On Tuesday, May 5, 2020, your ONA/Providence Newberg Medical Center (PNMC) bargaining team began negotiations with administration. Due to the stay at home order for non-essential workers, we held our bargaining session over Skype from noon to 5 p.m.

Your ONA/PNMC bargaining team held three preparation sessions over the last few weeks, using your survey results as the primary guide to our proposal development.

We put several proposals on the table that would help strengthen our bargaining unit, increase access to extended illness time (EIT), commence the short-term disability program, preserve your hours, strengthen pay practices and improve staffing, especially during breaks.

We made proposals in several areas:

- Improving access to EIT by proposing what the other Providence facilities settled with last year. This includes starting the short-term disability insurance program in June 2020, where nurses would receive 65 percent of their pay when out for a long-term illness, injury or parental leave. EIT would top off the short-term disability, making your pay 100 percent. EIT would also be able to be used for family members.

- Moving to a five-tiered paid time off (PTO) system. This would increase PTO in some areas. This is the same program that other Providence facilities settled with last year. There is also a supplemental PTO and education proposal to keep nurses whole.

- Developing a break relief nurse program that would prevent break buddying. This is a program that the nearby Tuality hospital has, and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has ruled that break buddying violates the nurse staffing law. We also proposed removing the breaks committee, as it has been difficult to find enough nurses to participate. Based upon our survey results, nurses would rather have qualified break relief.

- A cap on mandatory low census. No nurse will be asked to take mandatory low census beyond a cap of 24 hours per scheduling period and not to exceed 168 hours in a calendar year. This proposal is similar to what Providence Portland Medical Center (PPMC) and Providence Seaside Hospital (PSH) settled on last year.

- Overtime after working 36 hours. Most of the other Providence hospitals in Oregon have overtime after 36 hours. In addition, 36 hours per week is considered full time. We also proposed improved language in the pyramiding section in relation to callback hours, so those hours would not count against overtime.

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Bargaining Begins (continued from page 1)

- Required ONA membership or representation fee for all nurses hired after May 5, 2020. This is what most of the other Providence facilities have and it was deemed important in our survey responses. In addition, we added a bargaining unit work clause that would decrease the amount of hours given to a traveler or agency nurse. We proposed that ONA officers help with getting the shifts filled internally first.

PNMC administration did express concerns about the break relief nurse proposal and the language we proposed on pyramiding, but not any of the other proposals. They thought that the break relief nurse program would not work, however it has worked very well at other ONA represented facilities, which includes Tuality in Hillsboro and St. Charles Medical Center in Bend.

We have several bargaining sessions scheduled between now and the end of June. The scheduled sessions are:
- May 19
- May 27
- June 2
- June 16
- June 24

As part of our ground rules, nurses are able to observe the sessions. Since the current plan is to have these sessions remotely, please reach out to Jocelyn Pitman if you would like to participate.

ONA Coronavirus Resource Center

As more cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) are reported and confirmed, ONA will continue working relentlessly to do the work needed to keep nurses and our communities safe.

Frequently Asked Questions

To help nurses and health care workers navigate the COVID-19 crisis, ONA has compiled a frequently asked questions document. Please check the FAQ to find the answers you need.

Declining an Unsafe Assignment

ONA has issued guidance to our members on declining unsafe assignments for COVID-19 patients when lack of PPE, safe staffing levels, or breakdown of triage protocols put your health at risk.

PPE Shortage

It is critical to get PPE in the hands of the frontline health care workers who need them in their fight against COVID-19. First and foremost, we are communicating the need for PPE. This requires federal action and we are also asking the legislature to pass similar emergency funding legislation to California and Washington to support public health.

Help raise awareness of the PPE shortage and how it impacts nurses and other health care workers on the frontline of care by adding a "PPE Now!" frame to your Facebook profile picture.

Report Violations

To report a violation of Coronavirus protocol in your facility, please email practice@oregonrn.org with as many details as possible while being mindful of HIPAA guidelines.

To learn more about all of these issues and to stay up to date on the work being done and to take the COVID-19 Workplace survey, visit:

www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus
Nurses Week is a time we celebrate the profession of nursing and honor the life-saving work done by every nurse in every practice. This year is especially meaningful as nurses across the country are on the front lines of a global pandemic, dedicated to fighting COVID-19 and protecting our communities.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) called for 2020 to be the Year of the Nurse and we didn't know how true this would be. Nurses have shown they are the backbone of our health care system and work hard every day on behalf of our patients and our communities.

In Oregon, ONA nurses stand together to advocate for safer working conditions and fight for proper PPE to protect all health care workers and our patients.

This Nurses Week, May 6-12, we honor the dedication of ONA nurses! While we may not be able to hold celebrations together, we will celebrate throughout the week with various events online and some bargaining units will hold small celebrations where they can.

Thank you for everything you do, every day, every week. We will continue to stand together because together, we are ONA.

[We Can Do It! image]

OregonRN.org/NursesWeek2020

Wednesday, May 6:
We Are ONA Nurses Week video

Thursday, May 7:
The Fight For PPE: How ONA Came Together

Friday, May 8:
Special Messages from ONA leaders

Saturday, May 9 - Sunday, May 10
Nurses, Political Power, and COVID

Monday, May 11
The ONA Difference

Tuesday, May 12
Moving ONA into Our Future
Petition to Governor Brown to Stand with Health Care Workers

Oregon nurses and frontline health care workers are risking their lives everyday to save patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, far too many of our hospitals and facilities are not protecting us.

For more than a month, frontline Oregon health care workers and their unions have fought 24/7 for the minimum of COVID-19 protections. However, the vast majority of hospitals, clinics, and health care facilities in Oregon have refused to agree to emergency COVID-19 protections for health care workers. After our courageous health care workers helped flatten the curve to delay Oregon’s surge, it is critical that employers treat their workers with the respect and dignity they deserve and do everything in their power to protect nurses, first responders and all essential workers.

That's why we're asking Governor Kate Brown to insist that health care employers come to the table with their workers and get COVID-19 protections in place before the lives of Oregon health care providers are lost.

Sign the petition to urge Governor Brown to intervene in this extraordinary public health and workers’ rights emergency. We need every employer to help protect all nurses! Stand with all frontline health care workers in Oregon.

SIGN THE PETITION

Click here to sign the petition or visit www.OregonRN.org/Petition

Recruiting for CAT

One of the most important tasks that we have to do as we ramp up for bargaining is to put together a Contract Action Team (CAT). The CAT is responsible for helping keep their units appraised of developments in bargaining and work with PNMC leadership and ONA staff to coordinate bargaining actions to ensure that we win a strong contract.

For this round of negotiations it’s important that we are well organized from the start of bargaining to ensure that management knows that we are fully prepared to fight for our patients.

If you would like to be on the CAT, please contact a member of the PNMC executive committee, or ONA labor representative Jocelyn Pitman at Pitman@OregonRN.org.