

Legislation Addressing Minimum Registered Nurse Staffing Deficiencies in Healthcare Settings

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Abstract

Addressing nurse staffing ratios within health care facilities and resulting patient outcomes in the light of a bill known as Assembly, Number 647 State Of New Jersey 216th Legislature.

The bill seeks to establish minimum safe staffing standards for registered professional nurses in hospitals, ambulatory surgery facilities, and State development centers and psychiatric centers

Background

Evidence cited in studies demonstrates links between adequate nurse staffing levels and better patient outcomes.

Inadequate nurse staffing has been tied to higher mortality, failure to rescue, cardiac arrest, and hospital acquired pneumonia.

Numerous statewide initiatives have variously addressed the staffing needs to a limited degree. More comprehensive legislation has yet to be created.^{1, 2, 3}



Results

Minimum Nurse Staffing Standards for Healthcare Facilities in the State of New Jersey

How a Bill Becomes Law in New Jersey

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Idea Developed | 6. Second Reading |
| 2. Bill Drafted | 7. Third Reading |
| 3. Bill Introduced | 8. House Vote |
| 4. Committee Reference | 9. Second House |
| 5. Committee Action | 10. Governor's Action |
| | 11. Law |

- 2008 – Lack of adequate support
- 2010 – Lack of adequate support
- 2012 – Lack of adequate support
- 2013 – Newly sponsored by Senator Joseph Natali



New Jersey's current governor continues to refuse to sign this legislation into law

Methods

Literature Search

A search for healthcare legislation in the state of New Jersey at www.njleg.state.nj.us was conducted. Bills listed in the 2014-2015 legislative session under the subject heading of health - professionals were evaluated.

Legislative Meeting

On June 30, 2014 a meeting was held with primary sponsor of the bill - Assemblyman Paul Moriarty, to discuss bill's origins, intent, and progress to law. Also consulted NJ State under the headings: general information, and legislative process.

Phone interview with legislative aide of current sponsor bill gave update as of July 2017

Conclusions

Current Status of Bill

- According to the office of current bill sponsor, the current governor refuses to sign bill into law⁴
- Bill has languished for years in committee due to resistance from hospital associations.
- Nursing organization support has achieved little.

References

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3. ANA, American Nurses Association (2016) Retrieved from <http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/Policy-Advocacy>
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