Bargaining Update #2: Black Lives Matter and other proposals from Wednesday, June 3.

Our Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)/Association of University Registered Nurses (AURN) bargaining team returned to the (virtual) table on Wednesday and took the lead on the major issue of our moment.

Below is the text in full of what our team proposed:

In response to both currently and historically disparate treatment of Black people in America, a nationwide movement has arisen to assert that Black Lives Matter (BLM).

In support of the BLM movement, nurses and healthcare workers at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) come together to proclaim a week of action, affirmation, and solidarity, to be called “Black Lives Matter At OHSU,” as outlined below:

1. The purpose of BLM week, and of the subsequent activity is to inspire, to explore and grapple with the past, present, and future status of black lives in our society, in healthcare and at OHSU.

2. To affirm black lives status as equal to, and not secondary to, the lives of others.

3. To recognize and acknowledge the Black lives healthcare disparities present in our institution and in our culture.

4. That OHSU should be a place for the practice of equity, for the building of understanding, and for the active engagement of all in creating pathways to freedom and justice for all people.

5. A committee supported by OHSU with the appropriate resources, will be formed including Black Nurse Leaders and OHSU employees along with OHSU Diversity Staff to coordinate and plan activities for the first full week of February to support this week of education, reflection, dialogue, and action in order to engage our healthcare communities in activities that support the understandings and affirmations that underlie the Black Lives Matter movement. This committee will report work and progress to the AURN/OHSU Co-op once a year.

6. The ONA/AURN and OHSU seek to address institutionalized racism in our institution and to offer spaces for dialogue among staff by supporting and facilitating professional development work related to race and other challenging topics.

We will communicate updates as we get them.
Other ONA/AURN proposals:
At our third contract bargaining session (our second one after a hiatus) our team gave OHSU administration proposals on “Hours of Work” and “Grievance and Arbitration”. Highlights include:

- Ability to streamline REQ (nurses who are curtailed or canceled who chose to take time unpaid should be able to directly code it in KRONOS.)

- Enhanced and updated grievance language

- More protections for resource nurses (For instance: Travelers should be curtailed/canceled before resource nurses except those working beyond minimum shift obligation.)

- Unequivocal language that it is OHSU’s responsibility to ensure that nurses can take lunches and breaks: “…that responsibility includes appropriate staff so that every employee can take breaks without impacting patient safety or increasing the number of patients the nurse is responsible for as determined in the staffing plan.”

- Protections for lactation breaks

- All vacation grievances will be expedited, not just those “in block”

OHSU Proposals:

- The most concerning proposals to our ONA/AURN bargaining team include:

- Vast expansion of Mandatory Call, to include everyone! The language specifically added Interventional Radiology and Apherisis, but also said, “and all other units as needed, with advance notice.” As one bargaining member said, “This would give OHSU carte blanche for mandatory call.”

- More restrictions on resource nurses: Increasing the minimum to 48 hours a month—double the current 24; two holidays a year required (currently one); only one period of leave will be permitted in Spring and Summer (not a current restriction)

- Limits to visitations by ONA representatives (“Visits with employees must take place during non-working time.” Even though they never interfere with patient care, and as nurses would never drop patient care to meet with them, OHSU wants to restrict them so they cannot round to our units and speak with us unless we are officially “off.”

ONA/AURN COVID MOU
Our ONA/AURN bargaining team informed OHSU that we intend to push to extend the MOU.
This is a top priority and more details will be forthcoming.