

Nurse Staffing Legislation and Patient Care Advocacy

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Nurse Staffing Policy and Patient Care Advocacy

Problem

In a hospital setting, nurse staffing is directly associated with better patient experience and outcomes. The shortage occurs when there are very few nurses to tend to a large number of patients, which subsequently increases the likelihood of mortality in the hospital setting and medical errors. As it is a serious problem in the healthcare setting, nurse shortage affects caregivers, organizations, nurses, patients, and even the whole healthcare system. The low nurse staffing level also affects the organization, as when patients are not provided with quality care, the adverse patient care outcomes affect the credibility of the organization. It may be possible that people will lose interest in the healthcare system because of rising prices and bad care outcomes. The problem of nurse shortage overwhelms the ability of the nurses who are already providing quality and safe care in the hospital setting, which leads to negative patient care outcomes. It is seen that when nurses are assigned many duties, there are more chances of missed care, which affects the quality of the care provided and patient care outcomes. Having very few nurses for so many patients to be cared for leads to stress among the nurses, and this adversity further contributes to a lack of motivation and interest among nurses. Additionally, if the problem of nurse staffing level in hospital settings is not addressed, this problem will continue to affect the organizations, the healthcare system, and also patient care in particular. The adverse patient care in the hospital setting undermines the primary goal of the healthcare system, which is to provide quality patient care outcomes (Lasater et al., 2021).

The Idea for Addressing the Solution

Nurse shortage is a problem that directly or indirectly affects the unhealthy population as well as the organization and even the whole healthcare system. A vital strategy is needed in the healthcare setting to effectively address the problem of nurse shortages. The ratio of nurses per patient is the strategy to provide appropriate and quality care to the patients, which will be based on the hospital departments, which would improve patient experience and outcomes. The best course to advocate mandatory nurse staffing levels within hospital settings is legislation to be observed. The law observed to overcome the nurse staffing levels shortage should stipulate the minimum number of patients per nurse to be served.

Research the Issue

<i>Evidence 1</i>	Haegdorens et al. (2019), in a research study, state that the number of patients a nurse takes care of determines the safety level of the patients. Patient safety then determines and influences patient care outcomes. Therefore, increasing the number of nurses in hospitals also benefits the nurses and the patients.
<i>Evidence 2</i>	According to a study by Driscoll and Masters (2018), the nurse-to-patient ratio influences and improves patient outcomes as increasing staffing levels reduces hospital mortality and lowers nurses' burnout.
<i>Similar Legislation</i>	New York is the first state to implement mandatory legislation based on the nurse-to-patient ratio, which has subsequently lowered mortality rates, resulted in better patient outcomes, and resulted in better nurse retention.
Stakeholder Support	
<i>Stakeholder(s) Supporting 1</i>	The primary stakeholders for this legislation are nurses themselves because they serve on the frontline in caring for their patients. This is also because the idea of coping with the nursing staffing levels shortage focuses mainly on nurses' work, so nurses themselves would advocate the mandatory legislation. The benefits this legislation would have for nurses are a reduction of workload stress, better nurse retention, reduced mortality rates, and an increase in nursing satisfaction and motivation.
<i>Stakeholder(s) Supporting 2</i>	The second stakeholder of this legislation would be hospital administrators who run the routine activities of an organization. They are the individuals who are responsible for providing nurses with effective resources to boost efficient care. Hospital administrators would support the legislation for the nursing shortage issue because this law would reduce the number of funds that are being used to address adverse patient care outcomes. Resultantly, the credibility of the organization would be increased, increasing the chances of getting more funds and loans from investors and organizations.
Stakeholder Opposition	

<i>Stakeholder(s) Opposed 1</i>	Nurse executives within the organization have a senior administrative role who may oppose the idea. There is a possibility that they may cite better approaches such as improvement of nursing practitioners' recruitment, undergraduate nursing education development, and nurses' retention approaches.
<i>Stakeholder(s) Opposed 2</i>	Board members of any hospital organization are the real force behind major economic decisions and determine what financial procedures should be implemented to improve patient outcomes. They may oppose the idea on the grounds that hiring new nurses would cost the organization.
Financial Incentives/Costs	
The increased nurse-to-patient ratio would raise other issues, such as turnover costs. Therefore, the implementation of mandatory nurse staffing legislation will increase the cost of provision, subsequently increasing the hospital's additional revenue. Adverse patient outcomes and increased mortality rates in hospitals would make the implementation of the legislation difficult because the hospital that implements the idea does not get additional reimbursement. The implementation of the proposed legislation will result in an increase in the annual cost of hiring more nurses for the increased nurse-to-patient ratios within a healthcare setting.	
Legislature: Information Needed and Process for Proposal	
<i>Name and Contact of the legislator.</i>	George Edward Holding
<i>Describe the steps for how you would present this to your legislator.</i>	To present the proposed legislation to a legislator, the first task is to convince the legislator to lobby for the idea of hiring new nurses. The next step to achieve the goal of presenting this idea entails a policy brief outlining the problem and the related solutions. The policy brief will contain personal perspectives and the effects of the issue, and the solutions will be prepared and sent to the legislator.

<i>Outline the process if your legislator chooses to introduce your idea as a bill to Congress.</i>	Introducing the proposed idea as a bill is characterized by key procedures that will first include the sponsoring of the bill by the legislator. The process includes: • A legislative committee will study the proposed idea. • The legislative committee will assign the debate date if the idea needs to be debated. • The text for the bill will be developed. • The bill is then assigned a specific number to present whenever the House will be in session. • The bill is referred to the New York State Legislative Assembly for voting and debating. • The state legislative assembly will pass the legislation. • The governor of New York will sign the proposed idea into law.
Christian Principles and Nursing Advocacy	
The idea of advocacy takes the religious dimension as the Christian worldview has always been persistent in lobbying for social inclusion. Therefore, when a group of individuals or states examines the proposed idea from the perspective of the Christian worldview, it is based on the principle of love and care, as God has made humans in His own image. Thus, irrespective of cultural or racial background, it is the responsibility of every individual to advocate for the needs of vulnerable populations. In this regard, patients are a vulnerable population in need of quality and safe care. Having this in mind, advocating for increased nurse staffing levels in healthcare settings would be valuable to better the well-being of patients as well as nurses in meeting individual and social needs. Love and care are the focal points of the Christian worldview; therefore, nurses and the authorities in power should ensure quality care services for the marginalized in society so that the vulnerable community can receive adequate care.	

References

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