Get Involved!

There are a lot of ways to be involved in your union and make Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) a better place to work and receive care!

Because of our union, we have a meaningful voice in our wages, benefits, working conditions, and how we care for our patients here at OHSU. Our Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)/Association of University Registered Nurses (AURN) bargaining unit has been around since 1972, when nurses first joined together to organize and bargain our first contract.

The continued strength of our union depends upon the involvement of nurses like us. Our new contract has been signed and the printed version is on its way, but the work of the union continues even when we are not in bargaining.

Several important leadership roles on our ONA/AURN executive committee are up for election or appointment. Consider nominating a nurse colleague, or, better yet, consider running and serving in one of these roles yourself!

PNCC Vacancy

OHSU recognized the professional nursing care committee (PNCC) as a resource to direct care nurses in OHSU’s hospital and clinics on matters related to patient care and professional development.

Per our contract, the PNCC is composed of six nurses. PNCC members serve 2-year terms and elections happen annually, with half the positions open for election each year. You can learn more in the AURN bylaws on the bargaining unit webpage at www.OregonRN.org/OHSU.

The committee meets the fourth Wednesday of every month from 4 to 6 p.m. Nurses are paid from a bank of hours for their attendance and for any work done to support the committee and its activities.

We currently have on PNCC vacancy. If we have more than one nomination, an election will be scheduled. If you are interested in serving please fill out the consent to serve form: www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Here are some things the PNCC is involved with at OHSU. In collaboration with the coordinating council, the PNCC does the training for new unit-based nurse practice council (UBNPC) chairs.

One member of the PNCC serves as a liaison to the staffing committee. PNCC also serves as an advisory committee for appointments of direct care nurses to all nursing councils and committees that relate to nursing service or direct patient care.

PNCC monitors the distribution of staff development funds as described in Section 21.4. It is also responsible for continued on page 2
maintaining and updating the national certification listing to inform staff of eligible certifications for the annual certification bonus and reimbursement. More information on the PNCC can be found in your contract section 27.3. Or go to www.OregonRN.org/ohsu and follow the contract link.

The Staffing Committee

Improve Staffing By Serving On The Staffing Committee

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) just completed a survey at OHSU. In light of this, the staffing committee is going to have a lot of important work to do. The committee is made up of direct care registered nurses as well as an equal number of nurse managers. We have openings for several representatives.

The committee meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month from 2 to 5 p.m. Members are paid for attending this meeting. Members of the staffing committee review and approve staffing plans, SVFs (staffing variance forms), and any new policies or procedures that impact nurse staffing.

If you are in one of the units where there is an opening, consider running to serve on this committee. If there is more than one applicant for each vacancy an election will be scheduled. If you are interested in serving please fill out the consent to serve form: www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Current staffing committee vacancies:

- **Pediatrics:** 8N, 9N, 9S, 10N, 10S, PANDA, Pediatric Sedation, Pediatric (10C), Pediatric Float Pool
- **Perioperative / Peri-Anesthesia:** Intra-operative (ORs): CEI, CHH, DCH, and SOR Pre and post PACU: South (6A), CHH, CEI & DCH
- **Ambulatory #2:** CWH, Home Infusion, Family Medicine (*5), Digestive Health Center

DAC Committee Opening

AURN needs a representative to serve on the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), which advises the president and the executive leadership team on ways to enhance diversity, multiculturalism and equal opportunity for all aspects of our mission.

As a campus-wide group, the DAC supports diversity initiatives across the university, everything from helping units understand the business case for diversity, to providing practical resources for employees, students and community members. The DAC represents all of the university’s mission areas and student, staff and faculty groups.

Working together, DAC members enhance communication and collaboration across OHSU’s schools and departments. For more information see the DAC website click here.

The seats on this committee are filled by appointment. Submit a consent to serve form if you are interested, and the AURN board will meet in June to review all forms. If you are interested in serving please fill out the consent to serve form: www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

New Labor Representative

We have a new, full-time ONA labor relations representative for nurses at OHSU. Daniel Zamora is our newest addition to the team. Prior to coming to ONA, Daniel worked as a labor organizer for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) in their healthcare division.

Daniel is originally from Kansas but has lived most of his life in Las Vegas, NV. When not at work, Daniel takes his role as an uncle very seriously by engaging in prolonged pillow fights with his nephew and nagging his 13-year-old niece to let him help with her math homework.
AURN Executive Committee

AURN recently had a resignation. Our ONA executive committee is made up of our nurse colleagues who we elect to help run the day-to-day operations of our union. There are five positions on the executive committee and we have an opening for a new Treasurer.

All vacancies outside of the annual election process are filled by appointment. In June, AURN will review all consent to serve forms received.

If you are interested in serving as Treasurer for this committee, please fill out a consent to serve form www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Grievance Committee

Our contract allows for 15 nurses to be paid to help with union representation and contract enforcement, an important role at a big hospital like OHSU.

This grievance committee meets 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the second Thursday of every other month. Being a part of this committee means being committed to attend training (if not already trained) to file grievances, attend investigatory meetings when needed, answer contract questions, and be an advocate for our contract.

Nurse representatives on this committee also share responsibility for checking messages on the ONA/AURN hotline and returning calls to answer questions. The grievance committee seats are filled by appointment.

In June, AURN will review all consent to serve forms received. If you are interested, please fill out a consent to serve form www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Membership Committee

This committee helps with explaining our union to new hires and asking them to join. Since COVID we discontinued the in-person new employee orientation (NEO) sessions.

We are looking for nurses who are creative thinkers and problem solvers who can help introduce newly hired nurses to our union and explain how ONA works at OHSU and across the state. Specifically, we want committee members to explain to new hires what it means to work at a union hospital, promote full membership to new hires, and talk about your experiences as a nurse and union member.

Membership is union power! If you are interested, please fill out a consent to serve form and write membership committee in the “other” box www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Unit Representatives

Unit representatives are ONA nurse leaders for their unit. Unit representatives are the eyes, ears and backbone of a union. Our union is stronger when we, as nurses, are empowered to advocate for ourselves and our patients.

ONA unit representatives help peers to better understand their rights, and to help point them in the right direction when they have questions or concerns about our contract or things going on at work. Every nurse needs someone to turn to for quick answers when they need help, that means we need unit representatives on every shift in every unit.

Being a unit representative is easy. The bulk of the commitment of a unit representative is simply updating your unit’s bulletin board, making sure your coworkers are receiving important updates and information from ONA, being available to your co-workers when they have questions/concerns and knowing how best to triage those questions.

ONA provides beginning and advanced training (like basic contract interpretation and how to help your co-workers if they get called in for investigatory meetings), and we have a network of unit representatives across our facility who work to help one another as much as possible.

We don’t have ONA unit representatives in many units. We need at least one unit representative for every unit, on every shift. If you can’t fill the role but know someone who would be good for it — ask them to help out! It’s important that nurses have someone to turn to that they already have a relationship with. Who in your
Committee Openings  (continued from page 3)

area do you think would be a good fit for the role?

If you are interested in learning more about the role, please fill out a consent to serve form and write in unit representative in the “other” box www.OregonRN.org/ohsu-cts.

Center for Women's Health Grievance Update

Center for Women's Health (CWH) RN positions and work are being replaced by medical assistants. In the most recent occurrence, there was a posting for an RN position, a nurse applied for and was awarded the position, then OHSU retracted that award and announced they are hiring two medical assistants instead.

These actions are major violations of multiple parts of the contract. Just as concerning is the climate of fear and intimidation at CWH and non-RN managers making decisions beyond their scope.

An association grievance was filed on May 7 and the Step 1 meeting was held on Thursday, May 20. OHSU administration was made aware that all 2,800 nurses at OHSU are watching, as are the 15,000 members of ONA.

If your unit/department has experienced similar circumstances, please contact your ONA representative Daniel Zamora (email Zamora@OregonRN.org) or Grievance Committee member immediately.

Staffing Problems?

Sometimes staffing is a problem during your shift. Staffing variance forms (SVFs) were jointly developed by ONA and OHSU to document situations when staffing levels do not allow nurses to provide appropriate care in a timely manner.

Completing an SVF creates a record of the incident and documents that you felt you were working under unsafe conditions and that you requested additional staff. The SVF helps build an evidence base in order to identify solutions to staffing issues.

When you submit an electronic SVF, a copy is automatically provided to your unit manager, the staffing office, the staffing committee’s administrative support, the PNCC, the Professional Services department of ONA and OHSU’s chief nursing officer.

This allows the PNCC to track staffing trends throughout the hospital and provides the staffing committee with important information about whether the staffing plan on your unit is appropriate. The SVF record could also protect your nursing license if you were reported to the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) for an event occurring on a shift for which you submitted an SVF, therefore documenting that you felt you or your patients were placed in an unsafe situation.

If you ever feel you are working an unsafe assignment due to staffing, take the following steps to ensure all committees and related leaders at OHSU have enough evidence to identify solutions and work to address staffing needs:

- Notify your charge nurse or nurse manager (you are not required to notify more than one person during an already busy shift);
- Request additional staff;
- Locate the SVF on the Nursing Portal at https://o2.ohsu.edu/orgapps/nursing/sv/, and complete the form within 24-48 hours of the affected shift if possible (though the form can be submitted at any time).

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Once you submit an SVF online, an email notification is automatically sent to all concerned parties listed above, and the following process should occur:

- The unit manager and staff nurse will discuss the content of the report. This is an information-gathering session that should be focused on fact-finding and solutions.
  - If your manager questions your use of the SVF or insists you contributed to the problem, you should ask for union representation and call ONA.
- The unit manager alerts the chair of the unit-based nursing practice committee (UBNPC) about the need to place discussion of the SVF on the next UBNPC meeting agenda.
- All discussions regarding trends and opportunities for improving the staffing plan will be documented in the UBNPC minutes.

- The UBNPC’s discussion of the SVF should focus on reviewing any identified barriers, documenting any variances in patient care and acknowledging trends, and identifying opportunities for improving the unit staffing plan.
- The unit manager then writes a response on the SVF itself, which the cluster representative on the hospital-based nurse staffing committee (HBNSC) will review.
- The HBNSC reviews the outcome of the SVF discussion at the unit level (from the UBNPC minutes) and determines whether further action is needed.

Ultimately, if all the criteria are met and parties involved agree the issue is resolved, the HBNSC then closes the file.

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Don’t Miss Important ONA Emails

Make sure you receive timely communications, and have the most up-to-date information on your contract, bargaining issues, upcoming votes, nursing research, practice issues and workplace policies. If you are not receiving ONA emails, we can help.

You can fix most problems by simply emailing ONA at News@OregonRN.org with your name, personal email address, name of your employer, and state you want to be added to ONA’s email list.

**Fixing 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 most causes of not receiving emails, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.

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**Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails**

1. **Spam/Junk Filters:** Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider.
2. **No Email:** ONA doesn’t have your email on file.
3. **Bad Email:** ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.
4. **Opted Out:** You have opted out of receiving emails.
5. **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.
2021 ONA Bargaining Unit Leadership Conference

Friday, June 25
8:30am-4:30pm
Virtual

This year’s Bargaining Unit Leadership Conference will look at the concept of Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG), how it impacts bargaining in health care, how it impacts our communities we care for, and how ONA might utilize these concepts to further our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the future.

Bargaining for the Common Good is a return to the roots of unionism – the basic idea of advancing shared interests. We are not just nurses, we are community members, parents, users of public transportation, social justice advocates and renters too! Our employers are required by law to negotiate employment contracts with us, but that only addresses one part of our lives and largely ignores the community members we live with and care for.

Failing to support our community members outside the hospital leads to problems inside our workplace. For example, nurses have cited the lack of community-based mental health services as a factor in increasing boarding and violence in hospitals. This is the definition of a lose-lose issue. Patients, nurses, and our community are all needlessly suffering because of the same problem. So, what happens when union members, especially nurses, take the power of bargaining and pull in the concerns of the communities we live in? How can we use our collective power to advance social justice goals and our values of diversity, equity and inclusion?

Join us virtually for ONA’s 2021 Bargaining Unit Leadership Conference, Friday, June 25 to learn more about the BCG framework and how negotiations can achieve win-win results both for ONA members and our communities.

Who Should Attend?
ONA members who are in a bargaining unit can attend for FREE. If you want to attend but are unsure about your membership status, please contact us.

Continuing Education
Limited continuing nursing education contact hours will be available.

Oregon Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

Registration
Registration is open through May 26.
Visit www.oregonrn.org/event/2021BULC to register today!