

B 002 07

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Creating the Nurse Workforce and Patient Care Task Force

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order creating the Nurse Workforce and Patient Care Task Force (“Task Force”).

1. Background and Need

Hospitals are essential to the communities they serve—as care giving institutions, employers, educators, purchasers and major contributors to Colorado’s economy. Community hospitals and their staffs are committed to providing quality patient care twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The blue “H” along the highway is a beacon of hope and help to thousands of Coloradoans in need of emergency care. Colorado patients depend upon hospitals to provide safe and effective care. To this end, nurses and health care professionals are an invaluable and essential component of ensuring patient safety and quality care.

Patients and their families will benefit from information that helps them learn more about each hospital’s commitment to patient safety, and health care providers have a responsibility to provide information that is helpful to patients and families so they understand what to expect when they receive health care services.

There is a national recognition that nursing-focused performance measures are an important indicator of the quality of patient care, and there is an ongoing discussion about which measures are of best use to consumers. It is in the interest of Colorado consumers for hospitals to disclose information regarding the quality of patient care. Collection and disclosure of nursing-focused performance measures should be feasible for hospitals to provide and meaningful for consumers.

Hospitals and nurses in Colorado are committed to working together in a collaborative fashion to compile reliable, relevant, and comparable data to ensure that Colorado consumers and nurses have the best information available to aid in making critical decisions about where to receive their care. This information will enable patients to make wise choices about nursing quality, which will improve patient safety and provide greater satisfaction to the workforce. The work of the Nurse Workforce and Patient Care

Task Force will empower consumers of healthcare and enhance nursing satisfaction, while improving patient safety and the quality of care provided in Colorado hospitals.

2. Mission and Scope

The Task Force shall develop standards and processes for the measurement and disclosure of nurses' contributions to the quality of patient care in licensed health care facilities. The Task Force shall also evaluate the environment of nursing practice in Colorado.

To those ends, the Task Force shall:

- A. Develop guiding principles that will lead to a quality measurement process for nursing.
- B. Review and study national examples of nurse-staffing reporting and measures, and determine what impact on patient outcomes has been demonstrated.
- C. Determine how best to standardize nurse-staffing data and reporting of such measures among all hospitals across Colorado.
- D. Evaluate and report the factors and variables that are involved in nurse-staffing decisions that impact the quality of patient care.
- E. Consider and recommend potential legislative solutions to healthcare workforce shortages, including, but not limited to, finding ways to increase the number of faculty available to educate nurses, providing incentives for nursing students who stay in the state after graduation and work in patient care settings, creating additional scholarships to address the nursing shortage, and retaining nurses who already work in patient-care settings.
- F. Determine what staffing information would be of value to patients when made publicly available and how best to provide this information to patients and patients' families.
- G. Evaluate what should be done to educate the public in Colorado about the nursing shortage, nurse staffing plans, and other quality and patient-safety initiatives.
- H. Make recommendations regarding how and in what form evidence-based nurse staffing information should be added to the Hospital Report Card, as established in C.R.S. § 25-3-602.

The Task Force shall periodically update both the Governor's office and the leadership of the Colorado General Assembly during the period of their deliberations. The Task Force shall report its recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2007.

3. Membership

- A. The Task Force shall be composed of fourteen (14) voting members and seven (7) *ex-officio* members, appointed as follows:
- 1) The Colorado Hospital Association shall appoint three voting members, one of which shall be designated as a co-chair of the Task Force.
 - 2) The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Nurse Alliance of Colorado shall appoint three voting members, one of which shall be designated as a co-chair of the Task Force.
 - 3) The Colorado Nurses Association shall appoint three voting members of the Task Force.
 - 4) The Colorado Organization of Nursing Leaders shall appoint three voting members of the Task Force.
 - 5) The Colorado Council on Nursing Education shall appoint two voting members of the Task Force.
 - 6) The Colorado Medical Society, the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence, and the Department of Public Health and Environment shall each appoint one *ex-officio* member of the Task Force.
 - 7) In consultation with the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Governor will appoint two members of the Colorado House of Representatives and two members of the Colorado Senate to serve as *ex-officio* members of the Task Force.
- B. *Ex-officio* members shall be non-voting members of the Task Force.
- C. The Task Force shall have two co-chairs, to be designated as provided in paragraphs (A)(1) and (2), above.
- D. The Task Force shall make every effort to reach consensus on its final recommendations. Final recommendations shall only be adopted upon a two-thirds vote of the Task Force.

4. Staffing and Resources

The Colorado Hospital Association's Center for Advancing Patient Safety (C-CAP), a section 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, shall house the Task Force. A project coordinator and meeting facilitator shall be retained to staff the Task Force. The resources required for the formation and operation of the Task Force shall be provided through gifts, grants, and donations, which shall be accepted and administered by C-CAP. Members of the Task Force shall serve without compensation.

5. Directive

The Nurse Workforce and Patient Care Task Force is hereby created.

6. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in force until December 31, 2007, at which time the Task Force shall be dissolved.

GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado, this 29th day
of March, 2007

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor