

This is a Healthforce Center at UCSF rapid response resource and is a living document last updated March 21, 2020.
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The numbers below reflect best available literature, when possible, and crowd sourced information. Baseline, non-surge, ratios for acute care settings are difficult to interpret due to variations in study settings (e.g., trainees present or absent, level of support services, etc). Surge ratios for acute care settings are informed by literature and expert input and or benchmarking, if available; they do not consider existing requirements about staffing ratios. This list is limited to an abbreviated list of health workers supporting direct patient care and is not intended to be comprehensive of all team members or all settings.

Team member	Baseline ratio (min-max)	Surge ratio (min-max)	Notes
Physician (intensivist)	1:7 – 1:10	1:8 – 1:10	European and US data; Ratios differ based on levels of services and presence of trainees (residents and fellows) and advanced practice providers.
Physician (hospitalist)	1:10 – 1:15	1:12 – 1:18	Assumes no ICU care responsibilities, which would decrease ratios and does not account for teams, which could include NP/PA/trainees. Wide ranges based on patient complexity and underlying health status as well as presence of team members to help with responsibilities and tasks.
Advanced Practice Providers (NP, PA) in intensive care settings	1:5 – 1:7	1:7	See above notation
Advanced Practice Providers (NP, PA) in acute care settings	1:8 – 1:10	1:10	Assumes no ICU care responsibilities, which would decrease ratios significantly.
Nurse, licensed (ICU)	1:1	1:3	
Nurse, licensed (acute care)	1:6 – 1:8	1:6 – 1:10	Up to 50% can be licensed vocational nurses
Respiratory therapist	1:4 – 1:6	1:5 – 1:6	For settings using mechanical ventilation, depending on need to perform tasks such as insertion of arterial lines
Pharmacist (acute care)	1:8 – 1:30	1:15 – 1:30	Ratios differ based on levels of services and presence of trainees (residents)
Certified nursing assistant	1:7 – 1:17	1:10 – 1:15	If licensed nurse ratio is 1:6, then 1:12 CNA ratio. Licensed ratio of 1:8 might need 1:8-1:10 CNA ratio.

Healthforce
Center at UCSF

The mission of the Healthforce Center is to equip health care organizations with the workforce knowledge and leadership skills to effect positive change.

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