More than 1,000 nurses from OHSU made a clear statement during the survey to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) that using the “buddy” system for meals and breaks is not effective.

OHA investigated staffing at OHSU and cited OHSU for failure to adhere to the Oregon Hospital Nurse Staffing Law for meals and breaks and they noted the citation reflected repeated non-compliance with the law.

Nurses in the Labor and Delivery Unit stood together this year in speaking up for safe staffing for their patients! Ninety percent of the nurses signed a petition to management demanding that the unsafe staffing be addressed.

An association grievance was filed, and many brave nurses testified to the unsafe conditions. Along the way these nurses were pressured and told they were causing trouble by speaking up.

But in the end, they gathered all the data necessary to clearly demonstrate the dire need in their unit and were finally heard with agreement from management for major increases of FTE and a promise for the first pilot of a meals and breaks nurse program at OHSU.

These nurses are educated, empowered, and strong because they stood together, and we hope they are an inspiration for nurses across the hospital.

At the August Nurse Staffing Committee meeting, Chief Nursing Executive, Dana
Bjarnason; and Doernbecher’s Chief Nursing Officer, Jane Russell came to discuss meals and breaks and notified the staffing committee they are open to pilot programs utilizing dedicated meal and break nurses and will increase budgets (HPPD and FTE) where needed to accomplish this.

In the past, attempts by UBNPC members to run pilots with dedicated break nurses was met with management obstruction, intimidation, and retaliation. This is no longer the case, and UBNPC members are encouraged to think of innovative ways to solve the longstanding problem of meals and breaks. Frontline nurses know the innovation we need: dedicated meal and break nurses who do not already have a patient assignment.

For help with your staffing plan and designing meal and break pilot programs reach out to your staffing committee cluster representative (link) or your ONA nurse practice consultant Matt Calzia at calzia@oregonrn.org.

Required COVID-19 Vaccination

Under Governor Brown’s orders, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has issued a ruling that requires all health care workers, including our members, to become vaccinated by Oct. 18 or six weeks after full FDA approval of the vaccine, whichever is later. The governor has said the mandate will include religious and medical exemptions, which we are awaiting news to learn more about.

Anytime a new rule/order/law is passed, as a union we have a right to negotiate the impact of that on our members. As such, we have issued a demand to bargain over this. Management will be meeting with us very soon to negotiate how this impacts our members. At OHSU, about 80 percent of nurses are vaccinated and we continue to strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated.

Across the state, the Oregon Nurses Association is issuing demands to bargain over this at nearly all our workplaces. We are hopeful that a fair agreement can be reached for how to implement this at OHSU.

In the meantime, our AURN COVID-19 Monitoring Taskforce continues to meet with management over a variety of issues. We have discussed the need for free testing to be available to everyone on paid time due to the nature of our work, and the outbreaks that have occurred at OHSU. Management has issued a notice that any staff member may currently get tested.

Please watch for updates in the coming weeks. If you have strong feelings about the vaccine mandate that you would like to share with your AURN board members please submit them using this form and know that each OHSU nurse who serves on the AURN board will be reviewing all comments and feedback.

Our board represents all AURN members and hopes we can stand together when facing times like these.

COVID-19 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Extension


For those that don’t know, an MOU is a legally binding letter of agreement that is as strong as our collective bargaining agreement. MOUs are used during the three years of a collective bargaining agreement to reach agreement on urgent matters that cannot wait until the next round of negotiations.

Extending our COVID-19 MOU means many rights and protections have been extended as we face the current Delta surge.

Here are some of highlights from the previous MOU which there was concern about expiration dates:

▶ **Education funds:** from 2020-21 will be extended for use through September 26 for education that was delayed due to travel restrictions this past year.

*continued on page 3*
**COVID-19 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Extension**  
*(continued from page 2)*

**Vacation:** hours that have accrued in the over limit bank or holding bank shall remain in those banks for now, and be moved to the regular bank on Dec. 24, 2021.

All other elements of the COVID-19 MOU were extended as well. This includes management utilizing redeployments until Sept. 26, which given the current COVID-19 hospitalizations in Oregon and utilization of our COVID-19 units, we saw there was an urgent need. Our state is in crisis, and we know that your fellow nurses in these units need our support.

However, we stood firm that these redeployments only be used for what they are intended, and they don’t last beyond the current surge without our union being able to reassess what is necessary.

We know OHSU has longer term chronic staffing issues, and these redeployments are not intended to resolve that issue.

Additionally, volunteers must be used first, and we discussed with management the need for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account, for example with childcare and other care giving issues at home.

You can read the full MOU here.

If you have thoughts about future MOUs or extensions, particularly around COVID-19, you can email the AURN board at aurnboard@oregonrn.org

**Neonatal Resuscitation Program: Temporary Incentive MOU**

We are in the process of negotiating an incentive for Doernbecher nurses to volunteer to get certified with the Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) so they can float to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). There will be a bonus for those that volunteer to get NRP certified. We are in the process of negotiating this MOU and will have more details soon.

For background, we filed a grievance more than a year ago about the forced floating of nurses to the NICU without management taking into account their training and experience as stipulated in our collective bargaining agreement. Management rejected our grievance at each step of the process and ultimately it went to a hearing before a labor arbitrator, because when our contract is not followed, we can seek third party binding arbitration.

This arbitrator was delayed in hearing our case for quite some time with COVID-19 limiting arbitration hearings all across Oregon. But the case was finally heard and the arbitrator ruled in our favor, that management “taking into account the nurse’s training and experience” does indeed include making sure nurses who float to the NICU have NRP. Of note in the arbitrator’s decision:

"Section 7.13.2 is not satisfied by having floaters attend less acute NICU patients. The evidence showed that NICU patients are in need of specialized care. If they were not, they would not be in the NICU. Nothing indicates that only a certain few patients will need resuscitation, or specialized care to avoid resuscitation. "Taking into account" a nurse’s training should recognize this fluidity in care demanded in the NICU, and should, therefore, include NRP certification before an assignment to the NICU."-Michael E. de Grasse, Arbitrator

Due to this arbitrator’s decision, management is required to resolve this situation. We have discussed and exchanged proposals with management to create an incentive bonus for Doernbecher nurses outside the NICU to get NRP certified, and then be the only nurses that float to the NICU.

We hope to have this in place as soon as possible, so that a properly trained group of nurses will be available to float to the NICU. In the meantime, we are asking nurses to volunteer temporarily until this is resolved. We are negotiating an end date, where no further floating will occur without the NRP certification.

For nurses in other units that float to units and do not have the training and experience including resuscitation certifications to be caring for those patients, we ask that you

*continued on page 4*
Temporary Incentive MOU  (continued from page 3)

contact Amber Cooper at Cooper@OregonRN.org and let her know the following:
1. Your name
2. Home unit
3. Unit you are floated to
4. Resuscitation certification that is lacking
5. Any additional information

Get Involved!

There are a lot of ways to be involved in your union and make 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 ONA/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.

Two major leadership roles on our ONA/AURN executive committee are vacant.

To serve on any committee or position, the individual volunteering to serve must fill out the nomination form on page 6 to consent to serve by Sept. 24.

Consider nominating a nurse colleague, or, better yet, consider running and serving in one of these roles yourself!

AURN Executive Committee Has Vacancies!

AURN recently has had a resignation and we are seeking to fill our Member at Large officer position.

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 currently have one vacancy. All vacancies outside of the annual election process are filled by appointment. AURN will review all consent to serve forms received by the deadline of Sept. 24.

Improve Staffing by Serving on the Staffing Committee

The OHA just did 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 3 to 5 p.m. Members are paid for attending this meeting. Members of the staffing committee review and approve staffing plans, staffing variance forms (SVFs), 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 are more than one applicant for each vacancy and election will be scheduled.

Current staffing committee vacancies:

- Critical care/ICU and ED - 7A, 7C NSICU, 8C, 12K, ICU Nursing Resource Management (NRM), Adult ED, Peds ED, 6B and ED obs
- Ambulatory #2 –CWH, Home Infusion, Family Medicine (*5), Digestive Health Center

The Diversity Advisory Council Committee Opening

The Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) 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 here. The seats on this committee are filled by appointment. AURN will review all consent to serve forms received prior to Sept. 24.

Impairment Free Taskforce Members

AURN needs a few more people to serve on this taskforce. It’s a very unique taskforce that is more effective and progressive in its approach than nearly any other hospital in the state.

It’s a rare opportunity to serve on such an important and well-run committee. Here is the full description from our collective bargaining agreement:

"26.8.1 Impairment Free Workplace Committee. A joint committee will be maintained to assist management and staff in understanding and administering the policy. The committee shall meet a minimum of one time per calendar year in the month of October to review the policy and changes in partners (drug testing and evaluation vendors).

The committee shall be composed of six (6) members; three (3) members designated by AURN and three (3) members designated by the Employer.

Every reasonable effort will be made to reach full consensus on any material changes to this policy. If consensus fails, the issue will be decided by majority vote among committee members. If the vote does not result in a majority decision, the matter will be referred to the Chief Nurse Executive for a final review and determination. Committee members will be paid at the straight time rate of pay for activities related to the committee.

Membership Committee Chair & Committee Members

This committee helps with welcoming new hires to our union and asking them to join. Since COVID we have no longer had the in-person New Employee Orientation sessions that we have historically had.

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 or membership committee chair in the “other” box.

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 units 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 currently have ONA unit representatives in many units. We need at least one unit representative for every unit, on every shift. If you are interested in learning more about the role, please fill out a consent
Get Involved!  (continued from page 5)

to serve form and write in unit steward in the “other” box.

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

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!

To serve on any committee or position, the individual volunteering to serve must fill out the nomination form below to consent to serve by Sept. 24.

Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)/Association of University Registered Nurses (AURN) at Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU)

You must be a member in good standing in order to nominate or to serve.

Return completed forms to Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) no later than Sept. 24 2021.

Fax to Jaime Newman at 503-293-0013 or email Newman@OregonRN.org

AURN OHSU Nomination Form

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name of Nominee</th>
<th>Signature of Nominee (signifying consent to run and serve if elected)</th>
<th>Date</th>
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OTHER PLEASE SPECIFY:

Please include your contact information below.

ONA will use this information to update its own records and track who has submitted nominations.

Name: ___________________________  Address: ____________________________________________

City: ___________________________  State: _______________  Zip: ___________________________

Home Phone #: ___________________  Cell Phone #: ___________________  Non-work Email: ___________________