

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Nurse Staffing Steering Committee: Update Bulletin

August 2008

The Steering Committee has met five times and has the following highlights:

Training

The Education Advisory Committee has developed a training program for those who will be members of the hospital staffing committees. The program will be offered in a one-day (8:30am - 4:30pm) format with the following dates and locations:

- Friday, August 22: Seattle at SSCC Brockey Conference Center
- Saturday, August 23: Spokane at Sacred Heart Medical Center (Please register for the Spokane session as soon as possible to ensure there is adequate attendance.)

Program information, the agenda for program content, cost and registration information can be found at the [WSHA website](#).

Data Collection

The Steering Committee has identified five indicators (pressure ulcer rate/prevalence, falls prevalence, falls with injury, skill mix and nursing care hours per patient day) that would be valuable to collect and examine centrally in an effort to learn about nurse staffing impacts. The committee is also working with the Washington State Department of Health to include staffing information in adverse events data that could be compiled for examination.

Research

Dr. Pamela Mitchell, a nationally known expert, and the Associate Dean for Research from the University of Washington School of Nursing, is leading preparation of a summary of research and prevailing policy approaches regarding the effects of nurse staffing. She is also coordinating committee consultation with other experts in the field.

Immediate Staffing Response Pilot Project

The Steering Committee has created an advisory committee to develop and pilot an "Immediate Staffing Alert" Response Process in three Washington hospitals. The pilots are planned to begin this fall, and the results will be reviewed to determine if the model can be used more broadly.

Education Advisory Committee

Steering Committee Advisor
Gladys Campbell (NWONE)

Advisory Committee Chairperson
Sally Watkins (WSNA)

Membership

Chris Barton (SEIU)
Taya Briley (WSHA)
Tracey Kasnic (NWONE)
Cheryl Wilkinson (UFCW)

"IMMEDIATE STAFFING ALERT" Response Process Group Advisory Committee

Steering Committee Advisor
Tracey Kasnic (NWONE)

Advisory Committee Chairperson
Patty Cochrell (NWONE)

Membership

Susan Greeley (SEIU)
Jan Iverson (NWONE)
Sharon Ness (UFCW)
Kristin Peterson (WSHA)
Sally Watkins (WSNA)

Committee Origin, Legislation and Organization

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.

(SHB 3123) was jointly supported by the unions, hospitals, and nurse executives, enacted by the legislature, and signed by the Governor. The new law requires hospital-level committees to produce staffing plans to be submitted to hospital CEOs, and posting of unit-specific plans and schedules in each patient care area.

The Memorandum of Agreement is guiding the ongoing work to examine and recommend further actions to address nurse staffing in Washington State, and potentially other joint proposals for action or legislation. 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 difficult issues around nurse staffing.