

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Nurse Staffing Steering Committee: Update Bulletin

June 1, 2008

Current Highlights

— (SHB 3123) was jointly supported by the unions, hospitals, and nurse executives, and was enacted by the legislature and signed by the Governor. The new law requires the establishment, where they do not already exist, of hospital level committees that would produce evidenced-based staffing plans to be forwarded as recommendations to hospital CEOs. They also agreed to work together to examine and come up with further actions to address nurse staffing in Washington State, and potentially other joint proposals for action or legislation.

— A steering committee with two representatives from each of the organizations has already begun to meet monthly to carry out this agreement. See enclosed list.

— An Education Advisory Committee, chaired by Sally Watkins of the Washington State Nurses Association, has been established to develop training and other support for the hospital committees. Watch for announcements in the late Spring and early Summer for training courses and materials.

— The Committee is also focusing on data collection. Two actions have been taken so far:

- A joint request has gone to the Washington State Health Department of Health to require nurse staffing information be included in the adverse events root cause analysis reports.
- A jointly approved survey has been sent to all Washington hospitals to identify what data are already being collected about nurse sensitive quality indicators. Once compiled, the steering committee will identify at least five indicators that would be valuable to collect and examine centrally in an effort to learn about nurse staffing impacts.

— The committee has asked Dr. Pamela Mitchell, a nationally known expert, and the associate dean for research from the University of Washington School of Nursing, to be the lead researcher in the preparation of a summary of research and prevailing policy views about the effects of nurse staffing. Other experts will be brought in and consulted as necessary.

Introduction

The Northwest Organization of Nurse Executives; SEIU Healthcare 1199NW; United Staff Nurses, UFCW 141; Washington State Nurses Association; and the Washington State Hospital Association signed a Memorandum of Agreement on February 4, 2008 where the Governor presided (press conference), committing to work together to address issues related to nurse staffing and other nursing care issues. A report on this work will be provided to the Governor and Washington State Legislature by November 1, 2008. As the Governor noted, this joint effort by hospitals, nurses, and nurse executives is unique in the country as a way of addressing the very difficult issues around nurse staffing. The committee aspires to develop, in a collaborative manner, innovative and practical solutions that will be a model for others.

This bulletin will be issued periodically to keep interested parties informed.

William D. Ruckelshaus Center Nurse Staffing Steering Committee Members

Chris Barton, SEIU Healthcare - 1199NW
 Gladys Campbell, NNONE
 Leo Greenawalt, Washington State Hospital Association
 Judith Huntington, Washington State Nurses Association
 Tracey Kasnic, Central Washington Hospital

Sharon Ness, UFCW 141 Nurses
 Randy Revelle, Washington State Hospital Association
 Diane Sosne, SEIU Healthcare - 1199NW
 Anne Tan Piazza, Washington State Nurses Association
 Cheryl Wilkinson, UFCW 141 Nurses