



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

December 8, 2015

**AL TSA: NH #2015-035**  
**24-HOUR RN REQUIREMENT IN NURSING HOMES**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

In June of 2015, Substitute House Bill 1274 passed and was signed into law. A portion of this bill outlined new expectations regarding RN coverage in nursing homes (NHs). The section of this bill outlining those expectations became effective July 1, 2015. The RN coverage requirements currently in effect are:

- All large, nonessential nursing homes will have 24-hour RN coverage, 7 days a week.
- All essential NHs and small, nonessential NHs are required to have 16 hours of RN coverage in a 24-hour period.

Effective immediately, Residential Care Services (RCS) staff will review all NH RN staffing levels to determine if the new requirement is met. Until further notice, if a home is found to be out of compliance with the new requirements, RCS surveyors/complaint investigators will do one of the following:

- **If no harm to resident(s) is found**, the surveyor/complaint investigator will remind the facility of the RN coverage expectation and direct the facility to the regulation outlining this expectation ([RCW 74.42.360](#)).
- **If harm to one or more resident(s) is found**, the RCS surveyor/complaint investigator will cite the facility for lack of required RN coverage under 74.42.360(3) RCW.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the health and safety of nursing home residents. If you have any questions, please contact your local RCS Field Manager.

Sincerely,

Candace Goehring, Director  
Residential Care Services

*"Transforming Lives"*