

HOW TO READ AND UNDERSTAND STAFFING PLANS

Many healthcare professionals care for you as part of a team when you are hospitalized. A nurse cares for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week and partners with many other healthcare professionals – including your doctor – to meet your varying care needs. On staffing plans, "Direct Caregivers" may include nursing aides, assistants and respiratory therapists, among others. Team members listed in the "Additional Team Member" section, such as clinical pharmacists, nutritionists, IV Therapy Teams and Staff Educators also help coordinate and deliver your care.

There are many variables to consider in terms of what constitutes safe, efficient staffing for a particular hospital unit. Every patient care unit is different based upon the types of patients cared for on that unit, and the way in which care is organized and delivered there. Staffing for individual units can vary based on the education and experience level of the staff, support from nurse educators and nurse managers on a given unit, as well as on the unique characteristics and mission of the hospital. It is also important to look at hospitals' patient outcomes such as fall rates, pressure ulcer rates and Hospital Compare measures – including heart attack care, heart failure care, pneumonia care and surgical care – in the Performance Measures section of *PatientCareLink*.

Rev. 8-15-11