

# Scotland's safe staffing legislation

**The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 comes into force from 1 April 2024.**

**The Act is the first legislation in the UK to set out requirements for safe staffing across both health and care services and most clinical professions.**

**RCN members and staff worked to influence and shape the legislation for the benefit of patients, care homes residents and members.**



**SAFE STAFFING  
SAVES LIVES**

# What does the Act do?

The Act places a statutory duty on health and care providers to ensure that, at all times, the appropriate number of qualified and competent individuals are working to meet the needs of patients, residents or service users.



The legislation also makes it clear that the wellbeing of staff must be accounted for when calculating the number of staff needed to provide safe and high-quality services.

The duties within the Act sit firmly with key parties including the Scottish government, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, health boards and social care providers. It does not place any duties on individual frontline members of staff.

However, the Act alone will not deliver safe staffing levels. Investment in the NHS, in social care and in the nursing profession is essential if Scotland is to have the right number of staff available to deliver care and for health boards and local authorities to meet their duties under the Act.

**Find out more about what the Act means for you and how the RCN is influencing on your behalf.**

**#SafeStaffingSavesLives**

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