Finally, you can get your bilingual certification!

We settled our Association grievance with the employer on bilingual certification. Even though our contract took effect this summer, the employer kept dragging their feet on identifying an exam to allow nurses to certify their proficiency in a foreign language.

We finally got them to agree to an online exam for medical Spanish language certification, ICBMed. The exam costs $295, for which a nurse can be reimbursed from the ONA education funds. Further, a nurse could use those funds to pay for their time to take the exam. (See §16.1 of our contract.) Nurses who receive a certification will receive an additional $2.00 per hour differential for the bilingual certification for all hours worked.

For other non-bilingual certification, nurses can continue to earn a separate $2.00 per hour differential. (See §9.12 and §9.13 of our MCW Contract.)

To receive bilingual differential retroactively for all hours worked since July 13, 2021, a nurse:
- Must have been employed at McKenzie-Willamette since June 6, 2021,
- Complete the test on or before March 1, 2022,
- And provide the employer with documented certification by April 1, 2022.

Please keep us informed about your progress on this matter, including your experiences with the exam.

So far, we have only heard from nurses who want to certify in Spanish. If a nurse would like to become certified in a non-Spanish language or American Sign Language, we will identify an exam at that time. Nurses will receive the bilingual differential for only one language.

This bilingual certification allows nurses to communicate with patients for medical purposes but would not allow the patient to provide legal consent.

For more information, contact Gary, our labor rep, text/call 503-444-0690 or Aguiar@OregonRN.org.