The AURN RSV Incentives Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) scheduled to expire today, December 18 is being extended to January 15, 2023. This MOU has provided additional incentives for pediatric and ED units to help with the RSV surge.

When our AURN bargaining team met with management on December 7 we proposed replacing the RSV MOU and the increased CNI MOU with a new MOU for the current respiratory illness surge that would help all nurses across the hospital. When we met, we asked that management get this in place urgently as the Governor was declaring a State of Emergency and the hospital was moving towards Crisis Standards of Care for adult units as well. This did not happen.

In the MOU that now expires on January 15, we do have an increased CNI rate of $46 still in place hospital-wide to help fill holes in staffing. And the additional incentives for pediatric units and ED units remain in place with the extension of the RSV MOU through January 15. However, these MOUs do not currently provide enough incentives to adequately staff OHSU during Crisis Standards of Care occurring right now.

Our AURN Bargaining Team is meeting with management on Wednesday, December 21, where management has committed to further negotiations on these MOUs. We are hopeful a better agreement can be reached that properly supports patients and nurses during this crisis.

Sadly, we have also learned that during Crisis Standards of Care, management has significantly increased outpatient elective procedures beyond what is safe. This is an abuse of the state of emergency that is not about caring for Flu, RSV, and COVID patients. While we know there are adverse health risks to delaying some elective procedures, those risks are outweighed by the risks of running CHH short 5-10 nurses on shifts due to large increases in caseloads. We must speak up when patient safety is at stake.

Additionally, we've made it clear to management that proper incentives need to be in place for our AFSCME peers who are also critically needed during this crisis.
When care is being rationed, space is limited for patients where hallways are being utilized; and when there are not enough nurses to care for the patient population, patients are at risk. We ask that management think seriously about their use of financial resources during this crisis. As a public institution that doubled its assets from over 2 billion to over 4 billion dollars during a worldwide pandemic, we ask that management put more resources towards patient care.

Sincerely,

Your AURN Leadership