

# 2<sup>ND</sup> ADVANCED NURSING SCIENCE & PRACTICE

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## Understanding the contribution of nurse staffing laws on the quality of patient outcomes in the United States

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**Background:** Many factors contribute to patient outcomes, including nurse staffing. Nurse staffing refers to the nurse/patient ratios and credentials. In the US, states have varying nurse staffing laws and therefore it is crucial to understand how each policy might contribute to better patient outcomes and positive patient experiences.

**Objective:** The objective of this study was to assess common quality indicators (i.e., patient outcomes and satisfaction) among different US states that have enacted a nurse staffing-related laws.

**Design/Methods:** Secondary data that are publicly available on the hospital compare website were analyzed descriptively. States were randomly selected and categorized based on the enacted nurse staffing laws since 2004. Two outcomes were selected and compared in the selected states based on the Donabedian's model: healthcare-associated infection (HAIs) (technical outcomes) and patient satisfaction (interpersonal outcomes).

**Results:** Among the five states that were selected (CA, OH, IL, NY, MD), Ohio which enacted a nurse-driven staffing committee had higher patient satisfaction with nursing practice and had lower HAIs than the national average. Also, HAIs were lower in Illinois that enacted two nurse staffing laws (staffing committee and disclose of staffing levels). On the other hand, Maryland that enacted no nurse staffing-related laws had the worst patient satisfaction and higher HAIs than the national average.

**Conclusion:** Current nurse staffing laws present opportunities for more understanding and improvement in the quality of patient care. This is an important area of study given high morbidity and hospitalizations experienced in the US

### Biography

Alsawayidi Fatimah has completed her Bachelor of science in Nursing from Prince Sultan Military College for Health Science in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia in 2012. In 2015, she studied Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Administration. She works as Registered Nurse in Taif, Saudi Arabia. Currently, she is a graduate student in Public Health program at Arcadia University. She has received The Molly Haas Valentine Award at Honors Convocation at Arcadia University which is an award for a graduate student who is completing a Master's degree with distinction in the pursuit of excellence.

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