Contract Extension Proposal Unanimously Ratified!

The proposal to extend the current contract was unanimously passed by voting nurses April 24, 2015.

**The Agreement reads as follows:**

**State of Oregon (STATE) and ONA agree to the following:**

1. The current collective bargaining agreement between the STATE and ONA will continue in effect from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

2. References within the agreement to the Blue Mountain Recovery Center (BMRC), including letters of agreement specific to BMRC will be deleted as the BMRC is no longer operational.

3. References to the State Operated Community Program (SOCP) will be replaced with the new name of that program, Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU).

4. In the event the STATE agrees to salary and benefits changes with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 75 registered nurses at the Oregon State Hospital as a result of current contract negotiations for the 2015-2017 contract period, the STATE will offer comparable terms and same wage increases during the 2015-2017 extension period to ONA represented nurses working for the STATE. ONA will have the opportunity to respond and if necessary, request to bargain over such changes within 15 days of notification of any changes to wages (including differentials, cost of living allowance (COLA), and so forth) and benefits affecting the ONA represented nurses.

What this means is that all of the provisions in the current contract, from scheduling to vacation, to health care and other benefits, remain the same for the next two years until June 30, 2017. When the STATE and AFSCME finish negotiations for the nurses working at the State Hospital, the wage and benefits package offer to those nurses will be provided to our nurses. The ONA bargaining unit nurses have traditionally accepted the same wage and benefit offerings as the nurses working at the State Hospital and other negotiated contract provisions have been specific to the needs of our nurses at the facilities covered by the ONA contract. We will notify all of you when the wage and benefits proposal is shared with us. We will still have the opportunity to negotiate any such proposal if it is unacceptable.
Labor Management Committee

The labor management committee (LMC) meets quarterly and is currently composed of nurses from Eliot House and Outreach. There is an opportunity for a nurse from Pendleton Cottage to attend these meetings by teleconference. The LMC meets to discuss contractual issues as well as nurse practice concerns. If you have something you would like to discuss and look at for an agenda item, please contact your labor relations representative, Tresa Cavanaugh, at 503-293-0011 ext 312 or cavanaugh@oregonrn.org.

Has Your Hospital Ever Had a Nurse Staffing Audit?

Improving State Audits and Response Time Key to Improving Nurse Staffing

Nearly a third of Oregon’s hospitals have never had a nurse staffing audit under the state’s Nurse Staffing Law. It’s a serious problem that affects nurses and patients in 19 hospitals stretching from the Oregon-Idaho border to the Pacific Coast. The list includes facilities in Eugene, Florence, Ontario, Pendleton, Portland, Redmond, Roseburg, Seaside, and Silverton among others.

In addition to limited audits, nurses around the state know that when a staffing complaint is filed, it could take months before an investigation even begins. Nurses in Springfield and Portland each waited more than seven months for the state to investigate staffing complaints filed about their hospitals. In Oregon City, it took more than a year for the state to even begin an investigation.

Without regular audits and timely complaint investigations, ONA nurses have seen inadequate staffing conditions go unresolved and continue to deteriorate. This has a huge impact on patients and nurses.

This disturbing lack of basic audits and timely investigations led ONA to include strict new audit and investigation requirements in our nurse staffing legislation (Senate Bill 469). ONA’s bill (Senate Bill 469) would require the state to lead nurse staffing audits at every hospital once every three years. It would also require the state to start staffing investigations within 60 days of receiving a staffing complaint and to follow-up with facilities within 60 days after approving a plan of correction.

These changes would make sure hospitals are following Oregon’s Nurse Staffing Law and implementing changes to correct problems.

Go to www.OregonNurseStaffingLaw.org to learn more about ONA’s Nurse Staffing Bill and click on the Action Alert to email your state legislators and ask them to improve nurse staffing by passing Senate Bill 469.

Help Improve Staffing with One Email

Right now, your state legislators are considering important changes to Oregon’s Hospital Nurse Staffing Law that will empower direct-care nurses, increase hospitals’ transparency and accountability and allow patients to get the care they deserve. But these crucial staffing improvements can’t happen without your help.

Legislators have repeatedly said that your input will be one of the most important factors in their decision to vote for improved nurse staffing. You can tell your legislators why you support improved nurse staffing with one simple email.

Go to OregonNurseStaffingLaw.org to email your state legislators and share your experiences with nurse staffing at your facility. Ask your legislators to vote for Senate Bill 469, which will improve Oregon’s Hospital Nurse Staffing Law for nurses and patients.

Your email can make the difference for you, your fellow nurses, and patients and families across the state.

Thank you for your support!