



Serita Spadoni  
154 Mansion House Drive  
West Chester, PA 19382

August 26, 2021

Lori Gutierrez  
Deputy Director, Office of Policy  
625 Forster Street, Room 814  
Health and Welfare Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Deputy Director Gutierrez:

I serve on the Board of Barclay Friends in West Chester, PA. We are a community-based nonprofit serving older adults in our community in the Quaker tradition. I learned recently about the PA Department of Health's proposed regulations to increase the required staffing ratios for skilled nursing facilities from 2.7 to 4.1. This new ratio will not affect Barclay Friends directly, because we already staff at this higher level. However, other facilities will need to increase their staffing to meet this new ratio, adding further competition for an already scarce pool of qualified labor.

One of the major strategic issues we have been addressing as a leadership body of the organization is the profound lack of eligible employees. Barclay Friends has had great difficulty in recruiting RNs, LPNs and CNAs to fill our current vacancies, despite paying competitive wages and benefits, and offering an inviting work environment. Our hiring managers receive few qualified responses to online job listings; few candidates who actually show up for scheduled interviews; and candidates of poor qualifications who do arrive for interviews. This has been ongoing for a number of years, and the pandemic has just intensified the situation.

Your department must be aware that the shortage of qualified healthcare workers is a national shortage, affecting not just Pennsylvania, but the entire US. To put these regulations in place without addressing the workforce shortage is highly likely to cause our older adults in Pennsylvania to receive less care in nursing homes and in home care despite the appearance and the desire of the regulation to increase the quality of care.

At Barclay Friends, we would like to see you take a more comprehensive approach that includes increased training programs for new nurses and CNAs, immigration reform to increase the pool of qualified foreign-born workers, and increases to the Medicaid reimbursement rate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Serita Spadoni". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Serita Spadoni  
Board Member, Barclay Friends

cc: State Senator Carolyn Comitta, State Representative Christina Sappey