OHSU Nurse Staffing Update August 2022

Labor and Delivery Staffing Approved By HNSC!

At the August 3 Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee (HNSC) meeting, members of the 12C UBNPC were joined by their ANM in presenting their staffing plan. The presentation was remarkable and included an in-depth analysis establishing what staffing is needed to comply with professional practice standards. Labor and Delivery nurses have established the gold standard by presenting clear objective data to prove what all direct care nurses know: OHSU is not providing enough staff to create a productive, supportive, and healthy work environment. Now that the plan has been approved by the HSNC, OHSU must staff to it every day, every shift! ONA is taking a 12C staffing grievance to arbitration later this year. OHSU must implement the staffing plan now, and we will make sure the arbitrator hears that loud and clear.

No Consensus on Definition of “Minimum Staffing”

For almost all units the staffing plan must include a minimum staffing grid that provides the number of nursing staff needed at each census point. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has not provided a clear definition of minimum staffing. Your AURN elected leaders on the HNSC assert that the minimum should be based on the needs of the nurses and patients while the management team focuses on HPPD and budgetary approval. This has caused confusion throughout OHSU and disagreement with the HNSC. Direct care members drafted a position statement based on: OHA nurse staffing survey reports and citations; statute and administrative rule language; OHA interpretive guidance; and professional association best practice guidance. You can find the position statement on the OHSU Hospital Nurse staffing Committee page on O2 or on the AURN/ONA page: https://www.oregonrn.org/ohsu

OHSU Nursing Executives Deny Acute Care Association Grievance

On August 16, OHSU nurse executives notified ONA they have denied an association grievance demonstrating OHSU remains wildly out of compliance with the staffing law. OHSU’s response illustrates nursing executives have a distorted perception of the realities at the bedside and a profound lack of urgency. It is no wonder OHSU nurses do not feel valued. They claim to have made significant improvements to bring OHSU into compliance with the law – but those doing
the work know that things have gotten worse, not better since OHA surveyed staff in 2021. OHSU executives blame the nationwide nurse staffing crisis and deny any culpability while they experience turnover rates that are above the already abysmal national averages! Remember: when OHSU and the Portland area were not suffering a nursing shortage? OHSU showed no interest in complying with the law and getting nurses their mandated meals and breaks! Perhaps if nurse executives put as much effort into creating a healthy work environment as they do in trying to find loopholes in the law, they could be more successful in recruiting and retaining nurses. You can read management’s grievance response on the AURN/ONA bargaining unit page: [https://www.oregonrn.org/ohsu](https://www.oregonrn.org/ohsu)

**Impact nurse staffing on your unit:** Support your UBNPC members in writing staffing plans for patients and units, not HPPD! Observe the September 7 HNSC meeting – ask your cluster rep or manager for the Teams link!