After Our Rally, Encouraging Movement from MCMC

After a very successful show of unity at our August 19 rally downtown, Mid-Columbia Medical Center (MCMC) moved closer to our priorities in negotiations. There still are many key areas where we are apart, and our bargaining team looks forward to seeing more momentum from MCMC at our next bargaining session (still working on getting a date).

There was a clear connection from last week’s rally to the movement we got MCMC to make in negotiations. Our ONA bargaining team hopes we can reach an agreement without further escalation.

Our ONA bargaining team started the day by giving MCMC a comprehensive package proposal, holding the line on all of our top priorities. MCMC responded with a package that included many important items from ONA’s proposals.

Our wins include:

- Vacation requests will be granted for a minimum of one nurse per shift, with good faith effort to grant more if staffing needs can be met
- New step increase at 34 years
- BSN/MSN differential increase to $2 in 2022 (currently $1)
- $15 premium for all extra shifts (currently any extra shifts picked up after schedule is posted is only $8)
- Minimum 2 hour pay for mandatory education, training, and staff meetings
- Vacancies and new positions will be posted for 12 days (currently 10)
- Guaranteed paid education leave hours to individual nurses—12 hours a year for full-time and part-time core, 8 hours for part-time non-core (currently one bucket of 1,600 hours for everyone)
- Patient Nurse Navigators will be covered under the contract (though we still need to clarify a few details on this)
• Any nurse who accrues PTO can cash out when they leave (currently restricted to non-probationary full-time nurses)
• EIH can be used for quarantine
• Juneteenth added to the recognized holidays (our bargaining team proposed Christmas Eve)

In addition, we saw some movement on:

• Meals and breaks: There was conceptual movement toward guaranteed meals and breaks, but we have more work to do
• Shift differentials: MCMC proposed to extend night shift to 7pm (currently 11pm) but eliminating the evening shift differential, which per current practice will impact day shift nurses

Items we are still apart on:

• Across the board raises: MCMC came up a little to 2.25% this year, then 2% in 2022, and 2% in 2023. ONA held at 4.5% each year
• Self-scheduling: MCMC updated their proposal to have nurses record preferences in their electronic time-card system and for nurses and management to collaborate to develop self-scheduling guidelines that can be supported by the electronic time-card system. Our bargaining team’s proposal is still for each department to vote to self-schedule, draft their own methods, and for the final version to be approved by a majority vote of the nurses in that department.
• Variable shifts: MCMC is still at 25% variable nurses in a unit, however IF a job is posted for more than 30 days it will be posted variable and not be included in 25% calculation. ONA’s proposal is still at 15% variable nurses per unit
• MCMC is still rejecting an added tier of PTO accrual for nurses with 20+ years at MCMC
• MCMC is still rejecting adding PTO/EIH accrual for OR/PACU from on-call hours
• MCMC is still proposing that nurses may be placed on late start and directed to report four (4) hours after the start of their shift, in which case they will be paid straight-time for the remainder of their regularly-scheduled shift. If the nurse is placed on standby then they are eligible for call-back pay if called in prior to the time designated for the late start.

ONA has rejected this in all previous proposals.

• MCMC is still rejecting that meetings, trainings, and orientations should be included in the posted schedule

**What’s next?**

We should have a new bargaining date set any time now.

In the meantime we can continue to wear green on Mondays, black on Thursdays, and keep spreading the word about our public petition.

If you have any questions, please contact your ONA labor representative, Brian Howard, at Howard@OregonRN.org.