



## Mental Health Nurse Academics UK

Mental Health Nursing Academics UK (MHNAUK) echo the concerns of the Royal College of Nursing, Sir Francis and others included in the Safe Staff Alliance about the recent decision to suspend the safe staffing programme at the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), including any further meetings of the advisory committee. The development of these staffing guidelines by NICE was a clear recommendation of the Francis Report.

Our interests focus primarily on the two mental health topics (Mental health in-patient settings, and Mental health in the community) which now become part of the work of the Mental Health Task Force. We have serious concerns that this task force will have the capacity, resources or expertise required to undertake a comprehensive review of the evidence base before it is scheduled to report. Given that the work on nursing in adult inpatient settings (non-mental health) has been completed and will be adhered to, we believe that this is further evidence of a lack of parity of esteem for mental health care.

As an organisation which represents Mental Health Nursing academics working across all Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom we are acutely aware of the need for these guidelines to help maintain safe practices. There is clear evidence which suggests appropriate levels of qualified nursing staff has a direct relationship with patient safety, quality of care, and the education of the next generation of students. Mental Health Nurses working in acute inpatient settings particularly are increasingly working longer shifts (12 hours) and with less qualified staff despite evidence which demonstrates negative patient and safety outcomes.

We would welcome a statement from the Chief Nursing Officer or the Mental Health Task Force which offers reassurances to our concerns.

Mental Health Nursing Academics UK, a collaboration of Mental Health Nursing Academics from Higher Education Institutions across the UK.