Can Alternative Legislative Approaches Increase the Nursing Workforce?

Nurses are overworked due to insufficient staffing, resulting in turnover and risks to patient safety.

Previous research indicates a positive influence on nursing hours in California, the only US state with mandated staffing ratios.

Other US staffing laws:
- Staffing committees led by nurses
- Public reporting of staffing levels

How efficient are legislative approaches in pushing hospitals to hire more nurses?

A difference-in-difference method to compare the implications of different staffing laws across states:

- **Registered nurses**: 0.996 (p < 0.01) Increase in hours per patient day
- **Nursing assistive personnel**: 0.224 (p < 0.01) Increase in hours per patient day
- **Licensed practical nurses**: No notable changes

With California removed from the model...

-**Mandated staffing ratios**
- **Registered nurses**: 0.115 (p < 0.01) Increase in hours per patient day
- **Nursing assistive personnel**: -0.076 (p < 0.01) Reduction in hours per patient day
- **Licensed practical nurses**: No notable changes

**Future research must address how these legislative approaches can be strengthened to improve potential patient outcomes and nurse turnover rates.**

Alternative Approaches to Ensuring Adequate Nurse Staffing: The Effect of State Legislation on Hospital Nurse Staffing
Han et al. (2021) | Medical Care | DOI: 10.1097/MLR.0000000000001614