

2015 -- S 0326

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- LICENSING OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Introduced By: Senator Joshua Miller

Date Introduced: February 12, 2015

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 23-17 of the General Laws entitled "Licensing of Health Care
2 Facilities" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **23-17-63. Relative to patient safety. – (a) Definitions. – As used in this chapter:**

4 (1) "Facility" means any licensed private or state-owned and state-operated general acute
5 care hospital, an acute psychiatric hospital, an acute care specialty hospital, or any acute care unit
6 within a state operated health care facility. This definition shall not include rehabilitation facilities
7 or long-term care facilities.

8 (2) "Nursing care" means care which falls within the scope of practice as defined in § 5-
9 34-3 or is otherwise encompassed within recognized standards of nursing practice, including
10 assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, intervention, evaluation and patient advocacy.

11 (3) "Health care workforce" means personnel employed by or contracted to work at a
12 facility that have an effect upon the delivery of quality care to patients, including, but not limited
13 to, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, unlicensed assistive personnel, service,
14 maintenance, clerical, professional and technical workers, or other health care workers.

15 (b)(1) The maximum number of patients assigned to a registered nurse in a facility shall
16 not exceed the limits enumerated in this section. However, nothing shall preclude a facility from
17 assigning fewer patients to a registered nurse than the limits enumerated in this section.

18 (2) In all units with intensive care patients and in all units with critical care patients, the
19 maximum patient assignment is one patient. A registered nurse in such units may accept a second

1 intensive care or critical care patient if that nurse assesses that each patient's condition is stable.

2 (3) In all units with step-down/intermediate care patients, the maximum patient
3 assignment of step-down/intermediate patients is three (3).

4 (4) In all units with post anesthesia care (PACU) patients, the maximum patient
5 assignment of PACU patients under anesthesia is one. The maximum patient assignment of
6 PACU patients post anesthesia is two (2).

7 (5) In all units with operating room (OR) patients, the maximum patient assignment of
8 OR patients under anesthesia is one. The maximum patient assignment of OR patients post
9 anesthesia is two (2).

10 (6) In the emergency department:

11 (i) The maximum patient assignment of critical unstable or intensive care patients is one.

12 (ii) A registered nurse may accept a second critical or intensive care patient if that nurse
13 assesses that each patient's condition is stable.

14 (iii) The maximum patient assignment of critical stable patients is two (2).

15 (iv) The maximum patient assignment of urgent stable patients is three (3).

16 (v) The maximum patient assignment of non-urgent stable patients is four (4).

17 (7) As used in this subsection, "couplet" means one mother and one baby. In all units
18 with maternal child care patients:

19 (i) The maximum patient assignment of active labor patients is one patient.

20 (ii) The maximum patient assignment during birth is one nurse responsible for the mother
21 and, for each baby, one nurse whose sole responsibility is the baby.

22 (iii) The maximum patient assignment of immediate postpartum patients is one couplet,
23 and in the case of multiple births, one nurse for each additional baby.

24 (iv) The maximum patient assignment of postpartum patients is six (6) patients or three
25 (3) couplets.

26 (v) The maximum patient assignment of intermediate care babies is three (3) babies. The
27 nurse may accept a fourth intermediate care baby if the nurse assesses that each baby's condition
28 is stable.

29 (vi) The maximum patient assignment of well-baby patients is six (6) babies.

30 (8) In all units with pediatric patients, the maximum patient assignment of pediatric
31 patients is four (4):

32 (9) In all units with psychiatric patients, the maximum patient assignment of psychiatric
33 patients is five (5).

34 (10) In all units with medical, surgical and telemetry patients, the maximum patient

1 assignment of medical, surgical and telemetry patients is four (4).

2 (11) In all units with observational/outpatient treatment patients, the maximum patient
3 assignment of observational/outpatient treatment patients is four (4).

4 (12) In all units with transitional care patients the maximum patient assignment of
5 transitional care patients is five (5).

6 (13) In all units with rehabilitation patients, the maximum patient assignment of
7 rehabilitation patients is five (5).

8 (14) In any unit not otherwise listed, the maximum patient assignment is four (4).

9 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- LICENSING OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

- 1 This act would specify the maximum number of patients assigned to a registered nurse in
- 2 various facilities.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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