

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

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

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

WHEREAS, there are currently no minimum standards for nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico statutes and there is limited oversight and evaluation by the department of health

to determine whether hospitals have implemented appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios and whether hospitals are complying with the nurse-to-patient ratios that each hospital has adopted; and

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

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health, using appropriations contained in its fiscal year 2015 budget, be requested to conduct a survey of nurse-to-patient ratios at hospitals in New Mexico; and

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

state:

- A. American association of critical-care nurses;
- B. association of perioperative registered nurses;
- C. oncology nursing society;
- D. New Mexico emergency nurses association;
- E. association of women's health, obstetric and neonatal nurses;
- F. American psychiatric nurses association;
- G. American association of neuroscience nurses;
- H. society of gastroenterology nurses and associates;
- I. American society of perianesthesia nurses;
- J. rural institutional health care providers; and
- K. hospitals in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be requested to create a page on its web site that reports the nurse-to-patient ratios discovered from the surveys conducted pursuant to this memorial; and

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be requested to report to the legislative finance committee and

the legislative health and human services committee on the number of hospitals that have adopted standards relating to nurse-to-patient ratios and on the results of the survey, specifying which hospitals have adopted standards relating to nurse-to-patient ratios and the type of staffing model, or models, that each hospital uses; and

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

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