Bargaining Has Started

We had our first bargaining session Thursday, November 5! We made all of the following opening proposals that are discussed in this update. The employer made no opening proposals but hinted they would have some for us at the next session on November 24. Compensation is going to be our main issue.

Our Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)/Providence Hood River (HRM) team consists of: Elese Sewell; Margo Burtchaell; Tina Jorgensen; Pam Howard; Brenda Ralph; Rob Nosse, ONA staff.

The Providence Hood River team consists of: Jami McCaslin, human resources; Becky Kopecky, director of nursing; Jeanie Viera, associate administrator; and Dennis Westlind Providence’s Labor Relations attorney.

Opening Proposal Summary

Article 1 Definitions

Casual Call Nurse Shift Availability. We think it needs to be explicit that causal call nurses must offer to work four days a month including one shift which must be a weekend or in the case of surgical services, a weekend call shift as those are the only shifts that constitute an actual weekend shift.

Charge and/or Lead Nurse. We feel that at various times the employer has had nurses working in roles that feel like charge nurse – a role that exists at other hospitals. We think it is time to call the question and define this role in the contract.

Article 12 Seniority

We proposed language that we believe clarifies the current practice of honoring all your time working for the Hospital in the Columbia Gorge Service Area regardless of whether you started working for the Hospital as a registered nurse or in another role such as a certified nursing assistant or phlebotomist before promoted into a registered nursing role. Again, we do not think this is a change but rather a clarification.

Article 21 Duration of Agreement

We proposed a 2-year agreement to keep us lined up with the expected expiration of the Providence St Vincent’s contract.

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Appendix A Wages and Differentials

We proposed a new salary scale – the salary scale used at Providence St Vincent’s which has 22 steps and a step 25 and a step 30. We opened with wage increases to that scale of 5 percent each year in a 2-year agreement. Nurses would move the step on the new scale that most closely mirrors their current length of service. By example, nurses earning a rate at after two years would be placed on the new scale at step three. Nurses with 15 years of service will be placed on the new step 15, nurses at step 27 unless that nurse has 30 years of service would be placed at step 25.

We proposed increasing the evening shift differential to $3 an hour and the night shift differential to $6 an hour.

We proposed increasing the weekend differential to $1.25 an hour.

We proposed increasing the round trip bridge contribution to $2 to reflect current pricing.

We proposed increasing the open shift differential to $18 an hour just like what is paid at Providence Portland and at Providence St Vincent’s.

We also proposed increasing the float differential to $5 an hour and proposed a charge or lead nurse differential of $5 an hour as well.

Appendix E Certifications

We proposed adding the correct certification for home health and hospice nurses and we proposed an increase in the certification differential of $2.25 an hour just like what is paid at Providence Portland.

Appendix F Call In and On-Call Pay

We proposed increasing call pay to the state’s minimum wage above the current $5 an hour, and we proposed increasing on-call low census pay by $9.25 an hour plus an additional $5 an hour for a total of $14.25 above the current $11 an hour.

New Appendix for a Clinical Ladder

Lastly, we made a proposal to create a new clinical ladder program for HRM nurses that we believe would increase nurse professionalism, enhance patient care and offer a way to gain additional compensation. The rates we proposed were for three different levels based on difficulty and time commitment of an additional $2.50 an hour, $3.50 an hour and $5 an hour. The details of this proposal are posted on the ONA/HRM webpage in the October 28 newsletter. (go to www.OregonRN.org and select Prov Hood River under Find Your Bargaining Unit.)

Articles that we did not propose changes for and we hope that the employer will not propose changes for either.

Article 6 Annual Leave (Vacation) and Article 7 Sick Leave

We did not propose any changes to these important benefits. We are hopeful that the employer will not propose any changes either.

Article 19 Health and Welfare and Retirement

We did not propose any changes to these important benefits. We do not anticipate any changes being made in the retirement benefit. We are hopeful that we can secure a third and a fourth year of no changes to the medical, dental, and vision benefits.

Appendix D Permanent Schedules

We did not propose any change to this important article.

Appendix G Health Insurance

We did not propose any changes to this section of the contract. We know no changes are coming for 2016 based on open enrollment mailing from Providence. We are hopeful that we can extend that to 2017 as well.

Our Next Bargaining Session

is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 24.

At this session we expect to learn more about the employer’s thoughts about our proposals and of course find out if they have any proposals of their own for our consideration. Additional scheduled bargaining dates include December 2, 8, and 22.