



STAFFING INSUFFICIENT

Shocker! State audit finds San Diego County nurses are understaffed

It took a state audit to show what is obvious to every Public Health Nurse: the County's systematic understaffing is impacting nurses and patients. A report released by the California State Auditor on July 26 determined that the County of San Diego could not support its claim that it has enough Public Health Nurses to keep the public safe. SEIU Local 221 member leaders approached State Sen. Ben Hueso about taking the issue to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee about a year ago because of staffing concerns.

"The County's response to this audit is that it is still meeting 'numerous measures,' but this is something it is only able to do because Public Health Nurses are working overtime and not taking breaks," said Vanessa Garcia, California Children's Services Senior Public Health Nurse. "Rehiring retirees and stretching nurses to do more isn't sustainable and leads to work injuries and burnout."



July 2018



San Diego County's Health and Human Services Agency

It Cannot Demonstrate That It Employs the Appropriate Number of Public Health Nurses to Efficiently Serve Its Residents

Report 2017-124

FINDINGS ABOUT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY



Children Services caseloads were more than double the state target in 2015 and nearly double the state guideline the following two years.

More than 80 percent of Public Health Nurses in Children's Services said their caseloads were too high. Those that did report having enough time might have less complex cases requiring less work. The health agency doesn't report this variable.

81 percent

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Vanessa Garcia
California Children's Services
Senior Public Health Nurse

- In 2017 the Foster Care Public Health Nurse covering cases in the East region **averaged 295 cases**. This was higher than the State's benchmark of 200 cases per Foster Care PHN.
- Time to fill PHN vacancies **exceeded four months at least once** from 2014-17 in five of six San Diego regions

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Contact SEIU Local 221 Worksite Organizer Maggie Ta at maggie.ta@seiu221.org or call (858)560-0151 ext. 228. Go to www.seiu221.org for more information about joining or to fill out a membership card.



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