



Caregivers Count: Safe Staffing for Nursing Homes

SUPPORT AB 2079 (Calderon) to Improve Nursing Home Care



“Without enough hours for staff, residents are receiving lower quality care. There are times when several patients have their call lights on and due to lack of staff, I must prioritize which resident to tend to first.” – Karen, Certified Nurse Assistant

California Has Invested Billions in Improving Nursing Home Care...

- For more than a decade, California has invested heavily in nursing home care under AB 1629 in an effort to improve the quality of care.
- In 2015, for a substantially smaller resident population, we invested \$4.3 billion caring for nursing home residents through Medi-Cal.
- In 2004, we spent \$2.8 billion (\$3.5 billion in 2015 dollars)
- Over the course of a decade – even as California cut other programs, nursing homes continued to receive the higher AB 1629 reimbursement rates.

...But Direct Care Staffing Levels Still Fall Short

- At 3.7 nursing hours per resident day, California on average falls far short of the federal recommendation of 4.1 nursing hours per resident day (hprd).
- California's minimum standard of 3.2 hprd hasn't been re-evaluated since 1999.

Short-Staffing Puts Residents and Workers at Risk

- Direct care requires time, and when it is rushed, a resident's quality of life and health suffer. For example, if enough time isn't spent helping someone eat and drink, then they can suffer malnutrition and dehydration. If skin care is rushed or continence care is delayed, pressure sores can form.
- Insufficient staffing puts workers at risk, too: many residents require significant assistance with movement, including lifting and turning. Others have mental or psychiatric conditions that can be a risk for a worker who is alone.

- There is a direct correlation between higher staffing and higher ratings for nursing homes and between lower staffing and more numerous and severe the deficiencies.

People of Color Are More Likely to Be at Risk in Nursing Homes

- African American-majority facilities were five times more likely to have severe deficiencies than white-majority facilities.
- Latino-majority facilities were half as likely to have above average staffing as white-majority facilities.

Our Solution: More Hours and a Strong, Transparent Standard

- At a minimum, California needs to meet the federally recommended standard of 4.1 hours of care per resident per day. Our minimum standard of 3.2 is far below this recommendation.
- But we need to do more to make this standard real: without clear staffing ratios for direct caregivers, it's far too easy for nursing homes to manipulate the numbers in order to pass inspection.

SEIU Nursing Home Caregivers Ask:

Support AB 2079 to improve nursing home care.

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