



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

June 6, 2016

**AL TSA: NH #2016-015**  
**24-HOUR RN REQUIREMENT IN NURSING HOMES (NH) UPDATE**

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.

In December 2015, Residential Care Services (RCS) sent a letter to you indicating RCS staff would begin reviewing nursing home staffing levels to determine if a facility was in compliance with the new requirement. The letter also indicated, until further notice, citations would only be issued if harm was found to one or more residents.

This letter is to inform you that effective July 1, 2016, RCS staff will cite any facilities found out of compliance with RN coverage, unless the facility has been granted an exception by the department. Harm level citations will no longer be used as the sole basis for RN staffing citations.

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

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