

Submitter: Christina Becker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

Good evening Chair and committee members. My name is Christina Becker and I am a nurse at Providence Newberg Hospital in the Medical/Surgical unit. I come today in support of House Bill 2697. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Currently, Providence is proposing a new staffing model called "Care Pairs" where the number of nurses would be significantly decreased, while the number of CNAs and UAPs, or unlicensed assistive personnel would increase. We are told that by doing so, the assistants will do all patient care and nurses will no longer work below their "scope of practice" thereby allowing us the time to take on two, even three additional patients at night. I absolutely reject the idea that nurses should be pulled away from tasks that are below our scope of practice. It isn't realistic, practical, or possible. There is a LOT of "nursing" that happens while performing these tasks. When I help with incontinent care, I am assessing skin, and checking for pressure injuries and rashes. When a patient is walking are they short of breath, dizzy, or in pain? Assessments are a must and are beyond the scope of a CNA.

I want to share a story that I hope drives this point home. I was caring for a patient that started having several episodes of vomiting that resulted in quite a mess. My CNA asked if I could help with clean up. When we removed the gown I noticed a change in his abdominal contour and I was concerned there might be a bowel obstruction. I called the doctor to the bedside who agreed and ordered an NG tube. Within minutes of insertion, over a liter of fluid was removed, with much more to follow as the night went on. If a bowel obstruction is left untreated, it can be life-threatening! Had I not been involved in cleaning up vomit, this could have been missed. It terrifies me to think what other things could be missed by pulling nurses away from helping with patient care in order to increase the number of patients assigned.

Thank you very much for taking the time to hear my testimony. Please consider supporting Oregon nurses by joining me in voting in favor of HB 2697