

WBUR Poll
Survey of 500 Registered Nurses in Massachusetts
Field Dates: October 5-10, 2018

Which of the following best describes your main place of work as a nurse?

A teaching hospital	38%
A community hospital	24%
Another type of hospital	4%
A nursing home	5%
A school	6%
Something else	23%
Don't Know / Refused	<1%

SKIP NEXT QUESTION IF RESPONDENT DOES NOT WORK IN A HOSPITAL.

Which of the following best describes your position? **ROTATE OPTIONS 1 AND 2.**

Nurse manager or supervisor	17%
Floor nurse	82%
Something else	1%
Don't Know / Refused	<1%

Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?

Very satisfied	57%
Somewhat satisfied	34%
Somewhat dissatisfied	7%
Very dissatisfied	1%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

There will be a measure on the November ballot dealing with nurse staffing levels. A "yes" vote would limit how many patients could be assigned to each registered nurse in Massachusetts hospitals and certain other health care facilities. A "no" vote would make no change in the current laws regarding patient-to-nurse limits. If the election for this measure were held today, would you vote yes or no? **REREAD FULL DESCRIPTION OF YES AND NO VOTE, IF REQUESTED.**

IF UNDECIDED: How are you leaning as of today?

Yes	48%
No	45%
Don't Know / Undecided (not read)	7%
Refused (not read)	<1%

How frequently are you assigned more patients than you can safely care for?

Very frequently	19%
Somewhat frequently	22%
Not very frequently	18%
Not at all frequently	33%
Don't Know / Refused	9%

Thinking over the last year, have you seen harm to a patient because of high staffing ratios at your place of work?

Yes I have	25%
No I have not	70%
Don't Know / Refused	5%

In general, what do you think would be the best way to make rules on staffing ratios for nurses working in hospitals?

Ballot questions decided by voters	15%
Laws passed by the state legislature	10%
Regulations created by state agencies	11%
Rules made at individual hospitals	41%
Some other way (not read)	9%
Combo / depends (not read)	10%
Don't Know / Refused	4%

The ballot question would set different staffing levels for different departments and types of nursing. When thinking of the different staffing ratios that would be required if the ballot question passes, how many do you think are appropriate? **PROBE IF NEEDED:** How about just based on anything you've heard or read about the proposed ratios?

All of them	24%
Most of them	17%
Some of them	23%
None of them	15%
Don't Know / Refused	20%

Thinking about **READ FIRST**, if the ballot question on staffing ratios were to pass, do you think it would have a positive impact, a negative impact, or would it make no difference?

	A positive development	A negative development	Would make no difference	Don't Know / Refused
ROTATE ORDER				
Your own place of work	39%	32%	25%	5%
Rural hospitals in Massachusetts	40%	45%	6%	9%
Major teaching hospitals	48%	35%	11%	6%
Community hospitals	46%	43%	5%	6%

If question 1 were to pass, do you think there are **READ AND ROTATE** trained nurses to meet the staffing levels that would be required at Massachusetts hospitals?

More than enough	16%
Enough	22%
Not enough	56%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

If question 1 were to pass, do you think your own income would **READ AND ROTATE**?

Increase	6%
Decrease	5%
Stay about the same	83%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

If the measure were to pass, do you think patient safety in Massachusetts hospitals would **READ AND ROTATE**?

Get better	49%
Get worse	19%
Stay about the same	20%
Mixed outcome / depends (not read)	9%
Don't Know / Refused	3%

The State's Health Policy Commission estimates the new measure, if it passes, could increase health care costs by an additional \$600 to \$900 million a year. Do you think that estimate is **READ AND ROTATE**?

Too high	38%
Too low	9%
About right	36%
Don't Know / Refused	17%

If costs do rise, how likely do you think it is that each of the following will occur?

ROTATE ORDER	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not at all likely	Don't Know / Refused
Higher insurance rates	48%	23%	11%	13%	5%
Closing hospital units or cutting staff	32%	18%	18%	25%	7%
Shifting nursing staff to more profitable units	33%	26%	15%	14%	12%
Cutting staff at community or rural hospitals	29%	17%	19%	28%	6%
Closing entire rural or community hospitals	25%	24%	21%	25%	5%

To the best of your knowledge, are you registered to vote in the state of Massachusetts?

Yes I am	98%
No I am not	2%
Don't Know / Refused	0%

ASK NEXT QUESTION IF RESPONDENT IS CURRENTLY REGISTERED TO VOTE.

What are the chances that you will vote in the November general election for Massachusetts Governor, U.S. Senate and other offices? Would you say it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?

Very likely	93%
Somewhat likely	5%
Somewhat unlikely	1%
Very unlikely	1%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

Are you a member of the Massachusetts Nurses Association, another nurses union, or are you not a union member?

Massachusetts Nurses Association	33%
Another Nurses Union	5%
Not a Union Member	59%
Member of more than one union (not read)	1%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

How many years have you been a nurse?

15 or fewer	41%
16 to 30	30%
More than 30	28%
Refused	1%

Demographics

Race

White / Caucasian	87%
All others	10%
Don't Know / Refused	3%

Age

18 to 44	39%
45 to 59	36%
60+	23%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

Gender

Male	7%
Female	93%

Region

Western / Central	25%
Southeast	14%
Outer Boston Suburbs	39%
Boston / Inner Suburbs	23%

About the Poll

These results are based on a survey of 500 working registered nurses in Massachusetts. A list of registered nurses in the state was obtained from the Massachusetts Health Professions License Verification site. Phone numbers were added via commercial telephone matching services. Live telephone interviews were conducted October 5-10, 2018 via both landline and cell phone. Results were weighted to known population parameters for age, race, gender and region of the state obtained from "[The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Registered Nurse 2014 Report](#)" as well as the database of nurses. The margin of sampling error is 4.4 percentage points with a 95 percent level of confidence. The poll was sponsored by WBUR, a National Public Radio station in the Boston area.