

NEWS from the Michigan Nurses Association

VIDEO

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Video: Michigan nurses call for safe patient limits in hospitals after COVID-19 worsens conditions

New video released statewide urges Michigan legislators to pass the bipartisan Safe Patient Care Act to save lives

LANSING, MI - The Michigan Nurses Association (MNA) released [a powerful new video](#) today calling on Michigan legislators to set safe limits on nurses' patient assignments in hospitals. The message shares the story of Brenna Tresidder, a registered nurse from Commerce Township, and her account of how the lack of a safe RN staffing law is affecting patient care.

"In the worst public health crisis in 100 years, hospitals let us down. We didn't get the staff or the resources we needed to take care of our patients," Tresidder states in the video. "Nurses are left on their own, working 16 hour days, fighting an endless battle to keep our patients safe."

There is no law that limits the number of patients a hospital RN can be assigned or how many hours they can be forced to work. Routine understaffing in Michigan hospitals has been a chronic problem, but the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the situation.

[Years of scientific research](#) shows the clear link between RN staffing in a hospital and patient outcomes. Studies have shown that when the number of patients a nurse is assigned is too high, it can lead to increased falls, infections, and even deaths.

Yet the hospital industry consistently operates using staffing models that understaff and force nurses into excessive overtime despite the risks.

"Because there is no law, nurses are stretched too thin, too often, and we can't spend the time we need to with our patients," said Jamie Brown, RN, a critical care nurse and president of the Michigan Nurses Association. "Anyone who saw the images coming out

of our hospitals from the pandemic understands that our system is failing. Hospital CEOs should not be making millions while cutting staff. The hospital lobby has gone unchecked for too long. We need our legislators to step up and pass laws to protect patients.”

A bipartisan legislative package known as the [Safe Patient Care Act](#), endorsed by the Michigan Nurses Association and supported by dozens of legislators, would establish safe patient assignment limits based on national evidence-based standards; for example, a limit of 4 patients per nurse on a medical-surgical floor. The plan would also provide whistleblower protections for those who report violations, establish a law to limit forced RN overtime, and require hospital transparency around staffing.

During the pandemic, multiple nurses in Michigan were terminated after speaking out about dangerous working conditions.

"We are speaking out now because enough is enough. The number of patients we are expected to take care of keeps rising. There is no relief because our healthcare executives have not prioritized our patients before their profits," Tresidder said. "If this pandemic has taught us anything, it's the importance of nursing care. We need these laws to pass so that nurses can keep our patients safe."

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The bipartisan Safe Patient Care Act consists of Michigan House bills 4482-4484 and Senate bills 204-206 (identical in both chambers). They are awaiting a hearing in their respective committees.

Michigan Nurses Association is the largest, most effective union for registered nurses in Michigan. As the voice for all registered nurses in Michigan, MNA advocates for nurses and their patients at the Capitol, in the community, and at the bargaining table.

For more information, visit www.MISaferHospitals.org.