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HOUSE MEMORIAL 98

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT SURVEYS AND
CONSULT WITH PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE SURVEYS AND TO CREATE A WEB PAGE ON ITS WEB SITE REPORTING
ON NURSE-TO-PATIENT RATIOS AT HOSPITALS IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, there are nurse-to-patient standards, proposed by
national nursing organizations for specific patient groups,
that many hospitals throughout the United States have adopted;
and

WHEREAS, nurses are required to advocate for patient
needs, including ensuring the safety of patients, in a way
unique to the nursing profession; and

WHEREAS, nurse-to-patient ratios reflect the minimum
number of nurses that are needed to provide adequate care for a
maximum number of patients; and

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1 WHEREAS, nurse-to-patient ratios help provide an optimum
2 standard of care for patients and protect the safety of
3 patients and hospital personnel; and

4 WHEREAS, it is proven that when nurse-to-patient ratios
5 are enforced, patients spend fewer days in the hospital and
6 patient outcomes are greatly improved; and

7 WHEREAS, there are currently no minimum standards for
8 nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico statutes and there is
9 limited oversight and evaluation by the department of health to
10 determine whether hospitals have implemented appropriate nurse-
11 to-patient ratios and whether hospitals are complying with the
12 nurse-to-patient ratios that each hospital has adopted; and

13 WHEREAS, annual review of nurse-to-patient ratio standards
14 by the department of health is necessary to ensure that the
15 state does not fall behind national standards and that patients
16 in New Mexico receive the same quality of care as patients in
17 other states; and

18 WHEREAS, input from stakeholder groups in New Mexico is
19 essential to ensure that standards reflect special
20 circumstances or conditions pertaining to the delivery of care
21 in hospital settings in the state, and stakeholder input should
22 be actively sought by the department of health in reviewing the
23 standards;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
25 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department

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1 of health, using appropriations contained in its fiscal year
2 2015 budget, be requested to conduct a survey of nurse-to-
3 patient ratios at hospitals in New Mexico; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health
5 request the following organizations to provide input in the
6 development of the survey and in review of standards to ensure
7 that the surveys reflect special circumstances or conditions
8 pertaining to the delivery of care in hospital settings in the
9 state:

- 10 A. American association of critical-care nurses;
- 11 B. association of perioperative registered nurses;
- 12 C. oncology nursing society;
- 13 D. New Mexico emergency nurses association;
- 14 E. association of women's health, obstetric and
15 neonatal nurses;
- 16 F. American psychiatric nurses association;
- 17 G. American association of neuroscience nurses;
- 18 H. society of gastroenterology nurses and
19 associates;
- 20 I. American society of perianesthesia nurses;
- 21 J. rural institutional health care providers; and
- 22 K. hospitals in New Mexico; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be
24 requested to create a page on its web site that reports the
25 nurse-to-patient ratios discovered from the surveys conducted

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1 pursuant to this memorial; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be
3 requested to create a page on its web site that is interactive
4 so that nurses working in hospitals in New Mexico may report
5 actual staffing levels and conditions at the hospitals at which
6 they work; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be
8 requested to report to the legislative finance committee and
9 the legislative health and human services committee on the
10 number of hospitals that have adopted standards relating to
11 nurse-to-patient ratios and on the results of the survey,
12 specifying which hospitals have adopted standards relating to
13 nurse-to-patient ratios and the type of staffing model, or
14 models, that each hospital uses; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be
16 requested to include in its report the cost of implementing an
17 oversight program that evaluates the outcomes from hospitals
18 that do and do not implement the suggested standards; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the secretary of health.

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