Objectives

- Variables affecting staffing
- Patient classification systems
- Time standards
- Staffing formulas
- Full-time staff
- Part-time staff
Variables Affecting Staffing

- Institutional and nursing service philosophy and objectives guide staffing, various patient, staff, and environmental factors also affect staffing patterns.
- The types of patients, their expectations, fluctuations in admission, length of stay, and complexity of care complicate staffing.
- Personnel policies, educational and experience level of staff, job description, hours and rotation policies also affect staffing.
Variables Affecting Staffing

- Environmental factors such as the floor plan of the unit and hospital, number of patient beds, availability of supplies and equipment, organizational structure, and availability of support services from the other departments and agencies are also considered when planning staffing patterns.
Patient Classification System

- The PCS is a method of grouping patients according to the amount and complexity of their nursing care requirements.
- It is a measurement tool used to articulate the nursing workload for a specific patient or group of patients over a specific period of time.
Patient Classification System

- Patient acuity is the measure of nursing workload that is generated for each patient. As a patient becomes sicker, the acuity level rises, meaning the patient requires more nursing care. As a patient acuity level decreases, the patient requires less nursing care.
Patient Classification System

PCS developed to determine workload requirements and staffing needs objectively. The essential elements of an effective PCS include methods to:

- Predict the amount of nursing time needed based on the patient’s acuity.
- Validate the amount of care given to each category or type of patient on each unit and shift.
- Evaluate the patterns of care delivered by each unit, shift, and staff level.
Patient Classification System

- Revalidate, on a periodic basis, the amount of care delivery by patient category.
- Relate nursing care requirements to staff resource allocated on a shift-by-shift and unit-by-unit.
- Monitor the reliability and validity of the PCS over time.
Full- Term Staff

- Full time staff may be hired to meet the average staffing needs of an institution.
- The most common adjustment for an increased workload is to transfer staff from a less busy area to the overloaded area.
- At best, float staff is composed of full time staff nurses who are oriented to many areas and like the challenge of different types of patients and settings.
Full- Term Staff

- Letting full time staff work double shifts, extra shifts and overtime is another option.
- The nurse is already oriented to the area and continuity of care is facilitated.
- Institutional cost may increase.
- The nurses may become fatigued, errors are likely to increase and overtime may interfere with the nurses’ personal lives.
Part Time Staff

- Flexible working hours can be an incentive for inactive nurses and thus help to reduce staffing shortage.
- Most nurses are women who have to combine their nursing role with many other roles, such as wife, mother and home maker.
- A part time job can broaden the women’s horizons.
- It is not uncommon for nurses to want to work part time while continuing their education.
Part Time Staff

- When part time nurses’ other responsibilities decreases they are likely candidate for full time work.
- The part time nurses may not receive benefits such as paid sick or vacation days, and is not likely to be considered for promotion.
- External agencies providing temporary help are available in some areas.
- The agency has a registry of available nurses who are allowed to have highly flexible and self determined schedules.
Time Standards

- When determining time standards for nursing care, we should consider both direct and indirect care.
- Direct care involves the patient and includes feeding, bathing, treating, and giving medication.
- Indirect care includes all activities that are not direct care, such as preparation for and cleaning up after medication administration and treatment, reporting, communications, documentation of care, and breaks.
Time Standards

- Once the number and kind of care activities required by each patient are identified and the length of time required to carry out the activities is calculated, one can add up the time required by all patients on a unit and divide by the number of productive work hours on a shift to determine the number of personnel needed.
Time Standards

- Public health nurses deal with health needs of aggregate groups and individuals in the community, whereas visiting nurses provide care to clients in their own homes.
- For visiting nurse services staffing is determined by the number of clients who need to be seen in a day.
- A standard of 45 minutes per visit for four to six clients depending on the amount of driving has been used.
Staffing Formulas

- When determining the number of staff to hire, one must consider:
  - Hours for which coverage is required
  - Vacations
  - Holidays
  - Absenteeism
  - Staff development time
Staffing Formulas

- If nurses work 5 days per week and coverage is needed for 7 days, it takes 1.4 nurses to have one nurse on duty for 7 days and 2.8 nurses to have two nurses on duty for 7 days.

- Number needed x days of week ÷ number of days each work = number of people required.

- E.g 5 x 7 ÷ 5 = 7.0
Staffing Formulas (Vacation Coverage)

- To calculate the vacation coverage, multiply the number of vacation days per year by the number of people at the given skill level.
- Then divide the total number of vacation days per year per person to determine the number the number of people needed for vacation coverage.
Staffing Formulas (Vacation Coverage)

- Number of vacation days per year \times \text{Number of full time people} = \text{Total vacation days by skill level}
- \text{Total vacation days by skill level} \div \text{Total days worked per person per year} = \text{Number of full time people needed for vacation coverage}
- \text{E.g. } 22 \times 10 = 220
- \text{220} \div 320 = 0.6875
Staffing Formulas (Holiday Coverage)

- To determine holiday coverage, multiply the total number of personnel required by the number of holiday days to be staffed.
- Then divide the total holiday relief days by the total days worked per year per person to obtain the number of personnel required per skill level for holiday coverage per year.
Staffing Formulas (Holiday Coverage)

- Number of personnel $\times$ Number of holidays = Number of holiday relief days needing coverage
- Number of holiday relief days $\div$ Number of days worked per year per person = Number of personnel required for holiday coverage per year.
- E.g. $10 \times 20 = 200$
- $200 \div 320 = 0.625$