We Need Your Input!

Our contract expires Dec. 31, 2016

The Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)/Providence Home Health & Hospice (PHHH) Negotiating Committee recently met to set goals and begin drafting proposals for negotiating a new contract.

Negotiations for a new contract are set to begin in October. Wage increases for 2017 and 2018 will be a key subject of negotiations as always. We already know that the health insurance benefit will not change for 2017, but 2018 is still in question and many nurses would like to see improvements in our health benefit, instead of erosion. Other issues that are likely to come into play are mandatory overtime and staffing for safe patient care.

Your Participation is Critical

Our success in negotiations depends greatly on the participation of all our nurses in the bargaining process. The leverage of a union at the bargaining table is the solidarity of the membership and their willingness to act in a united way to show the Providence administration that we are serious about our proposals and getting a fair contract.

Providence is a big company and likely to drive a hard bargain if nurses don’t show their power. Fortunately, nurses have significant power because they do the bulk of the critical work of caring for patients. That’s work no one else can do. If we send a strong message to Providence that we are united and serious about a particular issue, they will listen.

The first thing nurses need to do to get a good contract is take the bargaining survey. The results of the bargaining survey tells our negotiating committee what issues are important to you. When a
Paid Time Off Scheduling Process Changes for Home Health

To provide more nurses with an opportunity to take vacation time during the prime-time months of June through Sept., Providence Home Care Services (PHCS) and our ONA/PHHH leadership came to an agreement on the following changes to the paid time off (PTO) scheduling procedure for home health (HH):

1. Staff will submit all requests using the HH PTO Requests SharePoint site.

2. The number of nurses that can be scheduled off at any given time is increased at the HH East and HH West sites from 4 to 5 on weekdays. On weekends the allowable number remains at one full-time plus one part-time nurse.

3. During prime time, each nurse is entitled to use seniority to obtain approval for one request of up to two weeks. All additional requests during prime time are subject to administration approval.

4. PTO requests are authorized in order of seniority if the request is made by Sept. 30 for the period of time Jan. 1 - Dec. 31 of the following year. Staff are notified of approval or denial of the PTO request by Nov. 1.

5. After Sept. 30 requests are approved on a first come, first served basis, until the limit has been met. Such requests need to be turned in by the tenth day of the month before the schedule for the following month is posted. For example, request for days off in April must be turned in by March 10.

6. Staff are given a written response (approval, denial or status update with an estimate on when a decision will be made) within two weeks.

7. Unusual circumstances, such as major family events will be considered on an individual basis if the maximum number of staff have already been granted time off.

8. Requests will need to be made in writing. Please give as much notice as possible since staffing will still need to be taken into consideration.

For further clarification of the PHCS PTO scheduling process, ask your supervisor for a copy of POLICY/PROCEDURE 707-4.

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majority of nurses have taken our survey, we'll know what you want and we'll have credibility when we tell Providence what your bottom line is. A high percentage of participation in the survey also shows Providence that nurses are interested and paying attention to what goes on at the bargaining table. It demonstrates nurses are willing to take small actions now supporting their team in hopes of avoiding the need for more serious demonstrations of unity in the future, such as rallies or picketing.

The bargaining survey is confidential. No personal identifying information will be shared with Providence.

If a request is denied, a written explanation will be provided.

Only aggregate data will be shared, (e.g. the percentage of nurses who would like to see improvements in the retirement plan). But please include your personal email on the survey because the next step for ONA nurses is to watch for alerts and information from your negotiation committee.

We'll need your support to get the best possible contract. This might include an ONA button wearing campaign, attending negotiation sessions, placing signs in your car while at work, or other activities that show solidarity and resolve. Your participation level will determine what we can achieve.