



**Date:** May 29, 2018

**TO:** 2018 Senate and Assembly Budget Conferees  
Senate pro Tem Toni Atkins  
Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon  
Senate Republican Leader Pat Bates  
Assembly Republican Leader Brian Dahle

**From:** Matt Robinson, California Association of Health Facilities

**Budget Issue:** 115<sup>th</sup> Community College – Fully On-line campus

**Recommendation:** Support the Governor's proposal to provide additional opportunities for individuals to receive a community college education and training through an on-line option

**Background:** California's skilled nursing facilities rely heavily on health care professionals that have been educated and trained through the community colleges to provide health care services to patients in their facilities. These health care professionals include registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, occupational therapy assistants, and certified nursing assistants to name just a few.

It is increasingly harder for skilled nursing facilities to recruit and retain qualified individuals who are willing to care for sick and vulnerable long term care patients. In addition, with the passage of SB 97 (Chapter 52, 2017), SNFs' mandated minimum nursing hours per patient day (NHPPD) have increased from 3.2 NHPPD to 3.5 NHPPD including a new certified nursing assistant (CNA) staffing minimum of 2.4 NHPPD.

CNAs provide valuable direct care services to patients in SNFs. They are an essential part of the nursing home staff. Unfortunately, due to low reimbursement rates from Medi-Cal and thus low wages for these direct care staff, it is a challenge to recruit and retain CNAs. Even before the new staffing requirements, SNFs were already struggling to find CNAs to fill open positions in their buildings.

It is estimated that the new staffing mandate will require California SNFs to hire at least 1,700 new CNAs to fill facility openings by July 1, 2018. Of the 1,039 SNFs in the state, 463 SNFs (42 percent) do not currently meet the 2.4 CNA minimum staffing requirement. Some SNFs are eligible to request and receive workforce shortage waivers, however, these waivers do not protect SNFs against liability exposure or provide protections and supports to facilities in recruiting and retaining the additional required CNAs.

One very important solution to increase training opportunities for CNAs and other health care professionals is to provide them with the opportunity to obtain their classroom hours through on-line learning. Many nursing facilities already have partnerships with a community college working collaboratively to provide the clinical training for those CNAs attending a community college. There could easily be an expansion of these training opportunities with the ability for CNAs to take advantage of an on-line option for their classroom hours.

The California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF) strongly supports the Governor's initiative to create the 115<sup>th</sup> Community College to provide on-line options for learning for health care professionals.

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