Recommendation for specialty nurse organizations to develop staffing standards for populations they serve
- Advocate for state and/or federal regulations and legislation that advances meeting minimum staffing standards
- Propose that CMS establish enforceable policies that support minimum staffing standards
- Propose that The Joint Commission enhance standards to support appropriate staffing





On a scale of 1 to 5:

(1 = Poor; 5 = Excellent)

How do you rate your ability to consistently address staffing in a meaningful way?





Nurse Staffing:

Evidence & Standards



Is there evidence of a need for public policy intervention to implement staffing standards?





2019 – Range Of Average Patient to Nurse Ratios On Medical-Surgical Units

3.5 – 10 patients per nurse



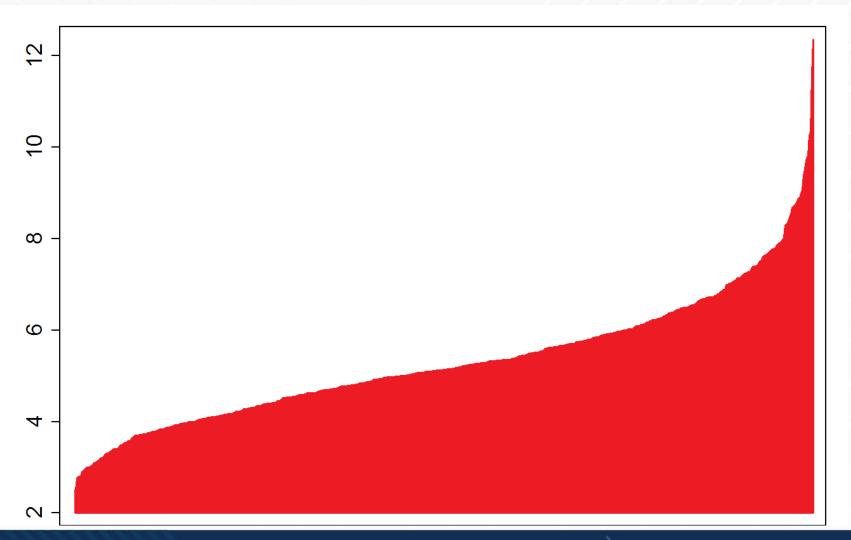


Patients per Nurse By Hospital, US

Aiken, McHugh, et al, *Medical Care*, 2011

Over 600 hospitals

Mean: 5.3 patients per nurse Range: 3 – 12







Evidence-Based Safe Nurse

Staffing





- Concludes there is strong, actionable evidence of association of nurse staffing and outcomes
 - Lower mortality
 - Fewer readmissions
 - Shorter length of stay
 - Fewer ICU Admissions
 - Fewer healthcare associated infections
 - Fewer falls with injuries and pressure ulcers
 - Greater patient satisfaction
 - Greater nurse job satisfaction, less burnout, greater intent to stay





A Call to Action





ICN encouraged nurses and their national associations to support implementation of safe nurse staffing systems





Nurse Staffing Policy Interventions Are Becoming More Common

- Victoria, AU in 2000
- California, US, passed 1999; implementation starts 2004, but rollout through 2006.
- MA 2014 (only ICU)

Last 5 years:

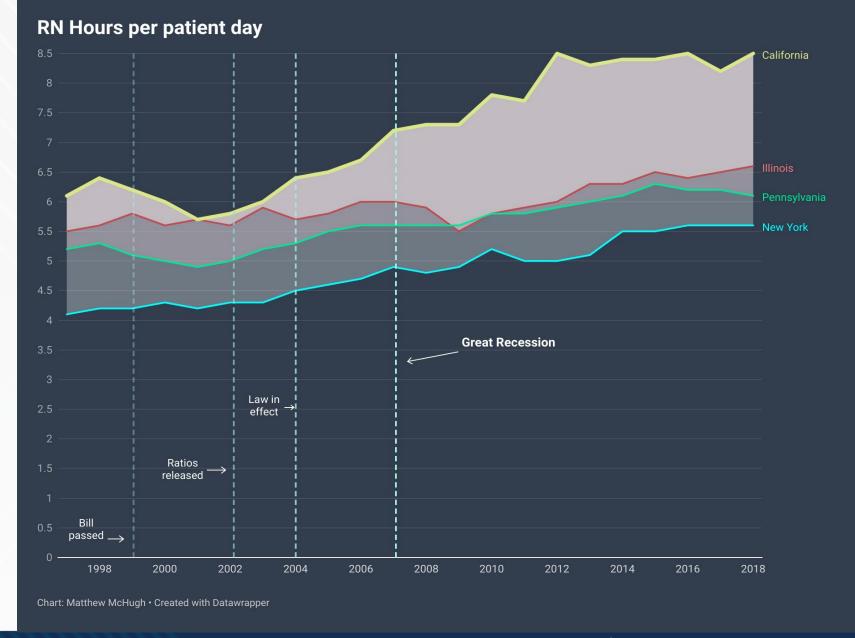
- Wales, UK
- Scotland, UK
- Ireland
- Queensland, AU
- Oregon 2023
- NY 2023 (only ICU)
- Other jurisdictions considering: More US states, Korea, Chile





Did California policy lead to improved staffing?

YES







What if other US states implemented ratios like California?

Aiken, McHugh et al. Health Services Research, 2010

- Pennsylvania and New Jersey nurses care for 1-2 more patients than nurses in California
- If Pennsylvania and New Jersey staffed at California levels:
 - odds of death after general surgery estimated to be reduced by 10 to 13% annually

But research challenges to study **CA** have resulted in contentious stakeholder debate on whether ratios worked

- Lack of good baseline measures
- 2. Lack of comparison groups
- 3. Varying quality of outcomes data, staffing data, and data sources
- 4. Limited time horizon (mostly only go to 2008)





What is the evidence for arguments against staffing standards?



Hospital Workforce Shortage Crisis Demands Immediate Action

For two long years, the dedicated women and men of America's hospitals and health systems have experienced firsthand the overwhelming impact of COVID-19.

The pandemic has been frustrating, exhausting, and heartbreaking, and few have felt these emotions stronger and longer than those on the front lines of delivering care.

While there is always room to build on our efforts, the hospital field has worked hard to prioritize the safety, protection and well-being of our caregivers and other essential workers.

The health care field entered the COVID-19 pandemic with long-term challenges related to the workforce.

- In 2017, more than half of nurses were age 50 and older, and almost 30% were age 60 and older.
- Federal data shows that we are expecting to lose 500,000 nurses by the end of this year, many through retirement, bringing the overall shortage of nurses to 1.1 million.

However, due to significant shortages of faculty, classroom space and clinical training sites, nursing schools actually had to turn away more than 80,000 qualified applicants in 2019. Hospital employment overall is down 95,600 from pre pandemic levels, according to the consulting firm Altarum.

Because our workforce is our most precious resource, hospitals and health systems are committed to supporting them today, preparing them for tomorrow and building a pipeline for the future.

That's why our field has created programs and developed resources to promote caregiver well-being and resiliency. Examples include helping to pay back student loans, providing childcare and transportation, offering tuition reimbursement and training benefits, providing referral and retention bonuses, and supporting programs that address mental and physical health.

Hospitals are also developing new team-based care models that allow health care workers from various disciplines and specialties to provide customized, patient-centered care. This allows them to manage medical and social needs across all settings to improve care and enhance professional satisfaction.

At the same time, many hospitals are facing serious financial pressures, including rapidly increasing costs for hiring and retaining staff. Through November 2021, labor expenses



Rick Pollack President and CEO American Hospital Association

increased 12% compared to pre-pandemic levels, according to the consulting firm Kaufman Hall.

And, when looked at through the lens of expenses per adjusted discharges, meaning labor costs per patient, the increase was a staggering 19.5%.

Persistent staff shortages caused by the pandemic have forced hospitals to increase their use of contract workers to fill nursing, technician and other essential positions. Unfortunately, some staffing agencies are exploiting the severe workforce shortages by charging uniformly high rates and retaining up to 40% or more of those amounts for themselves.

The conduct of some of these staffing agencies could suggest widespread coordination and other abuses, which is why the AHA and congressional lawmakers have asked federal agencies to investigate possible collusion and price gouging

Meanwhile, while some suggest there should be rigid nurseto-patient ratios, we strongly believe that nurses need to be empowered with flexibility to determine appropriate staffing for the needs of their patients. A one-size-approach does not fit all when it comes to safe staffing, and strict, inflexible approaches will exacerbate the workforce shortage crisis.

Our workforce challenges are a national emergency that demand immediate attention from all levels of government and workable solutions.

These include:

- Lifting the cap on Medicare-funded physician residencies;
- · Boosting support for nursing schools and faculty;
- Providing scholarships and loan forgiveness;
- And, expediting visas for all highly trained foreign health care workers.

In addition, we must support state efforts to expand scope of practice laws to allow health care professionals to practice at the top of their license. We also need to stop health insurers' burdensome bureaucratic practices that take caregivers away from the bedside.

The people who work in hospitals and health systems are truly the heart of health care. We must support them and stay focused on keeping our patients and communities safe and healthy.

Advancing Health in America

American Hospital

"Meanwhile, while some suggest there should be rigid nurse-to-patient ratios, we strongly believe that nurses need to be empowered with flexibility to determine appropriate staffing for the needs of their patients. A one-size-approach does not fit all when it comes to safe staffing, and strict, inflexible approaches will exacerbate the workforce shortage crisis.





"Meanwhile, while some suggest there should be rigid nurse-to- patient ratios..."

Who are the "some" suggesting that there is a policy need?

- Nurses
 - The top reasons cited for leaving hospital employers is poor staffing
- ½ of physicians rated nurse staffing among top 3 priorities to reduce their own burnout.

(Aiken et al, 2023, JAMA Health Forum)

Nurses and physicians <u>agree</u> on most/least important interventions for improving work environment/reducing burnout

MOST important

- Improve staffing (nurse and physician)
- Management that listens and responds to clinician concerns
- Reduce documentation/EHR burden, bureaucracy, and red tape
- Allow for more time to spend with patients
- Uninterrupted breaks
- Work-Life balance





"... We strongly believe that nurses need to be empowered with flexibility to determine appropriate staffing for the needs of their patients."

Yes!

But how are nurses empowered with flexibility now?





How are nurses empowered with flexibility?

- Staffing committees?
 - They don't work to improve staffing
- Nurses report little control over assignments
 - So much so we needSafe Harbor policies

- Managers may have flexibility with what they are given
 - Decisions about overall staffinga function of central budget
 - Lack of a direct line to revenue
 - In the US = results in cuts to nursing as a go-to strategy
 - Evidence from intro of DRGs, recessions, COVID, consolidation, private equity acquisition, and consultant playbooks.

(Han, Pittman, Barnow, 2021 Medical Care).





"A one-sizeapproach does not fit all when it comes to safe staffing"

Has this ever been advocated for?

NO.





"A one-size-approach does not fit all when it comes to safe staffing"

- If this were the case California staffing levels would level off at the regulatory threshold
- Instead over time California hospitals staffing levels got better and better relative to other US hospitals
- Minimum ratios are specific to unit/patient types which accounts for broad acuity differences
 - E.g., ratio of 1:5 in medical-surgical
 vs. 1:2 in critical care ICU settings

- All enacted and proposed legislation establish a minimum staffing standard adjusting upward per acuity requirements
- **CALIFORNIA** "These ratios shall constitute the minimum number of registered and licensed nurses that shall be allocated. Additional staff shall be assigned in accordance with a documented patient classification system for determining nursing care requirements, including the severity of the illness, the need for specialized equipment and technology, the complexity of clinical judgment needed to design, implement, and evaluate the patient care plan and the ability for self-care, and the licensure of the personnel required for care."

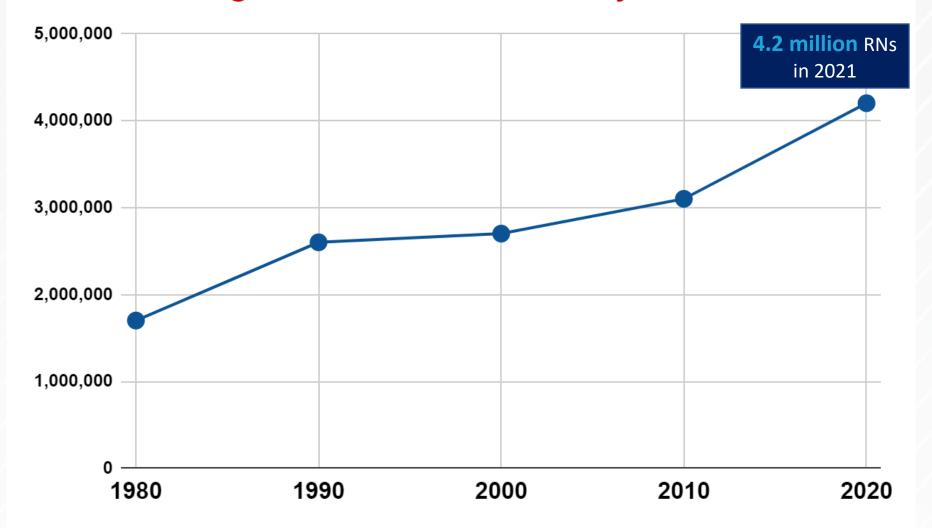




"...strict, inflexible approaches will exacerbate the workforce shortage crisis."



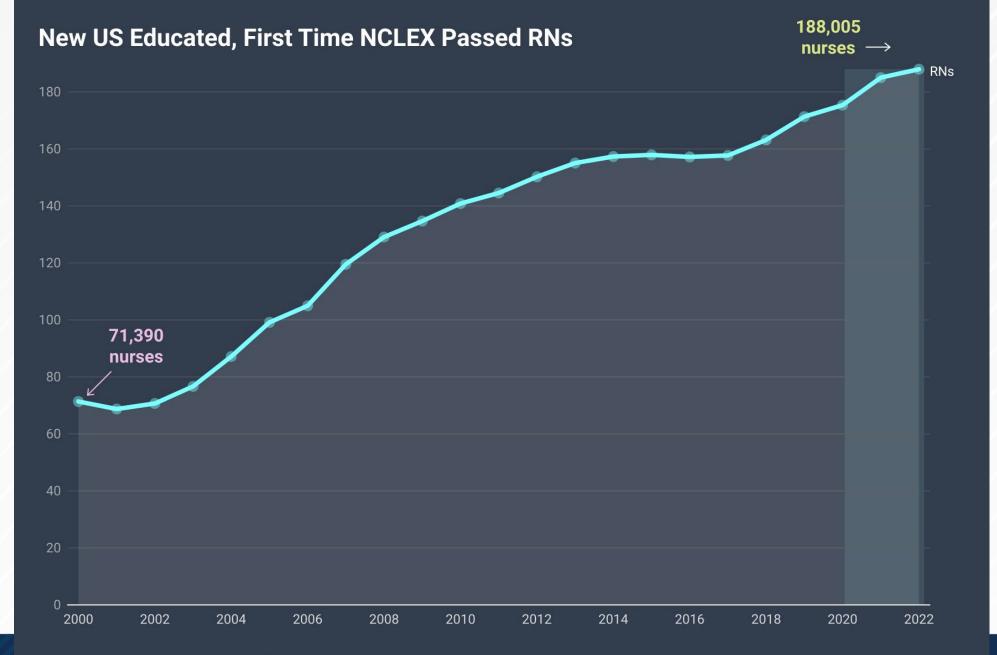
Number of Registered Nurses in the US by Decade



1.7million in 1980 to 4.2 million now.

Nearly as many additional new nurses in the past decade alone (2010-2020 - 1.1 million growth) vs. all three decades before combined (1980-2010 - 1.4 million growth)







Safety-net and critical access hospitals will be forced to close

- No evidence from California
- Safety-net hospitals saw greatest staffing improvements (McHugh, Milbank Quarterly).





Do minimum standards inhibit "innovation"?

- How?
 - Most innovation could be complements or substitutes
- The difference matters
- Starting point: Is there evidence that the innovation is (+)
- Examples:
 - Team nursing
 - Past experience linked with worse outcomes
 - Reduced skill mix linked with worse outcomes
 - Unspecified models of 'other' interdisciplinary providers (who?) or family?
 - Virtual nurses, robot helpers, artificial intelligence
 - Little evidence one way or the other





"Ratios" is not a policy monolith.

Policy design matters – lots of flexibility





Queensland—Policy Experiment

- July 2016, Queensland Health implemented nurse-topatient ratios in 27 public hospitals
- Ratios specify an average of 1:4 on morning/afternoon and 1:7 on night shifts in acute adult medical-surgical wards
- Prospective external evaluation with data collection and linked patient outcomes before and after implementation





Were the better outcomes attributable to the improvements in staffing following ratios implementation?







Were the better outcomes attributable to the improvements in staffing following ratios implementation?

Reductions of 1 patient per adult acute Med/Surg nurse were associated with significantly lower odds of:

Rating quality of care less than excellent	↓ 21%
Giving a failing grade on hospital safety	↓ 35%
Giving a failing grade on infection prevention	↓ 12%
Rating the hospital less than 9 or 10/10	↓ 8%
Not recommending hospital to family/friends	↓ 12%
Inadequate time to complete necessary care	↓ 16%
Inadequate time to detect patient changes	↓ 13%
Job dissatisfaction	↓ 8%
Burnout	↓ 7 %



Public benefits of nurse staffing improvements in QLD: first 2 years

145
Deaths avoided

255

Readmissions avoided

Estimated costs avoided ~ \$1.2-2.4 million (AUD)

29,222

Hospital days avoided

Estimated costs avoided ~ \$54-81 million (AUD)

McHugh et al. (2021). *The Lancet*





Leadership & **Frontline Staff Working Together to Develop Enforceable Policies that Support Staffing Standards**







One California Public Hospital System's approach to developing policies with frontline nurses and leadership collaboration



Developing 1:1 Criteria for ICU patient

- Minimum ratios for ICU in California are 1:2 or 12-hours of care
- ICU staff nurses approached the CNO to discuss 1:1 or 24 hours of care criteria
- Guidelines were set forth for the staff to develop criteria based on their experience
- Several meetings and negotiations took place over 2 months to fine-tune the policy
- 1:1 criteria were developed and the CNO brought them to the system CNOs for 4 hospitals; feedback was brought back to the committee
- Final criteria were brought to the system leadership including the CEOs and were approved in 2021





Intensive Care Unit (ICU) 1:1 Staffing Guidelines Proposal

- Routine patient acuity and 1:1 guidelines will be assessed every 6 hours by the primary nurse and charge nurse to establish and ensure the need for 1:1 nurse to patient ratio
- The patient's acuity that accurately reflects the patient's current condition shall be entered in the acuity classification system (i.e., Evalysis) AND reassessed every 6 hours or when reevaluation is due as indicated in Sections 1 and 2 below.
- All efforts will be made to provide timely 1:1 patient care as staffing permits
- Once a patient meets 1:1 guidelines, the charge nurse will notify the following:
 - Nurse manager on weekdays
 - Nursing supervisor on weekends, off-shift and holiday
- A patient will be considered 1:1 if he/she fulfills 1 or more criteria under Section 1
- A patient will be considered 1:1 if he/she fulfills 2 or more criteria under section 2





Developing 1:1 Criteria for ICU patient 50

Section 1

Patient must have at least **one** of the following:

1. Organ Donation or Donation After Cardiac Death (DCD)

Identified by One Legacy for organ donation and DCD

NOTE: Keep the patient 1:1 throughout ICU stay from initiation to completion of organ/tissue donation

1. Post-op open heart surgery

NOTE: Keep the patient 1:1 for the first 8 hours post-op and re-evaluate every 6 hours thereafter

1. Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO)

Patient is intubated on mechanical ventilation
Unstable oxygen saturation <90% with FiO2 100%, PEEP >20
Hemodynamic compromise requiring vasoactive medications and fluid replacements including blood products
Use of sedatives and paralyzing agents that requires multiple dose changes to reach goal

Monitoring for bleeding due to full anticoagulation that prevents clot formation in ECMO circuit

NOTE: Keep the patient 1:1 for the first **8 hours** of ECMO therapy and re-evaluate every 6 hours thereafter

Requires 2:1 staffing if utilizing ECMO-trained RN performing the role of the perfusionist responsible for the operation and troubleshooting of the device





Developing 1:1 Criteria for ICU Patient

Section 2

Patient must have at least two criteria (criteria 1 AND any of criteria 2-11)

Hemodynamic instability requiring 2 or more vasoactive medications (excluding non-titratable vasopressin)

Unstable defined as: fluctuating or unpredictable heart rate, blood pressure, or oxygen saturation Vasoactive medications include but not limited to norepinephrine, epinephrine, dopamine, nicardipine, nitroprusside, dobutamine (please see policy for full list of medications)

Active titration of vasoactive medications

Anticipation for addition of vasoactive medications

NOTE: This criterion must be paired with another criteria (criteria 2-11)

2. Intra-aortic balloon pump (IABP), Impella or heart assistive device

Fluctuating or unpredictable heart rate, blood pressure, or oxygen saturation





We simultaneously re-evaluated the budget to ensure:

- 20% of the patients would be at 24 hours of care or 1:1 (based on historical need)
- Budgeted for a "break nurse" based on the number of nurses to be relieved to ensure they took their breaks according to California labor law
 - two 15-minute breaks and one 30-minute meal period per 8 hours of work
- Budget for a charge nurse that was free from a patient assignment as much as possible
- Reviewing the span of control for the manager and assistant manager so they can focus on issues with the work environment and support the staff
 - even more important post-pandemic due to the larger number of new graduates in the workforce

Even more collaboration between management and direct-care nurses is needed to develop new staffing models to create healthy work environments





Unintended
Consequences
of California's Nurse
Ratio Legislation





History of California Nurse Ratios

- In 1999, California passed comprehensive legislation mandating patient-to-nurse ratios for its hospitals.
- Legislature asked California
 Department of Health to develop the ratios
- There shall be no more than 50%
 Licensed Vocational Nurses (or Psych Techs in Psychiatric areas)

Ratios took effect January 1, 2004
 and were modified in 2008

• ICU	1:2	
Stepdown	1:4	Changed in 2008 to 1:3
Telemetry	1:5	Changed in 2008 to 1:4
Med Surg	1:6	Changed in 2008 to 1:5
Psych	1:6	
Pediatrics	1:4	
Specialty units	1:4	
■ ED – Trauma 1:1; Critical Care 1:2; Others 1:4		
• L&D	1:2	





Unintended Consequences of the Ratios

- "At all times"
- Nurses used to go on breaks together
- They usually finished their work and then went on break
 - New staffing process required someone to be available for breaks and they would care of the patient while the assigned nurse went on break

- Time and motion studies to develop the ratios were done by research assistants, not nurses
- While direct care nurses liked the ratios and having more licensed nurses
- They didn't like the "at all times" provision in the ratios
 - The person who developed the specific ratios visited our hospital; received feedback from the staff





Additional Requirement in California

- Must have a Patient Classification System that determines the individual needs of the patient based on the registered nurses' assessment
- Reliability and validity of the classification system must be done annually
- This review of the patient classification system must be reviewed by a committee made up of at least 50% staff nurses





Think Tank Recommendations Based on Today's Discussion

- Establish empowered professional governance committees that include direct-care nurses and have authority to create and sustain flexible staffing approaches
- Advocate for state and/or federal regulation and legislation that advances meeting minimum staffing standards
- Advocate for the development and utilization of approaches that quantify nursing impact on organizational performance and outcomes







Discussion Questions

- Pick one of the three existing policy interventions currently used at the state level for promoting staffing standards – public reporting, required committees, and mandated ratios. How is this policy effective? What are the unintended consequences of this policy? How could we build a more effective policy?
- In one of our Task Force discussions, some members felt that the imperative of establishing staffing standards conflicted with the imperative to innovate care delivery. How do you see these two imperatives interacting?
- What are actionable steps nurse leaders and hospital executives can take to advance and implement these recommendations forward at the:
 - Individual level
 - Institutional level Unit level
 - Policy level Associations, etc.





Session Wrap-Up

- You will earn 1.5 CNE credits for today's session
- Please scan the QR code or follow the link placed in the chat to claim your CNE credits



Thank You To Our Task Force Presenters





+ Reform the Workplace
Environment – Creating a Healthy
& Supportive Nurse Work
Environment





Dr. Katie Boston-Leary Dr. Kiersten Henry

+ Innovate the Models for Care
Delivery - Innovative Care
Delivery in Nursing: A Paradigm
Shift in Healthcare









Dr. Sherry Perkins
Dr. Matthew McHugh

+ Establish Staffing Models to Ensure Quality Care – Achieving Excellence in Healthcare: Nurse Staffing Standards



Dr. Vicki Good, Dr. Lesly Kelly





+ Improve Regulatory Efficiency – Maximizing Nursing Efficiency: The Future of Regulatory

Innovation

Zina Gontscharow, Brian Sims, Michelle Buck











DATA DATA CTION

The Nurse Staffing Task Force Project ECHO*

Tackling the Nurse Staffing Crisis

Thank you for joining us!







