We met with Providence Medford Medical Center’s (PMMC) negotiators and the Federal Mediator on Friday, Jan. 29. PMMC expressed some priorities via the mediator that we took into consideration. Our team put together a comprehensive package proposal to move things forward that we believe balances and addresses multiple ONA members and PMMC administrative priorities. A proposal is an off the record package, generally with compromises in some areas to address improvements to others or explore a potential mutually acceptable solution to an issue.

Before we provided our proposal package to PMMC, ONA Negotiator, Dan Richmond, Float Pool RN, read a statement to the entire negotiation team (see next article) on behalf of our ONA nurses based on all the emails to Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), Kate Kitchell, member dialogue and the real struggles PMMC ONA nurses have faced in the last year.

Between our statement, 260+ petition signatures delivered to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Christopher Pizzi, and emails to Kate, PMMC has received our message loud and clear. We expect an acceptable contract deal addressing the issues and soon. It was expressed via the mediator that PMMC felt like the package was a breakthrough and they will cost our package out with an emailed response in the next week or so. They expressed being open to meeting without the mediator sooner than Friday, Feb. 26, the next available date for mediation.

While we await PMMC’s response, ONA members and staff will round this week with ONA masks, stickers, goodies and creative ways you can keep the pressure on. Keeping PMMC focused on agreeing to a fair contract with your participation and visibility is crucial!

Also, we will plan a drop-in and electronic Q&A session for members to ask questions, discuss what authorizing an informational picket looks like, potentially pursuing community support and other measures to reach an agreement.
By Dan Richmond, RN, Float Pool

2020 was a year like no other in life, in general and as a nurse. We’ve all had to face restrictions, evacuations and devastation in our communities from fires, and of course the pandemic. Despite all the hardship working as a nurse and in our personal lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, PMMC ONA nurses have stepped up and had PMMC’s back.

- PMMC ONA nurses care for our community despite recycling disposable, one time use personal protection equipment (PPE) and following PPE recommendations we know are substandard and based on supply shortages.

- PMMC ONA nurses have prepared to care for our community by agreeing to receive ventilator training and to provide critical care outside of intensive care units if needed.

- PMMC ONA nurses have cross trained to completely different specialties, moving from operating, procedural, and pre-surgical areas to train to help care for COVID-19 patients on telemetry and inpatient care units.

- PMMC ONA nurses have been furloughed and low censused, forced to burn vacation time, lose pay and/or been denied unemployment benefits or lost in an antiquated unemployment system.

- When the census, acuity and patient volumes are high, PMMC ONA nurses frequently work short under more stressful circumstances. We skip breaks and are asked to work extra and stay late.

- PMMC ONA nurses have received no hazard compensation. In fact, we have not even received a cost of living adjustment for over one and a half years despite working in hazardous conditions as essential workers.

- PMMC ONA nurses have spent more time exposed to and caring for COVID-19 patients than any other essential healthcare worker at PMMC.

- PMMC ONA nurses have shouldered the burden of working in hazardous conditions and exposing our families to COVID-19 while trying to homeschool our children.

- PMMC ONA nurses graciously agreed to pause negotiations and extend our contract while Providence assessed the economic impact and uncertainty over COVID-19.

- PMMC ONA nurses have watched Providence

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engage in aggressive, cost cutting campaigns despite government funding, ultra low interest rates, forgivable loans and watched as we have made up previously delayed or cancelled surgery volumes. Patient care volumes are recovering.

- PMMC ONA nurses have been exposed and/or contracted COVID-19 only to have wildly varied experiences with employee health. Delayed, disorganized or denied testing; not placed on paid leave and forced to use paid time off (PTO) and sick time; billed for COVID-19 tests; told to work under “emergency staffing” guidelines and denied workman’s comp, placed on varied quarantine times. All without regard for the emotional stress placed on nurses and their families or further potential exposure to co-workers.

- As Providence’s own executives have stated, we are amazing, we go deep everyday, we carry out the Mission, and we know people are burned out.

- PMMC ONA nurses understand we have been more than reasonable and accommodating to the hospital. PMMC ONA nurses know the community will support us. PMMC ONA nurses know the hospital can’t deliver care during the COVID-19 pandemic without us.

It’s PMMC and Providence regional leadership’s turn to reach deep, show us respect and show us gratefulness for just how accommodating and flexible we have been. It’s time to agree to a contract that pays nurses our fair market value through wages, differentials and benefits that ensures nurses are adequately rested to provide safe patient care and eliminates barriers to retention and recruitment.

We have the ability today to settle on a contract that delivers on all of these things so we can all focus on getting through this COVID-19 pandemic and not be distracted from providing quality care to our community. PMMC, show us you have our back too.

Don’t Miss Important ONA Emails

Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails

1. **Mislabeled**: Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider.

2. **No Email**: ONA does not have an email on file for you.

3. **Bad Email**: ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.

4. **Blocked**: Due to several failed delivery attempts, our system has stopped attempting to send emails to your email address.

5. **Opted Out**: You have opted out of receiving emails.

6. **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.

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 reasons 2-6, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.
Virtual Nurse Lobby Week

Feb. 22-26, 2021
We Always Show Up!

Join hundreds of nurses and nursing students for Virtual Nurse Lobby Week, Feb. 22-26.

This is your opportunity to change Oregon’s health policies, improve nurse staffing, raise patient care standards and more by meeting with legislators to advocate for innovative health care solutions. Share your experiences and stories with legislators to help shape health policy for years to come!

This year, you will have multiple opportunities to advocate for your profession and patients, including:

• Virtual Legislative Meetings
• Video Testimonials
• Online Letter Submission

Learn more and register for Nurse Lobby Week and Membership Meetings at:

www.OregonRN.org

Legislative Priorities

• Hospital Nurse Staffing: Emergency Planning & Funding OHA for Effective Oversight
• Telehealth Reimbursement
• Workers Comp and COVID-19
• Public Health Modernization
• Addressing Racism as a Public Health Crisis
• Progress Toward Universal Health Care

Leg. Agenda Membership Meetings

Get your first updates on legislative hearings and priorities this legislative session.

• Monday, Feb. 1, 6-7:30 p.m.
• Wednesday, Feb. 3, 6-7:30 p.m.
• Friday, Feb. 5, 6-7:30 p.m.