Newberg Mediation Update!

Our Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) bargaining team met with Providence Newberg Medical Center (PMMC) administration for our first mediation session on July 24, 2018. This was our ninth bargaining session this year.

We were welcomed by gifts from our staffing committee co-chair, Savannah Jensen. She made each person on the bargaining team “nevertheless they persisted” coffee mugs to start the day and “because bargaining” wine glasses to end the day! She also wrote us nice thank you cards. We so appreciate how thoughtful she is! She really helped lift the mood that morning.

We were able to reach an agreement on principle for Article 9, which is “Hours of Work and Scheduling”. This would be our seventh proposal. In this article, there are language improvements for scheduling, which includes fairness for weekend scheduling, setting schedules based upon templates or self-scheduling, bidding based upon seniority and review by a bargaining unit nurse. The reason we agreed on this in principle but did not do a formal tentative agreement with a signature yet was due to this being part of a package proposal.

The other important items in our first package that we proposed to PNMC were overtime for patient care beyond 36 hours, our Healthy Work Environment language, qualified and competent break relief, fair incentive pay (SIP) language and 2.5 percent across the board increases for the next 3 years (2.5 percent in January 1, 2019, 2.5 percent in January 1, 2020, 2.5 percent in January 1, 2021).

We brought up the fact that we have been out in the community at the First Friday Art Walk and at the Farmers Market, talking to community members about the issues that are important to us and quality patient care: break relief, safe staffing and having a healthy work environment. We collected
contact information from teachers, nurses and other concerned citizens so that we may contact them for our next course of action.

Administration responded with their own package proposal, which did not include acceptance of any of our major priorities. We made some progress in our Article 20 - professional development language, which includes a provision that we can open the contract before it is expired if the Mike Olberding fund ceases to be available. Administration stated that they couldn’t have the specific provisions of this policy in the contract because the fund is not funded by PNMC. We are allowed up to $1000 per year for those of us that are .6 to 1.0 FTE. This is a richer benefit than the education funds in other Providence contracts. There are other terms required to be eligible. Please see the policy dated January 2017 for more information.

We also made strides in the area of Low Census, which would allow us to take HealthStream courses, attend cross training orientation, participate in committee work and other unit tasks in lieu of low census, as long as we have approval from our manager. In addition, we clarified language on travel time for when being called in: 30 minutes plus travel time for departments that do not have the expectation of arriving within 30 minutes of the call. In addition, PNMC will provide a call room on a first come, first served basis.

Both parties did a second package proposal later in the day, but when we received administration’s second package proposal just before 6 p.m., we realized how far apart we still were. They are offering only a 1.5 percent across the board increase for Jan 1, 2019 and 1.5 percent for Jan 1, 2020. They did not agree to any of our important items, such as break relief, clearer incentive pay language and our Healthy Work Environment language.

Our team has been discussing our next course of action, and that action will be involving you! Please watch your email next week for more details, including an informational meeting and our next mediation date.

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An intensive, unique program, built on an evidence-based leadership model, the NLI will help you develop and strengthen vital skills needed to advance the nursing profession.

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