No Deal Yet

We are trying to reach agreement but it’s going to take more participation from everyone to win what we need in our contract!

While we are very close to reaching a tentative agreement to vote into our first union contract, we cannot reach agreement at this time without going to mediation, a final step before coming to an agreement, voting to have a work action (such as an informational picket or strike), or reaching impasse at the table.

The last four items up for negotiation are as follows:

**Article 3 Membership**—whether new hires shall be allowed to opt out of Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) membership;

**Article 8 Overtime**—whether .9 full time equivalent (FTE) nurses who work 12-hour shifts shall get time and one half after 36 or 40 hours in a work week;

**Article 24 Low Census**—whether nurses who experience greater than 200 hours of low census shall be able to bid on open shifts before or after the posting of the final schedule;

**Appendix A Wages**—whether the wage scale shall be increased by 2.5 percent or 2.25 percent in the first year (in the second year we agreed to 2.25 percent)

"It’s ironic that Providence thinks nurses should have a choice about union dues when we ended up precisely where we are because we didn’t have a choice about so many things that were unilaterally changed. Now, we finally have a say and management wants us to give it back. That’s not a good choice."

--Valerie Whitmore, ONA Bargaining Unit Chair, Providence Newberg Medical Center
No Deal Yet (Continued from page 1)

Of these four items, we made it clear to Providence that Article 3 - Membership, was most important to us. That may seem odd, as it doesn’t directly affect nurses currently employed (for whom we have proposed an initial period of time in which to opt out of ONA membership), but our team was unanimous and swift in our decision: not winning “union shop” for new hires would put us behind the other ONA-represented facilities again and we didn’t come this far, or work this hard, to give that up.

With the exception of Providence Milwaukie, whose nurses were represented by another union (Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals) within the last seven years, all other Providence facilities with RN contracts have membership (or payment of agency fees set by ONA in accordance with the law) as a requirement for nurses hired after December 2009 (the date it was negotiated for all ONA-represented nurses, in exchange for cuts to the retirement plan).

Without union shop, administration would allow every new hire to make the decision whether to pay dues to your organization or not. What would happen to the organization if only a small percentage of represented nurses paid dues? Oregon probably wouldn’t be able to boast the fourth highest RN wages in the country (after California, Hawaii, and Alaska) and ONA-represented Providence nurses wouldn’t be among the highest paid nurses in the state.

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service is a federal agency dedicated to keeping “labor peace” and provides mediation in labor-management disputes including contract negotiations. It’s like couples counseling for unions and employers— a last resort before taking more drastic measures, such as picketing or work stoppages, or giving up and declaring impasse.

We do not have a scheduled date for mediation yet, but will keep everyone posted as we get it on the calendar. Please join us for an informal lunch meeting on April 6 in the Cafeteria from 11 - 2 and ask your bargaining team representative what you can do to insure we get everything that we deserve.

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