Discharge Planners Successfully Joined ONA at MCMC

On Friday, Dec. 20 we successfully concluded negotiations with management to include Discharge Planners in the ONA bargaining unit! This has resulted not only in major increases in wages for these nurses as step increases occur, but also all other union guarantees on benefits and working conditions. We are so excited to report this being completed after working towards this for over a year.

We hope all our ONA nurses can give a great big union welcome to the discharge planners when you next see them coming to your departments to collaborate and do the amazing work they do across the hospital.

Management Continues to Refuse to Allow CDIS to Join ONA

Yet again, management refused to allow the Clinical Documentation Information Specialist (CDIS) Nurses to be protected under the ONA contract. During our last round of negotiations the CDIS and nurses from across the hospital all agreed it was the fair and correct thing to do to include CDIS nurses in our union. Having fellow MCMC nurses that get left out of the protections and benefits is not only unfair to them, but affects all nurses. An injury to one is an injury to all. Being in a workplace where a nurse can be singled out to be left significantly behind in wages, benefits and protections means that we cannot successfully recruit and retain nurses for those positions. The CDIS directly collaborate over the care that we give to our patients. If part of our team is left behind, that affects the whole team.

With this being such a high priority, we put forward a bargaining proposal last year to include CDIS. Management adamantly refused to even discuss the proposal. They said they had no interest in this and when we tried to speak about the fairness and impact on our whole hospital to compromise recruitment and retention of good nurses in these positions, management did not care. When we pointed out the huge value these nurses bring with decades of experience and knowledge to add to the collaboration in providing patient care, again they did not care. Just in a seven-month period, our CDIS saved the hospital over $700,000 in billing mistakes, yet earns the same as someone with ten years less experience. However, this is not the CDIS’s core mission or purpose. They serve to make sure patients are receiving proper care, just like any other nurse. Through reviewing of patient’s cases, they are able to catch mistakes and missed items that can then be fixed to improve outcomes for patients. Hospitals don’t exist to make sure they make money, they exist to serve patients. Our CDIS does exactly that.

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Management Continues to Refuse to Allow CDIS to Join ONA continued from Page 1

What does the CDIS job look like?

The CDIS RN serves as an essential resource to the clinical team ensuring that all relevant conditions requiring healthcare resources throughout the patient hospitalization are accurately captured in complete and specific documentation. Complete and specific documentation also promotes better patient care and disease management, while appropriately reflecting the acuity, severity and overall outcome of the patient. Although you may not work directly with CDIS they are working behind the scenes optimizing documentation integrity, better patient outcome, and higher revenue/reimbursement. As a highly skilled nurse who is both supporting better patient care and helping bring in better revenue for our hospital, it’s time the CDIS is properly compensated and respected in the ONA contract for the value they bring our community.

We met to negotiate with management on Nov. 12 and Dec. 20 and again we were denied the opportunity to include the CDIS in the bargaining unit. Management claimed that the CDIS’s purpose is billing and coding, which was hugely disrespectful to the contribution that the CDIS provides. We let management know that we are not letting this go, we will continue to stand together to support our fellow nurse. They had their chance to do the right thing and choose not to.

Taking Action!
In support of our CDIS, and to make sure they are not being left behind in pay, benefits, and protections, please sign our online petition in support of including the CDIS in our ONA bargaining unit. If management continues to refuse to do the right thing, please watch for further actions until we fix this!

Sign the online petition here:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MCMC-PETITION

Know Your Rights: Talking About the Union and Working Conditions at Work

We’ve had a few instances of management telling nurses that they aren’t allowed to talk “negatively” in the workplace. It might come in the form of “you’re having negative conversations” or “you really need to keep your conversations at work strictly about patient care and staying positive and constructive”. Beware that your manager might be violating your rights under federal law to speak with coworkers about your working conditions. When two or more coworkers speak with each other about the union, their ONA contract, or any working conditions it is considered concerted protected activity. This type of activity is protected under federal law to make sure workers have the right to talk with each other about their workplace and their union. You just have to make sure the conversations don’t interfere with patient care, and don’t happen directly in front of patients or their families. We encourage all nurses to exercise this right and make sure silence doesn’t cover up problems and safety issues. In addition, there are also a whole set of laws in Oregon including the Nurse Practice Act protecting nurses to speak up about patient safety and professional standards. Nurses may not be disciplined for speaking up. If you are, you should contact your union representative Amber Cooper at Cooper@OregonRN.org to find out how we can help.

Bring Your Voice to the ONA House of Delegates

Your voice matters. Be part of ONA’s primary governing body, the House of Delegates (HOD). As a delegate you will discuss and vote on resolutions, amendments and other initiatives that will determine ONA’s direction.

Bring your perspective and join us at the 2020 House of Delegates on May 19 in Portland.

Visit www.OregonRN.org/Delegate for more information and to complete your delegate nomination form.

Questions about statewide offices or delegates? Email or call ONA Chief of Staff Whitney Wong at Wong@OregonRN.org or 503-293-0011 ext. 1325.

Visit www.OregonRN.org/Delegate to learn more
Know Your Weingarten Rights!

What are Your Weingarten Rights?
In the case National Labor Relations Board vs. J. Weingarten, Inc., the Supreme Court ruled an employee who reasonably believes an investigatory interview will result in discipline has the right to have a union representative present. This is legally protected activity under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and is your fundamental right as part of an ONA bargaining unit. All nurses in ONA bargaining units have the right to ONA representation during any investigatory interview that could lead to discipline. By invoking your Weingarten Rights, you ensure you have an advocate by your side during difficult conversations. Having an ONA steward or labor representative supporting you gives you a contract expert to advise you during any conversations with management that may lead to discipline. While we hope you never need to exercise these rights, it’s important that we all know our rights in order to protect ourselves and our coworkers.

You Have a Right to Representation
Every nurse has discussions with supervisors about job performance. When this happens to you, there is an important question to ask your boss, “Could this meeting lead to discipline or affect my personal working conditions?” If the answer is “Yes,” stop the meeting and invoke your Weingarten Rights by saying: “If this discussion could in any way lead to my discipline or termination, or affect my personal working conditions, I request an association representative, steward or officer be present. Unless I have this representation I respectfully choose not to participate in this discussion.”

How to Use Your Weingarten Rights
Take immediate action when you are called into a meeting or discussion you believe may lead to discipline.

- Ask the supervisor or manager who is present, “Could this meeting lead to discipline or affect my personal working conditions?”
- If the answer is “Yes,” stop the meeting immediately.
- Invoke your Weingarten Rights by saying: “If this discussion could in any way lead to my discipline or termination, or affect my personal working conditions, I request an association representative, steward or officer be present. Unless I have this representation I respectfully choose not to participate in this discussion.”

Need help remembering your Weingarten Rights?
Request an ONA badge backer from your labor representative, Amber Cooper cooper@oregonrn.org. ONA badge backers identify you as a registered nurse, fit most lanyards and contain the full Weingarten statement on the reverse side.
We recently filed an association grievance on behalf of all nurses due to major safety concerns in the surgical services department. Management had said they wanted to move forward with expanding their hours of operation from a Monday through Thursday unit, to a Monday through Friday. We asked in August that they meet with us to negotiate how that would work with our nurses’ current schedules of four 10-hour shifts per week, but we were ignored. We heard management wanted to just move forward anyways and started putting open shifts on Fridays on the schedule without having changed their staffing plan or negotiated a memorandum of understanding with ONA over this change in their working conditions. The nurses in the unit were largely ignored by upper management who held no meetings to discuss this through ONA. The nurses all agreed to stand together and refuse to sign up for the optional Friday shifts until this was properly handled by management. In the meantime, management pushed forward with scheduled procedures for Friday with no volunteers for that shift. They instead used the call team for scheduled procedures, which is not only a violation of our collective bargaining agreement, but also the staffing plan, which violates the State of Oregon’s Safe Staffing Law, and it puts the hospital’s critical access status in question. A critical access hospital must have a call team available for emergency surgeries at all times, which was not possible if that team is being used for scheduled procedures. We held our first grievance hearing over this on Dec. 20 and received a response that they had not intended to move forward without negotiating these changes with us. They have expressed a commitment to negotiate this and find a safe resolution. We are hopeful this can be accomplished.

We finally received a proposal from management, for a six-month trial process to sort out scheduled procedures on Fridays. We look forward to meetings, where nurse representatives will be at the table with management to discuss and negotiate what needs to be in this proposed trail, not only the terms and conditions of this, but best practices for safe care. The nurses were quite clear at our grievance meeting, that upper management cannot just push something through without sorting out all the details to safely implement changes. We’re standing together, and we’re standing for safety.

Mark Your Calendars for Steward Trainings

Please consider becoming a union steward and help make your workplace stronger!

Saturday Mar. 14, 12 – 4 p.m.
Saturday Apr. 25, 12 – 4 p.m.

To be held in The Dalles, location TBA.

RSVP to Amber Cooper at Cooper@OregonRN.org

(If those dates won’t work for your schedule, there will be additional trainings held in Portland as well)

Training will include:
• Basic workplace rights
• How to help enforce our union contract rights in disciplinary investigations
• How to file union grievances
• How to organize the nurses in your unit to be strong and cohesive, to build a collective voice to make our workplace better!
Nominations and Consent to Serve

ONA/MCMC – ELECTIONS NOMINATION FORM AND CONSENT TO SERVE

If you are willing to serve as an officer or you want to nominate someone to be an officer and be on the bargaining team please fill out the form below and email it to Amber Cooper at Cooper@OregonRN.org. You can also fax the form to ONA at 503-293-0013.

The deadline for submission is Thursday, Feb. 22, 2020.

An election will be scheduled within a week of the close of nominations should we have more than one person running for any given position.

You must be a member in good standing to run.

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ONA Nurses’ Meeting and Social!

Thursday Jan. 30, 5:30—9 p.m.
(drop by for any portion of the evening)

Private Room
Casa El Mirandor
1424 West 2nd St. The Dalles

All nurses are invited to attend our upcoming meeting to learn and share about issues from across the hospital and have a voice in our strategic plans for our upcoming year!

This is also a great opportunity to meet nurses from across different units and socialize outside of work.

ALL MCMC Nurses are invited!
Kids welcome to attend as well!

Free dinner and non-alcoholic beverages provided!