



Oregon Nurses Association
Bargaining Unit Newsletter

Aug. 23, 2018

Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Association of University Registered Nurses (AURN)



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A VOICE FOR NURSES: THE HISTORY OF SHARED GOVERNANCE AT OHSU

By Harold Fleshman

Before our current model, the shared governance structure was management-run. OHSU administration selected nurses they would seek buy-in from on organizational proposals and initiatives. For the most part, staff nurses weren't involved in any final decisions. For example, a change would be implemented to our charting forms—paper back then—and the forms would be given to us with very little education on why the change was happening, how the change was developed or education on how to use them. In 1999, during negotiations unilateral issues came to a head and we attempted to get our concerns over to management. What resulted was a strike vote. The vote was greater than 50 percent of the nurses but not enough to strike. The structures and behaviors continued and we were told by management how to practice nursing with no avenue to advocate for our practice.

In 2001 when we went back to the table and things went poorly, some of the issues we discussed were that nurses couldn't advocate for safe patient care and autonomy in their practice. As negotiations advanced another strike vote was held and this time it passed with a strong majority! We were on strike for 56 days. The only way we could find a resolution between the two interests was to strive for Magnet status. Magnet would benefit both parties mutually. It would give the organization higher recognition and also allow nurses to obtain autonomy and

safety in their practice. Guess how? Yep, by starting the process for shared governance.

Magnet requires that shared governance committee meetings have equal number of participants between nurses and administration. Decisions would come from an equitable shared conclusion. Magnet was our tool for strengthening our voice. Many committees resulted from this and that is how they were written into our collective bargaining agreement. These include the Employee Benefits Council, Professional Nursing Care Committee, Nurse Staffing Committee, Unit-Based Nursing Practice Councils, and so many more!

Our historic labor strike “blew up” our old template and began our journey to a true shared governance process with the intent that both management and staff nurses could come together with their ideas and develop the best outcomes for our work environments and our patients.

Now let's pledge together to maintain the strength of shared governance.

**Need a union steward or
have a contract question?**

**Call the ONA Hotline:
503-494-6880**

What is 'I Pledge'?

As nurses, we entered this profession to devote ourselves to the care and welfare of our patients and to the greater community. We pledged to maintain and elevate standards of care so that individuals under our watch are protected and safe. At OHSU, nurses come to work every day pledging to give their best. ONA, our professional nursing organization, is committed to our nursing leadership in shared governance, to ensuring workplace safety, to advocating for employment fairness and to enhancing our work environment. This is *our* Pledge to each other as ONA nurses.

- **I Pledge** to be dedicated to safe practice
- **I Pledge** to uphold my patients' safety and care
- **I Pledge** to respect my team
- **I Pledge** to advocate for my patients and my profession
- **I Pledge** to help maintain the benefits we have earned
- **I Pledge** to stand up in solidarity with my fellow nurses on issues important to all of us
- **I Pledge** to stand united with my fellow ONA members



'I Pledge' is our union's ongoing commitment to champion issues important to both nurses and patients. Shared governance is one tool that helps us do this. Shared governance gives us the impetus and voice to enact change. Whether it's the staffing committee, the UBNPC's, collaborative, cooperative or the many other committees that enable us to be a part of organizational improvements in patient care and safety in our own work environments. Shared governance gives us the strength to maintain our pledge.

Join us in our first pledge—the pledge to protect shared governance. During the week of Sept. 3-7 ('I Pledge' week) there will be 'I Pledge' lapel pins distributed at multiple locations throughout OHSU. Snacks will be offered at these tables as well! Come say hello and tell us about what 'I Pledge' means to you! Also, keep a look out for the next 'I Pledge' initiative.

2019 ONA NURSE LOBBY DAY

Join hundreds of nurses and nursing students at the State Capitol in Salem. ONA will provide resources, materials and training to all attendees. First-time participants are welcome. ONA Nurse Lobby Day is open to all ONA members and student affiliates.

Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2019



- Meet your state legislators
- Learn more about 2019 legislative issues that affect nurses and our patients
- Learn how to effectively lobby decision makers
- Advocate for priority legislation and issues like patient health care access, workplace safety and advanced practice scope

Visit www.OregonRN.org for details and registration.