



Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47 Local 5047
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Testimony of
Beth Henvy, RN
Danbury Nurses' Union, Unit #47 AFT Local 5047
In support of Raised S. B. 855
An Act Concerning Reports of Nurse Staffing levels
February 23, 2015

I am a registered nurse at Danbury Hospital since 2006. I am writing to support S. B. 855, an Act concerning reports of nurse staffing levels. I support Transparency in Nursing. I am very concerned about nurse and ancillary staff staffing levels. The care our patients receive is not only being compromised in a real time daily basis, but also in a long term manner as staff are overworked and frustrated by the lack of recognition for understaffing. While I understand what a national grid may say about staffing levels across the country, that for example the average Step-Down Unit Nurse has 4 patients, who is to say that this average is what it should be.

I would like someone to follow nurses in their daily work and please explain to us how we are supposed to be competent compassionate professionals while charting to cover the legalities of our profession, talk to every member of the multidisciplinary team, talk to families both in person and on the phone, and catch vital omissions and errors in care that nurses typically catch. How can I care for four patients all with hourly needs, on insulin drips, cardiac drips, jumping out of bed, patients that need to be fed, patient and families that need emotional support as they make decisions about code status or end of life care, patients that need to be cleaned and positioned to avoid skin breakdown, patients that need education to avoid costly readmissions that Medicare doesn't pay for, to name a few examples. Patients are sicker than they used to be, the step down patients of today are the ICU patients of yesteryears. The patients on medical and surgical units today would have been on step down a few years ago or perhaps even the ICU. How are we to provide high quality care to patients when patients are sicker and staffing levels are (if you are lucky) the same, and in most cases staffing levels are worse than they have been in the past.

Nurses enter the profession because they want to care for their patients, their families, and their loved ones, but at current staffing levels the profession is becoming undesirable. I love being a nurse but at these staffing levels I don't feel I can take care of my patient's the way they should be and more importantly I do not feel safe in caring for my patients.

Please vote for S. B. 855, to improve quality patient care.

Thanks,

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