What is 4:1?

4:1 is a grassroots campaign of nurses who want mandatory minimum staffing levels to be implemented in the NHS. We are arguing for ward-appropriate mandatory minimum staffing ratios for nurses, so for every 4 patients there is 1 nurse, with more staff as required by specialist wards or units.

We have members of UNISON, the RCN and UNITE who believe that mandatory minimums are needed to safeguard quality patient care and provide us with a safe working environment.

4:1 is open to all NHS staff, health workers and supporters of the health service to join.

Contact us:
Fouronecampaign@gmail.com
www.4to1.org.uk
Facebook: 4:1 Campaigning for mandatory minimum staffing levels in NHS services

Copies of leaflets, petitions, model motions and letters are available on the 4:1 website.

What can we achieve?

There are many reasons to introduce more staff but the key points are:

- The research is conclusive. One study found that nurses on wards with more staff reduced RMNs, MTNs and RGNs were more likely to have fewer patient falls and improved patients’ satisfaction scores than those with fewer staff.
- Nursing care is more likely to be given to patients who are in pain or distress.
- There is a reduction in the number of patient’s deaths and a decrease in the number of adverse events.
- Patient and staff satisfaction scores increase.
- There is an increase in the number of staff who report that their patients are safe.

Can we afford it?

The costs of introducing mandatory minimum staffing levels are relatively low compared to the benefits. The costs include additional staffing costs, which can be offset by efficiency savings, deficit reduction, and new hospitals.

Can we afford to wait?

Every time nurses have to request a pay rise, they are putting pressure on the health service to provide the necessary staffing levels. This puts the health of patients at risk and can lead to staff shortages.

What you can do:

- Submit an incident report whenever there is understaffing in your ward or department.
- Fill out our staffing survey on surveymonkey.com/s/staffingratiosurvey
- Send in your Nursing experiences to our website or email*
- Send in your ideas for campaigning and organising.
- Form a campaign group at your hospital.
- Ask your union branch to support the campaign.
- Write to the press saying you support mandatory ratios.
- *Confidentiality will be maintained; no names or specific wards or Trusts will be revealed publicly unless permission is given by you individually.
Yes to safe staffing ratios

4:1 Campaign for Mandatory Minimum Patient to Nurse Staffing

Ideal mandatory minimum
02:48 hours per patient per shift

9:1 NHS medical ward average (Ball and Pike, RCN, 2009)
01:12 hours per patient per shift
20% higher mortality rate
22% higher job dissatisfaction
34% higher burn out rate

No to unsafe staffing ratios

14:1 Worst NHS staffing
00:48 hours per patient per shift
26% higher mortality rate
71% higher job dissatisfaction
78% higher burn out rate

(Rafferty et al, International Journal of Nursing Studies 2007)