

WHY SUPPORT SAFE STAFFING?

It offers us the chance to implement the best patient safety procedures available. It is modeled on the successful California mandatory ratio legislation and offers Florida the chance to achieve a true win-win-win:

1. Reduce Needless Patient Deaths

Numerous national studies point to the connection between adequate levels of registered nurse staffing and safe patient care. A 2011 study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that patient mortality was 6% higher in understaffed units. A 2012 study of Pennsylvania hospitals published in the *American Journal of Infection Control* found that increasing a nurse's patient load by just one patient also increased rates of infection.

2. Solve the "Nursing Shortage"

The Health Resources and Services Administration projects that more than one million registered nurses will reach retirement age within the next decade. They aren't being replaced adequately and the U.S. nursing shortage is projected to grow to 260,000 registered nurses by 2025. When Australia implemented mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios 16% of their RNs returned to work. When California implemented safe ratios the state Board of Nursing was inundated with RN applicants from other states.

3. Save Precious Health Care Dollars

High turnover rates and high levels of temporary nurse staffing increase the average costs per discharge and overall operating costs. Safe staffing improves nurse performance and patient-mortality rates, reduces turnover rates, staffing costs, and liability. A 2009 study found that adding an additional 133,000 RNs to the hospital workforce across the U.S. would produce medical savings estimated at \$6.1 billion in reduced patient care costs. This does not include the additional value of increased productivity when nurses help patients recover more quickly, an estimated \$231 million savings per year.

Hospital Patient Protection Act mandates unit specific RN to - patient ratios for all shifts at all times including coverage for breaks and absences from the unit. Averaging is prohibited. Proposed Minimum Ratios:

Florida RN Ratios

Intensive/Critical Care	1:2
Neonatal Intensive Care	1:2
Operating Room	1:1
Post-anesthesia Recovery	1:2
Labor and Delivery	1:2
Antepartum	1:3
Newborn Nursery	1:6
Postpartum Couplets	1:6
Postpartum Women Only	1:4
Pediatrics	1:3
Emergency Room	1:4
ICU Patient in ER	1:2
Trauma Patient in ER	1:1
Step Down & Telemetry	1:3
Medical/Surgical	1:4
Other Specialty Care Units	1:4
Psychiatric	1:4
Rehab Unit & Skilled Nursing	1:5

All ratios are minimums. Hospitals must increase staffing based upon individual patient needs.