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Bargaining Team

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What is Happening in Bargaining So Far?

This is to update you on the progress of the contract negotiations to date. The bargaining team and administration have met twice so far. The meetings have been a little slow but some good discussion and important topics have already been brought to the table. Our last session was very well attended by nurses that were on their break and lunches. It is always encouraging to the bargaining team when the membership comes to hear what is said. If you haven't been able to get down to the sessions, please make an attempt to do so. The team will be meeting Wednesday, April 27, at 1730 to continue working on proposals. Our next scheduled meeting with the administration is

Friday, April 29. All proposals have to be on the table by the end of the meeting on May 3.

Your bargaining team has identified three things in the early sessions that you need to be made aware of.

Your Bargaining Team



Left to right back row: Lynn Schonbrod, RN, Marguerite Rodriguez, RN, Stephanie Garcia, RN, Jill Dealy, RN and Deborah Armstrong, RN.

Front row: Corinne Howard, RN, Kathy Fournier, RN, Mike Howell, RN and Jacqueline Dillon, RN.

Not pictured: Juliette Vallejo, RN and Naomi Sterf, RN.

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Two Tier Benefit systems

The bargaining team has proposed that all nurses accrue benefits on the tier one schedule and that the employer eliminate the second tier. We explained the unfairness in a system that doesn't award the same benefits for the same job being done. The employer responded with a proposal that does not eliminate any of the tiers but will hide all language that pertains to the first tier in the back of the contract, making it harder to find. The team is not in favor of this proposal and has expressed to the employer that we want the language to stay the same.

Seniority

The bargaining team proposed language that is intended to strengthen the importance of seniority when awarding positions and creating schedule patterns in the hospital. It closes some loopholes where senior and qualified nurses are inappropriately placed. The employer has some questions but has not made a counter offer yet. This is a topic that will be a focus this bargaining cycle. There will be further updates to come on this topic.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

The employer brought a proposal to lower the PTO bank for all nurses to 650 hours down from the current 960 hours. This would be an immediate drop and all nurses that have more than the 650 hours

would be required to cash out any PTO to the 650 threshold. Further, any PTO earned after 650 hours would not be awarded until the nurse took PTO. This is a MAJOR takeaway by the administration. PTO banks are used by the membership to cover long-term illness for family members or the employees themselves. The last contract we took a cut in PTO and the team doesn't feel that this would be in the best interest of the nurses. When combined with the difficulty in getting PTO, the employer should not try to limit the ability to accrue that benefit as well and take it away when the limit is reached.

These three items are a sampling of the discussion to date with the biggest highlights for you. I encourage all the nurses to take the time and attend some of the sessions. You are always welcome in the room. I would remind you that while we are in session with the employer, only members of the team can address the administration, but the members can pass notes to the team and are encouraged to do so. While in caucus, you are encouraged to give input and collaborate with the team. Nurses are welcome to bring their lunch and eat while we are in session or caucus. Please refer to the conference room schedule for what rooms we will be meeting in.

Yours in solidarity,

Mike Howell, RN
Bargaining Chair

