PSH Hires Dedicated Security Staff for Night Shift

A petition drive organized by ONA/PSH nurse Autumn Doss and circulated by ONA nurses has been extremely successful. Over 100 PSH employees, mostly RNs, signed the petition requesting full time, trained, and certified security staff that are equipped to intervene in violent situations. ONA presented the petition to PSH Chief Executive Officer Kendall Sawa, who took the petition very seriously and immediately requested a full assessment of PSH’s security risks and preparedness. Some of the preliminary steps taken by PSH included:

- Clarification of roles and

ONA/PSH Nurse Testifies for Strong Staffing

May 18, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) held public hearings on its proposed rules implementing Senate Bill 469, the Oregon Nurse Staffing Law update, now codified as Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) Nos. 441.151 - 441.192. Mary Romanaggi, the staffing committee co-chair at PSH and an emergency room (ER) nurse for 32 years testified in favor of strengthening the section proposed OAR 333-510-0105(7) guaranteeing transparency of the staffing committee’s activities.

“As a direct care nurse, I understand the inherent connection between nurse staffing levels and the quality of care nurses are able to provide for our patients and their families,” said Romanaggi.

Specifically, Section 333-510-0105(7) allows either co-chair to request observers to leave the room when the staffing committee is voting or deliberating. PSH direct-care nurses regularly invite ONA

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responsibilities of PSH, Cannon Beach Police (PD), Seaside PD, Astoria PD, and Clatsop County Behavioral Health when managing behavioral health and/or potentially violent patients.

- Working collaboratively with other agencies in Clatsop County to open a behavioral health respite center which will provide a much needed service for many of the patients that we care for.
- Expanded staff education/training in Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behavior (PMAB)
- Code Gray policy review including training in roles/responsibilities.
- Expanded case management presence to seven days a week
- Standardize practices regarding communicating with Providence Regional Security Dispatch, and how to activate the Seaside PD.

May 27, PSH announced it would hire a dedicated security force to staff the hospital from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., seven days per week. This is not a hybrid maintenance/security staff, but rather, they are uniformed dedicated security like Providence has at its facilities in Portland. The security guard will be stationed in the ER and make regular rounds throughout the hospital.

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staff to observe the committee meetings as well as provide counsel and support to the direct care nurses on the committee. ONA was seeking clarification that the administration co-chair would not be asking ONA to leave every time that a meaningful discussion occurred, but that option would be limited to situations when a motion was on the floor and being discussed.

“Our hospital nurse staffing law is a process law that requires transparency to ensure it is functioning well. I encourage you to further define “committee deliberation” as voting on a motion. This additional clarification will help prevent the misuse of power during the committee process and ensure adequate transparency,” said Romanaggi.

The proposed final rules, which must be reviewed by the Legislative Reference Bureau prior to enrollment, include a requirement that staffing committees document instances in which non-members have been excluded from meetings, but stops short of defining or limiting the meaning of the word deliberations.

Rest Between Shifts

Under the Oregon Nurse Staffing Law (441.151 to 441.192), a nurse is entitled to the 10-hour rest break after any shift or combination of a shift and/or call-in that exceeds 12 hours in a 24-hour period. Whether or not the nurse volunteered for the hours worked, he or she must be provided the 10-hour break, if requested prior to the next shift. So whenever you clock out, no matter what the reason you were working, be it regular hours, a call-back, a meeting or education session, you count up your hours worked over the previous 24 and if you worked 12 or more, you then have a right to a 10-hour rest period.

Volunteerism – This is not a prohibition on nurses volunteering to work more than 12 hours in 24-hour period. Nurses may volunteer to work or be on-call without the 10-hours of rest.
Local unions depend upon a well-informed and trained membership that understands our mission and shares information with each other. We are putting out this basic primer so that all of our members will understand the basic rights of unionized nurses, the very foundation of why we have a union at PSH.

**We have a legally binding contract**—Our contract applies to every nurse from the very first day of work. Most conditions of employment, wages and benefits are addressed in the contract, which is a legally binding document. You can rely on the contract. The language is not as complicated as you might think and means exactly what it says. If you ever feel like you are not being treated according to the contract, please let us know. Most nurses received a spiral bound contract when the last negotiations concluded. The contract is also available on the PSH page of the ONA website. Go to OregonRN.org and click on Prov Seaside under Find Your Bargaining Unit. That will lead you to the ONA/PSH page where you’ll find a link to our contract and much, much more information.

**We have an agreed upon dispute resolution procedure**—Our contract contains an agreed upon procedure for resolving disputes about the application of the contract to your pay, your benefits and working conditions called the grievance procedure. It is a 4-step process that involves presenting the dispute up the chain of command and finally, if necessary, to a neutral third-party arbitrator with experience in resolving contractual disputes between nurses and hospitals. Our ONA labor relations representative will be there to help the nurse and local representatives present any grievance in a respectful, professional and effective manner.

**You have the right to representation**—As a union nurse, you have a right to be represented by an ONA/PSH official in any discussion or meeting that might lead to disciplinary action. If a supervisor wants to speak with you about a matter that might result in discipline, you may stop the conversation and request representation. Your representative can advise you on how to handle any questioning, take notes, provide additional supportive information and help document any unfairness in the investigation procedures.

**We have the right to bargain over other changes in company policy that affect your pay, benefits, or working conditions**—Because of our binding contract and ONA’s status as legal representative of the bargaining unit, terms of pay, benefits, or working conditions of our members not covered by the contract must be bargained with our ONA bargaining unit prior to implementation.
Why We are a Union

We are a union because we agreed that we wanted the legal right to work together and be able speak with one voice regarding working conditions, wages and benefits at PSH.

We are a union so that we are able to work together to build a workplace which upholds high standards of care, fairness and transparency.

We are a union so that we have an organized and democratic way to express common concerns and move forward in a unified fashion to address those concerns.

We are a union so that we can work together to maintain what works well and change what doesn’t.

We are a union because we want to support each other as professionals and as individuals.

We are a union because we want to be able to hold our employer accountable to the public they serve.

We are a union because we want to stay connected as RNs at Providence, with other RNs in the Providence system, and with other RNs throughout the state and country.

We are a union so that our professional views have real influence on building a healthy workplace as well as delivering the highest quality of care for our community.

We are a union so that policies cannot be imposed or changed without consultation.

We are a union so that favoritism does not determine rights and obligations in our workplace.

We are a union because we want the power to make positive change.