Recommended Tentative Agreement Reached with Washington County

We have reached a tentative agreement for the nurses at Washington County (County) to vote on. **Your team is recommending a “Yes” vote.** This new contract was accomplished after two short sessions at 4 p.m. on June 10, 2014.

We are proud to announce that these contract negotiations went very smoothly and in a collaborative manner where the parties had good, proactive discussion regarding each other’s interests.

Your nurse representatives at the table, Tera Roberts and Beth Doyle did a fantastic job representing the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) nurses at the County. We also want to thank the County representatives for engaging with us in the collaborative manner that they did. We did anticipate changes to health care as has been rolled out to other County employees, but other than that we were not asked to make any concessions. We even got new language to address some requests that we heard from the nurses.

A detailed newsletter will be forthcoming with ratification to be scheduled by mail ballot for June 25 by 4:30 p.m.

A detailed summary of modifications made to the contract follow below. Any article not listed was not changed.

Importantly, we maintained the current cost of living adjustment (COLA) language with the maximum cap of 4.5 percent. This is good language and we were happy not to see any changes.

**Article 1 - Seniority**

**Section 2.10.** We have new language that “Seniority” is determined by the length of a regular employee’s service in the bargaining unit. In the event of a tie (employees have the same amount of service in the bargaining unit), such ties shall be broken by drawing lots. Seniority for regular part-time employees will be prorated based the number of hours they are scheduled to work.

Short-hour employees do not accumulate seniority. A seniority list will be provided

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to the Association once per year, upon request. Under to the old contract and contracts before, seniority was determined by qualified payroll periods, which means a payroll period in which the employee has not had more than one (1) day in a non-pay status. So if you or another family member were ill, you were on vacation part of a payroll period, etc. the rest of the hours worked did not count for purposes of seniority. We consider this change to a large gain for the nurses.

**Article 12 – Educational Leave**

**Section 12.2 (C).** The language regarding the minimum amount available annually for training and related expenses for Nurse Practitioners will be increased from the current amount of $500 to $750.

**Section 12.2 (E).** Paid release time for nurses to attend pertinent courses has been increased from three (3) to four (4) hours.

**Article 13 – Hours of Work**

**Section 13.1.** Language change in the last sentence following the description of the standard work week and that “alternative” schedules may be requested that all work schedules are to be approved by the Division Manager instead of the “supervisor” as in the current language. There was a lot of discussion at the table regarding the desire of nurses to work alternative schedules, ten (10) hour shifts, and so on to meet client needs. The County expressed concern regarding the potential effects on other administrative office staff and desire to be able to monitor long term effects of alternative shifts as well as be aware of when and where those alternative shifts are occurring, hence the change for the Division Manager to approve such permanent alternative schedule changes. We were informed that this change does not affect week to week short notice changes that supervisors approve.

**Section 13.8. Adjustment to Normal Work Schedule** New language that an employee’s normal work schedule may be adjusted by mutual agreement between the employee and the Division Manager. In the event of a change of mutual agreement the new schedule shall become the standard workday and workweek for the affected employee.

**Article 15 – Wages**

**Section 15.9. Weekend Differential**

New language to reflect the discussion at the table regarding alternative schedules that any employee working an alternative schedule in accordance with Section 13.1 and 13.8 that includes weekends as regular workdays are not eligible for the weekend differential. The weekend differential still applies to anyone who is required to work weekends not by their own choice.

Language same as in other contracts around the County. Increase to annuals deductibles in the current plans in 2015. Some of the new language is as follows:

**Article 17 – Health and Life Insurance**

Beginning with January 1, 2015, the County will provide the following health insurance options including new PPO and HMO Healthy plan options. Each successive year of the contract the deductible increases. The Contract maintains the language that the County’s maximum contribution for medical insurance will be 95% of the premium for the Providence Standard Open Option or a PPO or other comparable PPO plan which is current language. Starting in 2015, the language is as follows:

**PPO:** Healthy Plan: Providence Standard Open Option $500 deductible plan or plan with reasonably comparable overall benefit. Basic Plan: Providence Standard Open Option $1,000 deductible, $20 copay plan or plan with reasonably comparable overall benefit.

**HMO:** Healthy Plan: standard Kaiser plan with $250 deductible; 80% coinsurance; $15/$25 copay or plan with reasonably comparable overall benefit. Basic Plan: standard Kaiser plan with $500 deductible; 80% coinsurance; $15/$25 copay plan, or plan with reasonably comparable overall benefit.
The deductibles will increase in 2016 and 2017 for all the plans. Please go to the link listed on the ballots to the website for our Washington County nurses within the Oregon Nurses Association webpage to see a complete view of the new redlined contract.

To qualify for the Healthy Plan under either option, the employee will need to meet wellness point requirements as determined by a work group of the County Wellness Committee. The wellness point program will be implemented in January 2015. Wellness points earned in each calendar year will determine the employee’s plan option for the following calendar year. ONA will have a representative nurse on the Wellness Committee.

**Article 18 – Retirement and Workers’ Compensation**

Section 18.2. will now read that the County will provide Worker’s Compensation as required by state law and in accordance with County policy.

**Article 25 – Cellular Phones**

New language that reads that the County shall provide nurses whose practice requires field work with a functional, reliable mobile communication device and that such devices shall be used pursuant to County policy. Nurses may request a stipend in accordance with the County policy in lieu of a County provided device. The County agreed with the nurses that they should not have to use their own phones in the field and that the phones that have been provided have been unreliable.

**Wages and the 2009 COLA Freeze**

It did come to our attention that there was some perception that the County owed an additional increase in addition to the current Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) language because of a freeze that was agreed to in 2009. Your Labor Relations Representative, Tresa Cavanaugh, looked back into the history of the freeze as well as the language of the agreement that was made back then. The agreement was in lieu of potential layers and the parties agreed to a COLA freeze based upon the following condition:

“In January, 2010, County shall review the General Fund ending fund balance as a percentage of General Fund revenues. If the General fund ending fund balance is 20% of General Fund revenues as of February 1, 2010, then County shall provide a 3.7% COLA, effective January 1, 2010.”

The language then goes on to discuss a review again in July 2010, and it the General Fund balance were at that time 20% of the General Fund revenues, then a market study analysis would be performed for an increase.

The market revenues never reached the 20% benchmark, in February of 2010 or July of 2010. Your Labor Relations Representative at that time, Julia Stewart, did follow-up with the County, as your current labor relations representative, Tresa Cavanaugh has recently confirmed.

There was never any agreement made with the County that the freeze would be reimbursed to employees and was only a possibility in 2010 if the required revenue benchmarks were achieved.

We hope that this clears up any confusion regarding the 2009 COLA freeze agreement.
Congratulations to the following ONA members elected to ONA leadership positions.

President
• Katy Cooper, BSN, RN, CCRN - Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU)

Secretary
• Diane Hedrick, RN - Retired

Director
• James Sims, ARNP, MSN, RN - Peace Health Medical Group

Cabinet on Health Policy
• Erin Shawn, MSN, FNP, RN – Mid County Health Center

Cabinet on Education
• Janet Killen, MSN, BSN, RN - Sacred Heart Medical Center (SHMC)
• Patricia Bellamy, RN - Retired

Cabinet on Nursing Practice & Research
• Charity Pape, BSN, RN, HNB-BC – OHSU, State of Oregon

Cabinet on Economic & General Welfare
• Susan V. Johnson, BSN, RN – Samaritan Albany General Hospital (SAGH)

American Nurses Association (ANA)
• Steve Rooney, RN – St. Charles Medical Center Bend
• Becky McCay, BSN, RN - St. Anthony Hospital (STA), ONA Labor Relations Representative

National Federation of Nurses (NFN)
• George Haefling, BSN, RN – Rogue Regional Medical Center (RRMC)
• Clarice Gerlach, BS, BSN, RN, CCRN – OHSU
• Bobbi Turnipseed, RN, CCRN - St. Alphonsus Medical Center – Ontario (SAO)

NFN
• Lynda Pond, RNC – SHMC

AFT
• Becky McCay, BSN, RN - ONA Labor Relations Representative
• George Haefling, BSN, RN – RRMC
• Carolyn Starnes, RN – Mercy Medical Center
• Susan King, MS, RN, CEN, FAAN, Executive Director, ONA
• Katy Cooper, BSN, RN, CCRN - OHSU
• Paul Goldberg, BSN, RN - ONA, Assistant Executive Director of Labor Relations
• Ann Carlson, RN – RRMC
• Lynda Pond, RNC – SHMC
• Bobbi Turnipseed, RN, CCRN - SAO
• Clarice Gerlach, BS, BSN, RN, CCRN – OHSU
• Susan V. Johnson, BSN, RN – SAGH

2014 Convention Was a Success!

Our ONA convention was filled with great learning opportunities, productive and in-depth discussions on labor and practice issues, and numerous opportunities for everyone to socialize and celebrate together!

At the House of Delegates, we had the honor of announcing the results of the 2014 ONA Statewide Elections, including introducing our incoming ONA Board of Directors President, Katy Cooper, RN, BSM, CCRM from Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU).

ONA would also like to thank special guest Governor John Kitzhaber for talking with us during the luncheon on Tuesday, May 21! He gave an insightful speech on the future of health care reform and took the time to answer questions our members had submitted by e-mail. ONA presidents Katy Cooper and Steve Rooney alternated asking members’ questions after Gov. Kitzhaber’s address.

Stay tuned to the ONA website in the upcoming weeks for more recaps and updates from the convention, including photo galleries, session notes, full ONA election results. Please go to ONA’s home page to read Delegates’ Action Reports.

Left to Right: Incoming ONA President, Katy Cooper, RN; Current ONA President, Steve Rooney, RN and Governor Kitzhaber