

**House File 2019 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 2019

BY WESSEL-KROESCHELL

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in  
2 hospitals.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 135B.36 Minimum registered  
2 nurse-to-patient ratios.

3 1. The department shall establish the following registered  
4 nurse-to-patient ratios based on the specific type of care:

5 a. For intensive and critical care, a registered  
6 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to two patients.  
7 b. For neonatal intensive care, a registered  
8 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to two patients.  
9 c. For the operating room, a registered nurse-to-patient  
10 ratio of one registered nurse to one patient.

11 d. For post-anesthesia recovery, a registered  
12 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to two patients.

13 e. For labor and delivery, a registered nurse-to-patient  
14 ratio of one registered nurse to two patients.

15 f. For antepartum care, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio  
16 of one registered nurse to four patients.

17 g. For postpartum couplet care, a registered  
18 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to four  
19 patients.

20 h. For postpartum women only care, a registered  
21 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to six patients.

22 i. For pediatrics, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio of  
23 one registered nurse to four patients.

24 j. For the emergency department, a registered  
25 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to four  
26 patients.

27 k. For intensive care unit patients in the emergency  
28 department, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio of one  
29 registered nurse to two patients.

30 l. For trauma patients in the emergency department, a  
31 registered nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to  
32 one patient.

33 m. For a step down unit, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio  
34 of one registered nurse to four patients.

35 n. For a step down unit beginning July 1, 2025, a registered

1 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to three  
2 patients.

3 *o.* For telemetry, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio of one  
4 registered nurse to five patients.

5 *p.* For telemetry beginning July 1, 2025, a registered  
6 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to four  
7 patients.

8 *q.* For a medical/surgical unit, a registered  
9 nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to six patients.

10 *r.* For a medical/surgical unit, beginning July 1, 2025, a  
11 registered nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to  
12 five patients.

13 *s.* For other specialty care, a registered nurse-to-patient  
14 ratio of one registered nurse to five patients.

15 *t.* For other specialty care beginning July 1, 2025, a  
16 registered nurse-to-patient ratio of one registered nurse to  
17 four patients.

18 *u.* For psychiatric care, a registered nurse-to-patient ratio  
19 of one registered nurse to six patients.

20 2. The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A  
21 to administer this section.

22 EXPLANATION

23 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
24 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

25 This bill establishes specific registered nurse-to-patient  
26 ratios based upon the type of care provided in a hospital.  
27 The bill requires the department of inspections, appeals, and  
28 licensing to adopt administrative rules to administer the bill.