

Southern Illinois Nurse Staffing Plan

SSM Health in Southern Illinois has documented a plan to guide the organization and all units in determining the proper level of nurse staffing to ensure the highest quality of patient care and safety in conformance with professional nursing standards. The plan follows evidence-based practices, which recommend that nurse staffing in an acute care hospital be determined by the complexity of patient care needs in alignment with available nursing skills.

Inpatient Acuity System Framework which guides the organization in:

- Adjusting the volume of nursing staff under real-time inpatient acuity.
- Making day-to-day shift assignment adjustments based on inpatient acuity to ensure each inpatient has the appropriate level of care.

Consideration based on the variety of day-to-day variables:

- Characteristics of each inpatient unit
- Experience and skill set of nurses assigned to the inpatient units
- Availability of support resources and opportunities for care coordination
- Discharge planning and patient education

Assignment of decision-making:

- Each inpatient unit Charge Nurse has the authority to respond to changes in workload due to inpatient census, department activity fluctuations, and acuity.
- On an ongoing basis, the Charge Nurse will identify and implement a flexible staffing process to promote clinically appropriate decisions.

Semi-annual review of the Nurse Staffing Plan by a Nursing Care Committee (NCC):

- Members of the NCC will be 55% or more nurses who work at the patient's bedside.
- One direct inpatient care nurse must be selected each year by the direct inpatient care nurses to serve as the committee's co-chair.
- The NCC will meet at least six times per year.

To report noncompliance with the nurse staffing requirements, contact the Regional Vice President of Nursing/Chief Nursing Officer at 618-899-1011 or NonCompliance-SIL@ssmhealth.com or the IDPH's Central Complaint Registry Hotline at 1-800-252-4343 or dph.ccr@illinois.gov. SSM Health will not retaliate against an employee solely because the employee expresses a concern or complaint regarding nurse staffing.

