On Wednesday, July 11, nurses packed the office of the Hospital CEO & President to deliver the signatures of over 130 nurses to demand a fair contract now. We have been in negotiations for far too long without a significant response from our employer to address the biggest concerns voiced by nurses all across the hospital.

We returned to negotiations on Thursday, July 12, in hopes that management would respond in a significant way. Nurses noticed a clear change in tone and approach by the management bargaining team in the way they spoke at the bargaining table. It was clear when nurses stand together, we are taken more seriously. However, that has not translated into any major agreements on our top priorities.

So, we must keep the pressure on! Please watch next week for information about decisions on major actions coming up very soon.

We discussed a variety of topics at the table including a timeline for tentative work schedules to come out, pay for precepting student nurses, an extra differential for taking call during a normal weekend work shift in Home Health, attendance requirements for staff meetings, the right to save PTO for use after a parental leave, and the need for more funds for professional development. All discussions seemed helpful, but have not yet resulted in any agreements. We expect management to take the issues we raised seriously and bring proposals to our session next week on these topics.

Our ONA bargaining team presented a counter proposal on Article 16: Floating/ Orientation. We reasserted that we still think orientations should be two weeks long instead of one week. And we offered a counter proposal on precepting that states: “Should a nurse transfer to take a permanent position in a new unit, they shall receive appropriate precepting and further appropriate training under their specialty area.” It is hard for us to see why management would not guarantee appropriate precepting and training for nurses to safely do their jobs. It is critical for the safety of our patients that management agrees to this.

Management gave us a counter proposal on Article 1: Recognition and Membership. They agree with some of contract language we asked for to better define nurses’ duties to not include management responsibilities. They did not agree to include nurse navigators or discharge planners in our union.
Previously, they asked to not pay a preceptor differential for precepting student nurses. In this counter proposal, they offered to continue to pay for precepting student nurses in their sixth quarter when they do not have a clinical instructor on-site. Lastly, there was discussion that put us close to agreement to improve the monthly data that management provides ONA to prevent errors in union dues deductions.

We were deeply disappointed that yet again management was not prepared to discuss any financial proposals. Unfortunately, they continue to delay, while nurses go without the raise we were due on July 1st. This is incredibly disrespectful to our nurses’ hard work that we provide to the hospital, and disrespects the genuine effort and lengthy volunteer hours our team of nurses have put into this bargaining process already. Every week they delay is another week we go without our raises and a fair contract.

In a very short time period, over 80% of nurses signed the petition to the Board of Trustees, because what is happening at bargaining is simply unacceptable. Our petition was very clear on our top priorities:

1) Repairing the damage done to benefits for part time nurses: equality with full time PTO rates, correct placement in PTO years of service, 401K match, etc.
2) Recruitment and retention of nurses by increasing wages to match peer hospitals
3) Improve Health Benefits
4) Eliminating the mass use of variable shifts in hiring and improving the process to earn desired day or night shifts through seniority and skill within departments
5) Investing in training for nurses. Improve orientations, precepting, access, and paid time for education and training
6) Improving a variety of general work issues like hours, differentials, work safety, staffing, and other benefits to meet the unique needs for specific shifts, nurses, and units.

We demand that our employer come to our next bargaining session with official proposals that make significant improvements to these areas. To do so, we know that it will require management to take a serious look at their priorities and balance their budget accordingly to better reflect the contributions of nurses to this hospital.

After the next bargaining session, if major progress is not made to reach an agreement, nurses have demanded that we plan further major actions to show how important these issues are to nurses, our patients, and our hospital. To get involved in planning the next actions, it is essential that nurses from every unit and every shift connect with our contract action team. To make sure your unit and shift are connected, please email cooper@oregonrn.org.

Join the Contract Action Team (CAT)!

Home Health and Acute Care are still in urgent need of representatives! Additionally, we can use more representatives from all shifts and all units to make us as strong as possible! Contact Nicole and Heather Chambers, the co-chairs of our CAT, to let them know you’ve got the bargaining team’s back! You can also email cooper@oregonrn.org or talk to an ONA bargaining team member from your department about joining the CAT. We aren’t going to win a strong contract just talking at the table. What matters most is what happens outside that table, to show management how critical a fair contract is. The CAT is a small time commitment with huge results. Help pass out buttons, organize a phone tree, and be the main point of contact for your unit during any ONA BBQ, gathering, rally, event or even a picket. The more people on our CAT, the stronger the contract we will win, and the better our workplace will be!
Summary of Tentative Agreements

A Tentative Agreement (TA) is where management and the ONA bargaining team have exchanged proposals and counter proposals on a single article of the collective bargaining agreement and have now signed a copy that is tentatively agreed to pending a ratification vote of all ONA members over the entire collective bargaining agreement. The ratification vote will not occur until tentative agreements have been reached for changes to all articles and a final complete tentative agreement has been reached between the bargaining teams (or management and the ONA bargaining team have agreed not to make any changes to a specific article).

Article 11: Grievance Procedure
TA on 7/12/18

The title “Director of Nursing Services” has been replaced by “Chief Nursing Officer” throughout this article.

The tentative agreement would allow us to take grievances involving terminations straight to Step 2 of the grievance procedure skipping Step 1. For someone who has been terminated and removed from their job, we want to seek a resolution as quickly as possible and this will allow us to remove up to 42 days from the process which can be take many months to complete in total. This is a significant improvement that will impact any nurse in the future that is unfairly fired who we now will have the opportunity to get them back to work more quickly.

We agreed to not to picket, join sympathy pickets, or sympathy strikes on hospital property during the life of the agreement. This means that before the new agreement expires nurses organized as a part of ONA could not organize a picket that is held on hospital property, or join with another union that is holding a picket or strike on hospital property. If a picket is held a few blocks away we would be free to take part, or if a picket or strike action occurred after our collective bargaining agreement expires we could take part.

Article 14: Professional Nursing Care Committee
TA on 6/18/18

No significant changes to this article, except the title “Director of Nursing Services” has been replaced by “Chief Nursing Officer” throughout this article to reflect the current title of the individual holding that position. The old title included in this article was not up to date.

No Changes Being Made to These Articles:

Neither the employer or the ONA bargaining team requested to open the following articles for negotiation by the agreed upon deadline, so they will be remaining the same as the previous collective bargaining agreement.

- Article 2: Equality of Employment Opportunity
- Article 17: Separability
- Article 18: Successors
- Article 20: Appendix
- Article 21: Management Rights
- Letter of Agreement: Reduction in Hours
- Letter of Agreement: Child Care Program
- Letter of Agreement: Dental Plan
Announcements

Upcoming Bargaining Sessions: July 19 and 27
Bring your kids, come and go as needed on your lunches and breaks. Come in on your day off and spend time supporting your bargaining team!

Management will present major economic proposals from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Thursday July 19: please pack the room during this hour!

Be Part of the ONA Nurse Leadership Institute!

ONA is now accepting applications for members interested in participating in the second annual Nurse Leadership Institute (NLI).

The NLI is designed to create a cohesive and dynamic community of peers that is organized to affect change and respond to challenges in politics, practice, and labor.

An intensive, unique program, built on an evidence-based leadership model, the NLI will help you develop and strengthen vital skills needed to advance the nursing profession.

Applications are due by Aug. 3, so visit the ONA website for more information and to start your application today!

www.OregonRN.org/NLI