On Monday, Dec. 11 and Friday, Dec. 15, we met for our fifth and sixth sessions of bargaining. These are our last planned sessions for this year due to the upcoming holidays. Our next session is scheduled for Jan. 12, 2018.

On Monday, management countered our wage proposal with a mere 1% raise. This was in response to our proposal that we had made in November, asking for comparability with wages of the Providence hospitals in the Portland area. Wages at all of the smaller Providence acute care facilities in the greater metropolitan area (Newberg, Willamette Falls and Milwaukie) are higher than at Hood River, not to mention the larger facilities - St Vincent and Providence Portland.

On Friday, we countered again, asking for a 5% raise added to the start step through step 10, and a 4% raise added to step 11 through step 30. We are also asking for 10 new steps to fill in the gaps on the scale. During this presentation, we had a group of nurses observe and show support for our proposal. We brought up several factors to back up our argument, which included that the top 21 Providence executives in Oregon average $719 per hour*, so surely they can afford to bring Hood River to the same wage standard as their Portland area nurses.

In addition, we brought up the fact that the nurses were not able to sign up for Delta Dental Premier during open enrollment in November. This plan is the preferred Delta plan of many dentists in the Gorge area. Our nurses have experienced higher than usual costs for routine dental care under the Delta plans they can access. These changes occurred without prior notification to ONA. We have HR looking into this issue further.

We did make progress on several items though. We tentatively agreed to proposals on:

- **Holidays:** You will now receive open shift call pay ($11 per hour) on Holidays. This is an increase of $6 per hour!
- ****Seniority and Layoff:** For nurses hired Jan. 1, 2018 and thereafter,
seniority will be calculated by hire date into a nursing position (RN, LPN, CNA) at any Providence location in the Gorge. The current seniority language will remain intact. This is reflective of the majority of responses in our seniority survey.

- **Job Bidding:** Clarified the difference between intradepartmental transfers and interdepartmental transfers. The language is reflective of the majority of responses in our seniority survey.

- **Master Schedules:** Clarifies the vetting process for altering an occupied master schedule to include the “agreement of the Unit Manager and any nurses whose schedule will change, and the majority of the nurses on the unit”. Prior language required that all nurses on the unit had to agree to the change.

We continued to exchange proposals on Work Schedule and Overtime. The outlying issues on this large article are on schedule periods, mandated critical shifts and the low census process. Each party has made four different proposals on this article. We will continue to push for a fair language around these items.

Other articles that we continued to work on included Appendix C: Home Health and Hospice and Article 11: Educational/Professional Leave.

We made a counter to the cap that they proposed on Educational/Professional leave back in Oct. They proposed $300 annually and we countered with $1,500 annually, since the cost of the conferences can fall around this amount, especially if airfare and/or hotels need to be covered. The current language has no cap however, there has been inequitable treatment when enforcing this benefit.

Having observers at our bargaining sessions brings more strength to our union and for getting a fair contract! If you are interested in being an observer at our Jan. 12 session, please contact your Labor Representative, Jocelyn Pitman at: pitman@oregonrn.org.

Please take a moment to thank your bargaining team for the countless hours they have spent on this process. Have a safe and wonderful holiday season!

*Source- Portland Business Journal- Top 50 Highest Paid Health System Employees

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**Vote YES on Measure 101 to Protect Health Care Access**

Oregon voters will face a decision on whether or not to protect health care for more than 350,000 children, adults with disabilities, seniors, and low-income families in a special election Jan. 23, 2018.

Measure 101 asks voters to uphold the bipartisan Oregon Healthcare Protections Bill which the legislature passed in the 2017 legislative session. Nurses, hospitals, insurers, Democrats and Republicans all supported the bill in order to fund health care and lower premiums for more than half a million Oregonians.

Voting YES on Measure 101 means protecting health care for Oregonians who otherwise couldn’t afford care and are too often forced to go to the emergency room when they are sick. If the measure fails, thousands of our most vulnerable patients will be in jeopardy of losing their health care.

It is critical we stand together to protect Oregon families by supporting Measure 101 in the Jan. 23 special election.


If Measure 101 fails, over 350,000 Oregonians could lose their healthcare coverage.

Learn more, get involved, and add your name to pledge to vote YES on Measure 101 at: