

HOUSE CONSUMER AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
HOUSE MEMORIAL 51

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REPORT 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, as no other
medical profession is required to do; 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

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

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

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

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

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

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the following
23 organizations be requested to provide input in review of the
24 standards to ensure that the standards reflect any special
25 circumstances or conditions pertaining to the delivery of care

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1 in hospital settings in the state:

- 2 A. American association of critical-care nurses;
- 3 B. association of perioperative registered nurses;
- 4 C. oncology nursing society;
- 5 D. New Mexico emergency nurses association;
- 6 E. association of women's health, obstetric and
7 neonatal nurses;
- 8 F. American psychiatric nurses association;
- 9 G. American association of neuroscience nurses;
- 10 H. society of gastroenterology nurses and
11 associates;
- 12 I. American society of perianesthesia nurses;
- 13 J. rural institutional health care providers; and
- 14 K. hospitals in New Mexico; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health
16 report to the legislative finance committee and the legislative
17 health and human services committee on the number of hospitals
18 that adopt standards relating to nurse-to-patient ratios; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health
20 include in its report the cost of implementing an oversight
21 program that evaluates the outcomes from hospitals that do and
22 do not implement the suggested standards; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health
24 determine and report the cost of implementing an annual review
25 of nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico; and

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

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