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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 5384**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTS OF NURSE STAFFING LEVELS.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill requires hospitals to:

1. submit quarterly reports to the Department of Public Health (DPH) concerning their actual daily nurse staffing levels for each patient care unit;
2. report annually to DPH on a prospective nurse staffing plan, rather than making the plan available to DPH upon request; and
3. submit an adjusted prospective nurse staffing plan if the hospital's actual nurse staffing levels for any patient care unit vary by more than 10% from its projected levels.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

#### **NURSE STAFFING LEVEL REPORTS**

Under the bill, hospitals must report to DPH their actual daily nurse staffing levels for each patient care unit, within 10 days after the beginning of each calendar quarter. Presumably, the report must cover the previous quarter. The report must include:

1. the number of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and registered nurse's aides providing direct patient care and the ratio of patients to each such nursing category;
2. the hospital's method to determine and adjust direct patient care staffing levels; and
3. how the prospective nurse staffing plan compares to the actual daily staffing levels for each unit.

## **ADJUSTMENTS TO PROSPECTIVE NURSE STAFFING PLAN**

Under the bill, if a hospital's actual nurse staffing levels for any patient care unit are more than 10% above or below its projected levels in a calendar quarter, the hospital must submit to DPH an adjusted prospective nurse staffing plan covering the rest of the year. Hospitals must submit the adjusted plan no later than 20 days into a quarter during which the variance exists. (It is unclear how a hospital can determine 20 days into a quarter whether its staffing level for the remainder of the quarter will vary by more than 10% from its projections.)

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Prospective Nurse Staffing Plans***

By law, when submitting its prospective nurse staffing plan to DPH, a hospital must certify that the plan is sufficient to provide adequate and appropriate patient health care services in the ensuing hospital licensure period. The plan must promote collaborative practice in the hospital that improves patient care and the level of services that nurses and other hospital patient care team members provide. The law specifies certain information that must be included in the plan.

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17    Nay 9    (03/21/2014)