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Statement from the Upstate NY Healthcare Coalition Regarding Mandatory Nurse Staffing Ratios

“In response to recent letters from the State Legislature urging the New York State Department of Health (DOH) to implement mandatory worker-to-patient ratios, the Upstate New York Healthcare Coalition vehemently opposes government-mandated nurse staffing ratios.

Upstate New York hospitals are vastly different from their Downstate counterparts. Upstate New York hospitals and nursing homes are experiencing massive nursing and workforce shortages. In fact, there are currently over 2,000 registered nurse vacancies across Upstate New York in hospital inpatient settings alone. Future projections continue to demonstrate a wide discrepancy between supply and demand of nursing staff.

Additionally, Upstate hospitals act as the safety-net of their communities, serving not only as the main source of emergency and primary care services; these institutions are also the largest employers in their counties. If minimum staffing ratios are implemented, vital care services would be stripped from the community causing local economies to fall.

There continues to be a misrepresentation that all nurses support this measure when, in fact, mandated staffing ratios would eliminate the ability of experienced nurse managers to adapt nurse staffing assignments based on patient needs that can evolve quickly. There is no evidence that proves minimum nurse-to-patient ratios results in positive outcomes for patients, caregivers or clinicians. Set ratios would ultimately pull resources away from patients, already struggling to pay for healthcare costs, by adding an annual \$3 billion to our State’s budget, which is presently deficient.



While we support quality patient care for all New Yorkers, government-mandated nurse staffing ratios is not the solution for Upstate New York’s hospitals and nursing homes.”

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The Upstate New York Healthcare Coalition is a partnership between Iroquois Healthcare Alliance and Pandion Optimization Alliance. The Coalition represents over 60 hospitals and healthcare systems in approximately 45 counties and 40,000 square miles across Upstate New York. Gary J. Fitzgerald is the President & CEO of Iroquois Healthcare Alliance and Travis Heider is the President & CEO of Pandion Optimization Alliance. To learn more, please visit www.iroquois.org/upstate-healthcare-coalition.