

Safety in Numbers

When you are comparing your hospital's staffing, it helps to know the standard for safety. Based on numerous studies, and on standards set by many nursing organizations, HPAE is supporting legislation – S1233 (Vitale) and A1531(Greenstein) – to require hospitals to meet the following minimum staffing levels:

1 RN to every 6 patients on a medical/surgical unit or behavioral health unit

1 RN to every 4 patients in a telemetry or step-down/intermediate unit

1 RN for every 4 patients in an emergency room and 1:1 in a trauma unit

1 RN for every 2 patients in a critical care unit

1 RN for every patient in an operating room and 1:2 in a post-operative recovery room

1 RN for every 2 patients in labor-delivery; 1:4 in post-partum-mother-baby unit and 1:6 in a mothers only unit

1 RN to every 4 in a pediatric/intermediate nursery and 1:6 in a well-baby unit.



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When it comes to
safe patient care...

Numbers Matter.



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Nurses and health care professionals know when it comes to the safety of our patients, having the right number of qualified nurses and staff at the bedside is critical to safe and effective patient care.

What does the staffing disclosure law require?

Every hospital must post, for each unit and each shift, the ratio of patients-to-nurses, and other health care professionals available for patient care. The ratios are based on the total number of hours worked by nurses and staff.



Who is included?

Registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, physical therapists, respiratory care practitioners and/or unlicensed assistive personnel such as Certified Nursing Assistants. A hospital must calculate the ratio for each staff category. Supervisory staff not providing direct patient care CANNOT be counted.

Reporting Period

For reporting purposes, a hospital must report based on three eight (8) hours shifts or two twelve (12) hour shifts.



A Patient's Right To Know

Patients and their families have a right to know if the hospital is safely staffed. The postings must be in a location visible to patients and their families, and posted no later than one hour after the end of each shift. Copies of the staffing postings must be made available to the public at no cost. In addition, hospitals will be required to submit this information to the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and the information will be compared and publicized. Patients and consumers can see for themselves which hospitals are more safely staffed for quality patient care.

As Nurses, We Know That Numbers Matter.

A MESSAGE FROM HPAE

Nurses are the best patient advocates. We are by our patients' bedsides, and by their side in the fight for safe patient care. It's time that hospitals were compared by what really matters – safe staffing for safe and effective patient care. We believe if hospitals have to make public their real staffing numbers, they will work harder to staff safely for our patients. That's why we fought for your right to know – and we're still fighting for safe staffing for all of our patients, all of the time.

