

# Safe Patient Care Act

## INFORMATION SHEET

### How to work out the unique ratio for a mixed ward

**Step 1a** ➤ Determine the number of staff (excluding any nurse or midwife in charge) for each portion by applying the relevant ratio for that portion.

*In this example it is assumed all 22 beds are likely to be utilised based on the last 12 months experience, and any projections over the 6-month period.*

Ratio type	Applicable ratios			beds	Relevant ratio applied		
	AM	PM	ND		AM	PM	ND
Level 4 Acute Ward	6	7	10	6	1.00	0.86	0.60
Aged Care	7	8	15	10	1.43	1.25	0.67
Palliative Care	4	5	8	3	0.75	0.60	0.38
GEM	5	6	10	3	0.60	0.50	0.30
				<b>22</b>			

the number of beds used to calculate the ratio is the number declared by management, which must reflect actual and intended use over the 6-month period

no rounding occurs yet in these scenarios

If all portions of the ward have the new rounding method applying - no rounding occurs at this point, you round up at the last stage.

If no portions of the ward have the new rounding method applying - no rounding occurs at this point, and consideration of rounding down occurs at the last stage.

**Step 1b** ➤ If some portions have the new rounding method applying, and some the old rounding method, then rounding down may be considered at this point, subject to the same considerations as before, e.g. patient acuity, allocation of 50% rule EFT, not leaving that portion of the ward with less than one full staff member etc. If for example, 50% rule EFT was allocated to the ward, you leave the number for each portion at its decimal amount - you neither round up, nor down.

rounding may occur if varied application of 50 per cent rule

Ratio type	Applicable ratios			beds	Consider rounding down		
	AM	PM	ND		AM	PM	ND
Level 4 Acute Ward	6	7	10	6	1.00	0.86	0.60
Aged Care	7	8	15	10	1.43	1.25	0.67
Palliative Care	4	5	8	3	0.75	0.60	0.38
GEM	5	6	10	3	0.60	0.50	0.30
<b>Total</b>				<b>22</b>			

**Note 1**  
If old rounding method applies to some portions but not all - leave at fractional amount if rounding down would lead to 0 for that portion.

**Note 2**  
Subject to note 1 - if old rounding method applies to some portions but not all - rounding down can occur for that portion - otherwise leave at fractional amount.

**Note 3**  
If new rounding method applies do not round down - leave at fractional amount.

**Step 2** ➤ Add together the number of nurses generated by the application of the ratios.

Ratio type	Applicable ratios			beds	Total nurses		
	AM	PM	ND		AM	PM	ND
Level 4 Acute Ward	6	7	10	6	1.00	0.86	0.60
Aged Care	7	8	15	10	1.43	1.25	0.67
Palliative Care	4	5	8	3	0.75	0.60	0.38
GEM	5	6	10	3	0.60	0.50	0.30
<b>Total</b>				<b>22</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.94</b>

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**Step 3** ➤ Divide the number of nurses into the number of beds (this creates the unique ratio for that shift).

	beds	AM	PM	ND
number of nurses	22	3.78	3.21	1.94
unique ratio	22	<b>5.82</b>	<b>6.86</b>	<b>11.33</b>

time to calculate the unique ratio

**Step 4** ➤ Apply the unique ratio to the number of occupied beds.

beds	AM	PM	ND
22	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.94</b>
21	<b>3.61</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>1.85</b>
20	<b>3.44</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>1.77</b>
19	<b>3.26</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>1.68</b>
18	<b>3.09</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>1.59</b>

round up where 50 per cent has been removed

**Step 5** ➤ Round up for that shift if any portion is subject to the new rounding method or the ward had 50% rule EFT allocated on that shift.

beds	Unique ratio			Apply rounding		
	AM	PM	ND	AM	PM	ND
	<b>5.82</b>	<b>6.86</b>	<b>11.33</b>	<b>In charge +</b>	<b>In charge +</b>	
22	3.78	3.21	1.94	4	3	2
21	3.61	3.06	1.85	4	3	2
20	3.44	2.92	1.77	3	3	2
19	3.26	2.77	1.68	3	3	2
18	3.09	2.62	1.59	3	3	2

**Note 1**

If the above calculation result in less staff than was historically the case, it is assumed that there were clinical reasons for that decision and reductions should not occur.

**Note 2**

Check for 50% rule EFT.