Regarding MCMC’s Surge Plan

We are in the midst of a statewide crisis. This surge is happening across Oregon and several facilities are using the “state of emergency” to try and get away with not following staffing plans, but the fact remains that all surge or contingency plans must go through the staffing committee for approval. If your staffing plan is being violated you should fill out a Staffing Request & Documentation Form (SRDF) as soon as possible.

Nurses have an obligation to refuse assignments for which they do not have skills/competencies to perform safely. According to the nurse practice act, “Accept only RN assignments that are within one’s individual scope of practice.” It is also your responsibility to “Ensure unsafe nursing practices are addressed immediately.” The OSBN specifically states that “Accepting an assignment when individual competencies necessary to safely perform the assignment have not been established or maintained” is conduct derogatory to the standards of nursing and, if reported, could cost you your license. Nurses are advised to use these quotes from the nurse practice act when declining an assignment. Also keep in mind that if you take an unsafe assignment but fill out an Assignment Despite Objection (ADO), your license still will not be protected.

We can maintain the high ground by saying we are willing to help in any way we can--just not at the expense of our license--by communicating the need for training before going to another unit with a different skill set/patient population.

Though some nurses are making the decision to not pick up extra shifts, there hasn't been a decision to do so as a hospital-wide concerted activity. Right now it's an individual decision, but we should prioritize not burning ourselves or our co-workers out. The American Nurses Association’s “Code of Ethics” Provision 5 tells us “nurses have a duty to take the same care of their own health and safety as they would their patients. It further states, “Nurses in all roles should seek this balance, and it is the responsibility of nurse leaders to foster this balance within their organizations.” No one should feel obligated to work extra if they feel it would be at the detriment of their own health and well-being.

Reminder: All MCMC Nurse Meeting Tonight!

In the long run, our ability to have a greater voice in the hospital is determined by how strong and unified we are as ONA nurses. Come to one of the virtual meetings tonight to find out the latest in contract negotiations and next steps we can take to apply pressure and win.

Thursday, July 29, 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. (same link for each):
https://aft.zoom.us/j/94042658117?pwd=VHZMVG14Y2NFeEkvWXFncHVEcFNYQT09
Passcode: ONA21