

Dear:

I am writing to you today to express concerns about the working conditions for Nurses at Health Sciences Centre. The workload, staffing levels and resource limitations have made providing safe, high-quality patient care impossible.

My nursing colleagues and I have repeatedly raised concerns with the management and have made every effort to propose solutions. Unfortunately, the employer is ignoring us and refusing to take needed action. This has led to unacceptable working conditions that are negatively impacting the ability of nurses to provide safe, quality patient care. As a result, I feel it is important for you as the Member of Legislative Assembly for the Health Sciences Centre area to be aware of the situation and to take immediate action to remedy the situation.

As an MLA, I know that you feel passionate concerns for your constituents. Nurses have been silent too long about how the changes to our centre are affecting our patients - YOUR constituent. The complexity and acuity of patients at Health Sciences Centre combined with the amount of mandatory overtime and limiting of resources has led to a danger to the public. With your role within the government, it is imperative that you act at this time to remedy this situation. It is not an exaggeration to say lives are in danger.

My own personal experience in the units of Health Sciences Centre: I see nurses being mandated constantly; multiple nurses every single shift - mandated for overtime or double shifts. Nurses cannot be expected to provide safe, quality care for numerous complex, high acuity patients when working double shifts and being mandated constantly. It's certainly not what I want for my colleagues, and it's certainly not what I want for our patients or their families. They deserve better. And it's in our code of ethics as a professional group to give them better. Due to an accommodation, I have thankfully escaped being mandated, but I see it day in and day out.

The only negotiated modality we have to express our concerns are workplace situation reports and nurses are consistently asked by management not to fill out these forms.

MNU is aware of the situation and is taking steps to hold the employer accountable, however it is also relevant to you as the governing MLA for the area. This situation has deteriorated to a point where professional standards are increasingly difficult to meet. The employer routinely threatens nurses to report them to the regulatory body for expressing concerns about workload and mandated overtime. This is bullying, intimidation and it must stop today.

One of the key roles of the professional nurse is advocacy for our patients. We all must advocate for our patients and the employer is using intimidation tactics to silence us from this advocacy function. You must ensure the employer takes needed action to remedy this situation so the nurses of Health Sciences Centre can provide the standards of patient care that we are committed to delivering.

Please reply at your earliest convenience and indicate what you are prepared to do to protect your constituents in terms of these employment standards.

Sincerely,