

Submitter: Zachary Nause

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

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I believe that for nurses the biggest factor in patient safety is safe staffing ratios. As nurses we have required tasks for each patient every shift, the more patients obviously the more tasks. This leaves less time to anticipate our patients' needs and prevent dangerous situations from occurring.

Without safe staffing ratios it becomes more difficult to create balanced nursing assignments. When making patient assignments we try to make sure that the nurses taking care of the sickest patients have other patients requiring less care. The fewer nurses on shift the more difficult it becomes to create that balance. Also, when a patient unexpectedly begins to decline if the assignment is balanced the other nurses on the floor are able to step in and assist that nurse, something that becomes much more difficult if the staffing ratio is not safe.

Our patients are complete human beings with full lives they are away from while we are in the hospital. They deserve to have staff that are able to talk with them while they are providing care, not people that are racing to complete tasks. Some patients require repositioning that they are unable to do on their own, all patients require hygiene to be healthy, these are some of the first things that get neglected when there is insufficient staffing.

To provide the best, safest care please ensure that safe staffing ratios are made law, you never know when you are someone you care about may need them.