Outstanding Grievance Representative Award

At ONA’s recent House of Delegates, our stewards won the Outstanding Grievance Representative Award, based on their stellar record in winning grievances and representing coworkers in disciplinary actions.

The statewide award is presented biennially “to a group or individual who build union power by addressing injustice through grievances and issue organizing and effectively increase the membership’s knowledge of the contract and their union rights.”

At McKenzie-Willamette, we have a ratio of one steward for every ten nurses and at least two stewards in each department. Our stewards are the first line of response to nurses’ questions and concerns. They perform initial grievance intake and attend step 1 meetings. Stewards also attend investigatory (fact-finding) meetings when a coworker is called into a meeting with their manager to answer questions. (See box on page 3 “What do stewards do?”)

Over the last five years, a total of 46 nurses have served as stewards, to see the complete list of past and present.

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McKenzie-Willamette Top Quorum Money-Maker Again

Tied for first, we produce one-fifth of total acute care profits

For the second year in a row, McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center (MCW) is the most profitable hospital in the Quorum Health Corporation (QHC) system. In data collected by the American Hospital Directory (AHD), MCW is tied for first in profits — with Heartland Medical Center (Marion, Ill.), our sister QHC facility. See the table on page 2, which lists profits for QHC’s 22 hospitals.

Normally, we report Oregon Health Authority (OHA) financial data for all Oregon hospitals, which are typically available in early summer. Due to the pandemic (aren’t you tired of that phrase?), OHA extended the deadline for hospitals to submit their reports. Our OHA source says they have now received financial statements from all of Oregon’s hospitals and expect to have those reports verified and available to the public next week.

Meanwhile, we share the AHD data, which employs a different accounting methodology than OHA. McKenzie-Willamette produced 21 percent of the total QHC profits in acute care! Further, the top seven hospitals produced 91 percent of the total acute care profits for QHC.

In May 2016, QHC spun out from hospital giant Community Health Systems with 38 hospitals. Since then, QHC has shuttered at least three hospitals and sold 11 others; it now operates 22 hospitals and 15 outpatient clinics in 13 states. Click here or go to: http://bit.ly/QuorumBankruptcy

Surprisingly, QHC no longer owns a single hospital in Tennessee, after it

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Outstanding Grievance Representative Award  
(continued from page 1)

stewards go to page 5. Our current list of stewards is always available here: [www.oregonrn.org/page/70](http://www.oregonrn.org/page/70).

Stewards build nurse power by seeking workplace issues that are deeply and widely felt. We use two questions to guide us: (1) who else cares about the issue and (2) what are they willing to do about it?

We have used our power to move the employer on grievances and formal discipline. We file fewer grievances and win them more frequently now, without taking a single case to arbitration. In 2019, we won six of our seven grievances for a success rate of 86 percent. In the previous three years, our grievance success rate was 53 percent. So far in 2020, we have filed three grievances on behalf of individual nurses, we have won two grievances and the third is still open.


Top Quorum Money-Maker  
(continued from page 1)

sold 36-bed Henderson County Community Hospital in Lexington, Tenn. in March. QHC corporate headquarters, nestled in a luxurious business park in Brentwood, Tenn., occupies two buildings, totaling 80,000 square feet.

According to their filing with the bankruptcy court, QHC employed approximately 9,136 workers in April 2020. Of these, about 6,823 were full-time, 2,313 were part-time (working more than 20 hours per week) and 1,311 are PRN (working as needed). They report 16.2 percent of their workers are represented by a labor union (or about 1,480 employees). Click here or go to [http://bit.ly/MCW-BankDock](http://bit.ly/MCW-BankDock).

At McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center in Springfield, Ore., nearly 400 nurses are represented by the Oregon Nurses Association and more than 400 other workers are represented by Service Employees International Union, Local 49. Together, our two unions at MCW account for a majority of the unionized QHC employees!

Our research shows that QHC’s other unionized workers are employed by four hospitals:

- California Nurses Association at Barstow Medical Center (Barstow, Calif.)
- National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees at Alta Vista Medical Center (Las Vegas, N.M.)
- SEIU Healthcare at Gateway Medical Center (Granite City, Ill.)
- United Steelworkers at Kentucky River Medical Center (Jackson, Ky.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Staffed Beds</th>
<th>Net Income (in millions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McKenzie-Willamette</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>113</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Marion</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>UT</td>
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<td>WY</td>
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<td>AR</td>
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<td>Anna</td>
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**AVERAGE** 74  $5.7

Source: American Hospital Directory

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Oklahoma Nurses Association  
1900 NW 23rd St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106  
1-800-634-3552  
www.OklahomaRN.org
Quorum Exits Bankruptcy

In July, Quorum Health Corporation (QHC) emerged from Chapter 11 (debt restructuring) bankruptcy. Creditors wrote off $500 million in debt they were owed by QHC. This write-down (or forgiveness) relieved QHC of both the principal and interest on that debt. The corporation believes that the debt reduction will allow it to finally become profitable.

As a result of surfacing from bankruptcy, QHC has completely turned over its board of directors. Six of the seven new directors are financial analysts, all of whom represent existing large creditors. All six have experience investing in health care, some specialize in health care operations. Click here or go to: http://bit.ly/QuorumBoard

The Interim Chief Executive Officer Dan Slipkovich is the seventh member of the board. He began his career as a certified public accountant with Hospital Corporation of America, where he served as Chief Financial Officer and later Senior Vice President for non-urban hospitals. More recently, he was President and Chief Operating Officer of Province Healthcare and later co-founded Capella Healthcare; both are large hospital and clinic systems headquartered near Franklin, Tenn. (http://bit.ly/QExecutiveManagement)

QHC’s consultancy and management division, formerly called Quorum Health Resources now rebranded as QHR Health, remains a critical profit-center for the corporation. QHR Health employs a corps of hospital executives in finance, operations, supply chain, and nursing on contract to a wide variety of hospitals, especially those “distressed” or struggling financially. http://bit.ly/QuorumRebrand


Several QHC motions are filed for a court hearing on October 20, 2020. If granted, these motions would grant a final decree for almost all of the outstanding cases related to the bankruptcy. https://dm.epiq11.com/case/qmh/dockets

What Do Stewards Do?

We list the primary activities in which stewards engage to help their coworkers below. All stewards build power, including on their Unit Practice Councils, Staffing Committee, and in many other venues. Stewards participate in at least one of the remaining activities listed here:

1. Build nurse power, by organizing around workplace issues
2. Recruit activists, explain member benefits, assist with contract interpretation
3. Represent nurses in fact-finding/ investigatory meetings and follow up on disciplinary actions that result
4. Initial grievance intake, form submission and attend step one meeting

Right to Speak

During the pandemic and at all times workers have a right to report concerns about health and safety to third parties, including regulators and media, without fear of unlawful reprisal or discipline.

The pandemic crisis did not abrogate our first amendment rights to free speech, nor does it prevent us from reporting unsafe practices to any governmental agency. Federal law continues to protect employees from retaliation or retribution from speaking out.

We all value and honor the privacy rights of our patients. However, we know we cannot divulge any HIPAA personal information.

We recognize our employer has a responsibility and duty to ensure patient information is not released inappropriately.

We have an obligation, under certain circumstances, to speak up about unsafe patient care under the Nurse Practice Act.

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Bargaining Side Letters For WHBCC & Wound Care

As we reported previously, we continue to bargain with our employer on two additional side letters. One of our August side letters froze existing mandatory call throughout the house, thanks to the great effort by ONA executive committee member Candy Bigbee and our stewards in Women’s Health, Birth, and Child Center (WHBCC).

**WHBCC**

In a new side letter in September, we proposed to eliminate mandatory call altogether in WHBCC. Our employer wasn’t ready to move that far, so we counter proposed mandatory call be placed in abeyance, except when WHBCC staffing falls sixty percent below the master schedule. See both proposals on our website: [www.oregonrn.org/page/70](http://www.oregonrn.org/page/70). We met with the employer again on September 29 and will report the results of that meeting shortly. Watch for an eblast.

Led by an experienced cadre of stewards, 20 WHBCC nurses wrote letters to the chief nursing officer, explaining why mandatory call is not necessary in their unit.

**Wound Care**

After winning the inclusion of Diagnostic Imaging nurses into our bargaining unit in August, we are now working to include the ten nurses in Wound Care. After 100 percent of the Wound Care nurses signed authorization cards, the employer agreed to bargain their inclusion directly with us. This bypasses the National Labor Relations Board elections process. We are now working to develop a proposal to include them in our bargaining unit and we anticipate meeting with the employer in October. We are so excited that our siblings in these two departments can enjoy union protections!

Seeking Contract Action Team (CAT) Members

Do you know a nurse who wants to get involved in bargaining next year? We are seeking Contract Action Team (CATs) for our next bargaining round. CATs are two-way communication liaisons between members and our negotiators during bargaining.

Each CAT selects five to seven nurses, ideally nurses with which the CAT already has an established relationship. Every two to three weeks during bargaining, CATs will have brief conversations with each of their assignees. These conversations should be face-to-face on breaks or downtime during shifts.

The time commitment is minimal. Most of these conversations happen before or after work, 15-minute break or meal period, or downtime. No meetings to attend, except the one-hour training.

Our bargaining round typically lasts several months until we ratify a new contract. Our contract expires March 1, 2021.

Training is provided by Gary Aguiar, our labor rep, who offers one-hour sessions with an opportunity to learn the basic role, role play, and ask questions.

- Oct. 14, Wednesday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- Oct. 17, Saturday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- Oct. 19, Monday, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
- Oct. 24, Saturday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- Oct. 29, Thursday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- Oct. 29, Thursday, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Register by contacting Gary via text / call at 503-444-0690 or email Aguiar@OregonRN.org
Make Our Union Stronger by Becoming a Steward

Are you interested in learning more about representing your coworkers, problem-solving workplace issues, welcoming new members to their union, and building our union’s overall power to make improvements for nurses?

ONA stewards are the lifeblood of what makes our union strong. A strong union has at least one steward for every unit and shift. Stewards are there to answer colleagues’ questions and discuss concerns and help keep every nurse up to date on important union activities.

Register today to participate in a virtual steward training, Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

More steward training dates are being finalized for December.

Visit www.OregonRN.org to learn more.
Before doing so, we strongly urge nurses to discuss their concerns with our local leaders and our labor rep. Together, we can have conversations with the employer before we communicate with outsiders.

Using our internal chain of command is a productive first step in addressing our concerns. We often find that many nurses share the same apprehensions and we have greater power when nurses speak with a single voice.

DON’T MISS IMPORTANT ONA EMAILS
Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails

1. **Mislabeled**: Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider. Related emails. This is why we encourage nurses to use their personal email addresses instead of work emails.

2. **No Email**: ONA does not have an email on file for you.

3. **Bad Email**: ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.

4. **Blocked**: Due to several failed delivery attempts, our system has stopped attempting to send emails to your email address.

5. **Opted Out**: You have opted out of receiving emails.

6. **Work Email Filters**: Some health care systems filter out ONA emails so nurses don’t receive ONA-related emails. This is why we encourage nurses to use their personal email addresses instead of work emails.

**Fixed Problems to Receive ONA Emails**

1. **Check your junk/spam/clutter folder for ONA emails**: Flag ONA emails as “not junk/spam” and add News@OregonRN.org to your safe sender list.

2. **Email ONA**: To fix reasons 2-6, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.

ONA Resources for Members Impacted by Fires

ONA, along with many other organizations, is marshalling resources for members who have been personally impacted by the fires in Oregon. This includes a new emergency dues relief program and grant programs for individuals in need of assistance approved by the ONA Board of Directors.

The emergency grants program is intended to help cover expenses associated with wildfire evacuations. Members who have been evacuated for 48 hours or more are eligible for a grant of up to $500 to help support you and your family.

If you are experiencing financial hardships due to this disaster, know that we are here for you. Please contact us at MemberServices@OregonRN.org to apply for our new emergency dues relief program OR emergency grants program and let us know what else we can do to support you.

For additional information on available resources or how you can help, visit the ONA website: www.OregonRN.org/Wildfires.