
SENATE BILL 5537

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Cleveland, Rivers, Dhingra, Mullet, and Muzzall

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the Washington state hospital
2 patient care unit staffing innovation collaborative; adding a new
3 section to chapter 43.70 RCW; creating a new section; and providing
4 an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes there is a
7 persistent health care workforce shortage in Washington state and
8 across the country and that, in order to protect patient access to
9 care amid a workforce shortage, hospitals must find new ways to
10 deliver care while easing burdens on patient care unit staff. The
11 legislature further recognizes that innovative hospital patient care
12 unit staffing and care delivery models should be thoughtfully
13 considered and disseminated across Washington state. Therefore, it is
14 the intent of the legislature to establish a collaborative for the
15 advancement of hospital patient care unit staffing and care delivery
16 innovations to provide guidance, research, and recommendations for
17 the benefit of those providing care in hospitals.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70
19 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) The Washington state hospital patient care unit staffing
2 innovation collaborative is established for the purpose of enhancing
3 the understanding of innovative hospital staffing and care delivery
4 models, such as those that integrate on-site team-based care
5 delivery, use of patient monitoring equipment and technology, and
6 virtual or remote care delivery.

7 (2) The department shall contract with the center to facilitate
8 and provide staff support to the collaborative.

9 (3) By December 1, 2023, the collaborative shall be convened. The
10 collaborative shall select two cochairs from among its members and
11 shall consist of the following members, who shall be appointed or
12 requested by the department, unless otherwise noted:

13 (a) Four representatives of small, medium, and large hospitals,
14 urban and rural hospitals, and public and private hospitals from
15 regions across the state, to be selected by the Washington state
16 hospital association;

17 (b) Four representatives of hospital patient care unit staff
18 working in small, medium, and large hospitals, urban and rural
19 hospitals, and public and private hospitals from regions across the
20 state, to be selected by the Washington state nurses association,
21 SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, and UFCW 21;

22 (c) One member representing a master of health administration
23 program in Washington state;

24 (d) One member representing a master of nursing program in
25 Washington state;

26 (e) One member representing patients who have been hospitalized
27 within the last 12 months;

28 (f) One member representing physicians practicing in hospitals
29 selected by the Washington state medical association; and

30 (g) One member who is an expert in the use of technology for
31 patient care delivery in hospitals.

32 (4) By December 1, 2023, the Washington state hospital
33 association shall survey hospitals in Washington state and report to
34 the center on Washington hospitals' existing use of innovative
35 hospital staffing and care delivery models, including but not limited
36 to integration of patient monitoring equipment, remote patient
37 monitoring, team-based care models, apprenticeship and career ladder
38 programs, and virtual or remote care delivery models and any
39 challenges with implementing the models.

1 (5) By December 1, 2024, the center shall review innovative
2 hospital staffing and care delivery models explored by national
3 organizations analyzing hospital staffing and care delivery
4 innovations.

5 (6) The collaborative shall, based on information provided under
6 subsections (4) and (5) of this section:

7 (a) Identify and analyze innovative hospital staffing and care
8 delivery models;

9 (b) Evaluate feasibility of broad-based implementation of
10 identified innovative hospital staffing and care delivery models;

11 (c) Select which innovative hospital staffing and care delivery
12 models should be disseminated across the state; and

13 (d) Explore and make recommendations on whether to create a
14 technical assistance center to support hospitals in implementing or
15 expanding innovative hospital staffing and care delivery models.

16 (7) The collaborative shall inform the relevant professional
17 associations, labor organizations, governing boards or commissions,
18 and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature
19 of any recommendations for broader dissemination of innovative
20 hospital staffing models or pilot projects identified for
21 implementation by no later than December 1, 2025, December 1, 2026,
22 and December 1, 2027.

23 (8) For purposes of this section:

24 (a) "Center" means the center for health workforce studies at the
25 University of Washington.

26 (b) "Department" means the department of health.

27 (c) "Hospital" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 70.41.020.

28 (d) "Patient care unit" has the same meaning as defined in RCW
29 70.41.410.

30 (9) This section expires December 31, 2027.

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