

Submitter: Tanya John

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

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Adequate patient ratios equate to safe patients, meeting their healthcare goals and a sane and stable nursing workforce. The hospital benefits from fewer readmission rates and a lower rate of nursing turnover. All in all, everyone wins and the patient experiences a higher level of patient satisfaction. If anyone has been in the hospital recently or has had a family member in the hospital, you know how important it is to have a nurse who is experienced in their field, well supported on their unit and attentive to the needs of the patient and the family. If you put your call light on...how long did you wait? What was the demeanor of the nurse when they came into the room? Many factors go into the patient and family experience when dealing with a nurse.

I have been a nurse at OHSU for 22 years and just this last year my mother ended up in the hospital for over two weeks. Nursing was such an important aspect to her overall care, recovery and wellbeing. While the nurses on Mom's unit were wonderful, they were also very stressed and overworked. I found out quickly that Mom would not get out of bed and walk unless I was there to do it myself. She would also not eat unless I gave it to her. The staff were wonderful but they did not have the time to do just those two important things that were so necessary for Mom to get better. They needed help. They needed to take care of fewer patients so each patient, including my mother, could get the care they needed.