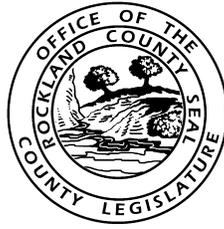


Press



Release

11 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY (845) 638-5100 Fax: (845) 638-5675 Email: legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Hon. Aney Paul
Laura Incalcaterra, Communications Director

(845) 638-5753
(845) 638-5184

Legislature Backs Safe Staffing For Quality Care Act

**Calls Upon State Assembly, Senate To Enact Law
Affecting Nurse Staffing At Hospitals, Nursing Homes**

**Research Shows Higher Ratio Of Nurses To Patients
Decreases Chances Of Death, Infections**

New City, NY (May 6, 2016) – The Rockland County Legislature voted 15-0 Tuesday to urge state Legislators to pass the Safe Staffing For Quality Care Act affecting hospitals and nursing homes.

“It is clear that this law is needed to insure appropriate nursing staff is always in place,” Legislator Aney Paul said. “Nurses are on the front line when it comes to providing quality care. If there are more nurses, there is a better outcome for patients and the facility.”

Paul has been a nurse for more than 30 years and is the main sponsor of the County Legislature’s resolution urging the state Assembly and Senate to pass the Safe Staffing law. The remaining 14 Legislators present for the meeting all co-sponsored the resolution.

Carol Massaro addressed Legislators prior to the vote. She is a registered nurse at Nyack Hospital and a member of the New York State Nurses’ Association, the largest professional association of nurses in the state with 39,000 registered nurses as members. The nurses’ specialties include medical-surgical units, intensive care, mother & baby, labor & delivery, emergency room, pediatrics, operating room, same-day surgery and home care.

“As front-line nurses, we work hard to provide the best care for our patients even under the most difficult conditions,” Massaro said. “It is true, New York hospitals and nursing homes are facing a staffing crisis. Nurses are being forced to care for more patients, sometimes more

than a dozen at one time, pushing nurses beyond their limits and putting patients at risk. We are stretched thin.”

The odds of patient death increase by 7 percent for each additional patient the nurse must care for at one time, according to research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The study also estimated there are 5 additional deaths per 1,000 patients in hospitals when the staffing ratio is 1 nurse per 8 patients vs. a ratio of 1 nurse per 4 patients.

“Simply put, when there are more nurses, there are more people to care for patients and those patients receive more personalized specific attention resulting in better outcomes for patient and facility,” Massaro said.

Studies have shown increased RN staffing lowers the risk of a number of specific patient outcomes and safety measures including hospital acquired infections pneumonia and cardiac arrest.¹ Higher nurse staffing also reduces hospital readmissions and emergency room wait times.²

As nurse turnover increases at nursing homes, the quality of resident care declines, research has shown, resulting in more frequent use of restraints, urinary catheterization and psychoactive drugs; and an increased risk of pressure ulcers and contractures – the shortening and hardening of muscles, tendons, or other tissue that often leads to deformity and the rigidity of joints.

But research also shows outcomes are much more positive when there is an improved ratio of nurse-to-patients. While costs for nurse staffing may increase, the profitability of facilities is not impacted thanks to savings due to improved patient outcomes and the avoidance of negative patient impacts.

“Nurses need to be able to focus their attention on the patients in their care,” Rockland County Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe said. “They should not be forced to juggle because staffing levels are inappropriate. You can’t expect the best possible outcome unless you provide the best possible staffing conditions. This proposed law would help remedy the problem.”

1 Nurse Staffing & In-Patient Hospital Mortality, Kane & J. Needleman

2 Quality & Cost Analysis of Nurse Staffing Discharge Preparation, M. Weiss

###

Visit us: <http://www.rocklandgov.com/>
Like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/rockleg>