


Staffing Effects on Healthcare Workers in NYC

OHIP 2015



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Background: 1199 SEIU UHE

- “1199” or “the union”
- Began in NYC
- Largest local union
 - Represents 200,000 healthcare workers in New York

1199 SEIU UHE Mission:
Improve and expand quality patient care, protect and improve the lives of its members, and to work with workers towards common goals.

Background: Healthcare Workers




(Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011)

- Days Away → Staffing
- Hospital Understaffing:
 - ↓ quality of care and ↑ risk of error
 - ↑ worker fatigue and occupational stress

Objectives of Project

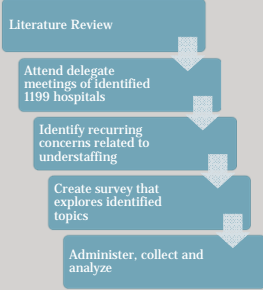
The Issue:




Goals:

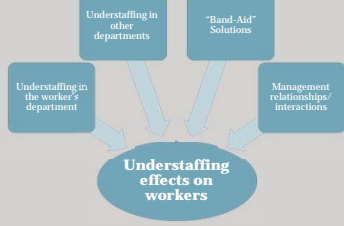
- Identify impact of understaffing related to health and safety
- Generate meaningful material to help the union fight understaffing

Methods






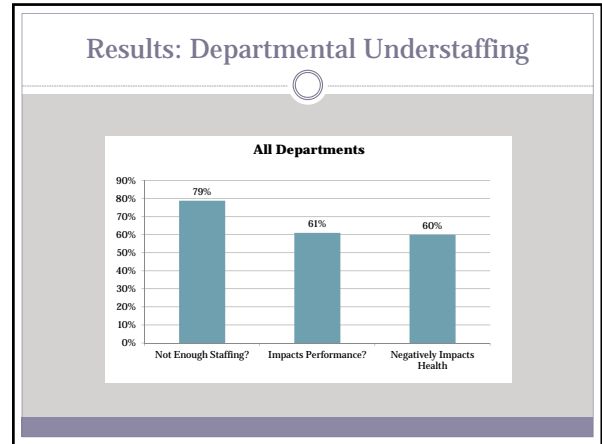
What we learned...



- “Understaffing effects” is a broad topic that extends past the worker’s assigned tasks
- Other side-effects to understaffing that affect workers are largely not documented

Results: Overview

- 8 hospitals in:
 - Queens
 - Brooklyn
 - Manhattan
- Attended:
 - Delegate meetings
 - Chapter meetings
 - Night shift meetings
 - Individual meetings
- 89 surveys
- Give Back Products:
 - Fact sheet
 - Environmental survey checklist

Results: Cross Departmental Effects

Departments that most exert cross departmental effects	% surveyed
Nursing	25%
Housekeeping/Environmental Serv.	21%
Transportation	15%
ER	15%
Materials Management	9%

Results: "Band-Aid" Solutions

Management Solutions		Effects on workers	
"Solution" Used	% surveyed	Staffing effect	% surveyed
Assigned combination of 2+ jobs	46.5%	Creates higher error risk	46.5%
Mandated Overtime	32.6%	Affects mental and emotional well being	39.5%
Employees tasked with coordinating workload	27.9%	Affects task completion	39.5%
Unusually high performance days set as standards	20.9%	Affects time required to complete work	37.2%
		Creates additional tasks	37.2%
		Work not completed properly by other departments --> physical danger	34.9%

Results: Management Interactions

Perceptions of Management: Across All Departments

"Makes Worker Feel Stress Around Co-Workers?"

54% of workers agreed



"Has Preferential Treatment for Specific Workers?"

57% of workers agreed





"Puts Pressure to do Heavy Workload?"


51% of workers agreed



Give Back Products

Fact Sheet	Hospital Environmental Checklist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data from surveys ○ Important statistics ○ Information to advocate for more staffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assists walkthrough inspections ○ Can be used by safety committee members ○ Covers all areas of hospital and common hazards 


Challenges



- Additional task for workers
- Covering 8 hospitals
 - Concurrent Delegate meetings
- Meeting with delegates outside of delegate meetings
- Travel time & Maintaining flexibility

Successes

- Survey identified another area of concern to workers: Preferential treatment
- Created a catalogued database of workers willing to do interviews/focus groups
- Extensive database allows studying understaffing via numerous variables
- Identified departments that most affect others



Recommendations



Short Term

- Follow up with workers interested in testimonials and focus groups
- Develop accountability system for preferential treatment
- Documentation system for incidents of cross departmental understaffing effects
- Complete walk through checklist departmentally
- Develop a strategy to respond to "band-aid" solutions that negatively impact workers

Long Term

- Pressure for training for management to address preferential treatment
- Use information from surveys as advocacy tool for more staffing
- **Develop strategies to increase staffing**

Personal Reflections

Thomas	Cristina
<p>Union provides workplace family. People have each other's "back". Earning worker trust is important. Working this closely with a strong union has motivated me to do more union service in future.</p> 	<p>I learned that the most valuable information doesn't come from you asking questions. I'll most remember the people and the positive working environments delegates have set up for themselves.</p> 

Acknowledgements

We'd like to extend a thank you to everyone who helped make this summer possible!

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- **1199 SEIU UHE Delegates**
- **1199 SEIU UHE Members**
- **AOEC / OHIP**
- **NIOSH**
- **And of course, Matt London!**

Thank You!

QUESTIONS?