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 nurse 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:

- Mandated staffing ratios
- Nurse-led staffing committees
- Public reporting of staffing levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Level</th>
<th>Mandated Staffing Ratios</th>
<th>Nurse-led Staffing Committees</th>
<th>Public Reporting of Staffing Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>Increase in hours per patient day</td>
<td>No notable changes</td>
<td>No notable changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistive Personnel</td>
<td>Increase in hours per patient day</td>
<td>No notable changes</td>
<td>No notable changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurses</td>
<td>No notable changes</td>
<td>-Reduction in hours per patient day</td>
<td>0.115 (p &lt; 0.01) Increase in hours per patient day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With California removed from the model...

- Staffing committees should be more empowered and open
- Public reporting ways should be revised for broader access

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