Bargaining Update Regarding Raising the Wage Scale and Differentials

Conversations with the hospital continue to move slowly. On December 15 the hospital shared its counteroffer to the union’s original proposal. The hospital’s proposal included the following:

Extending our current contract until July 1, 2025, and maintaining current contract language except for the following:

- An additional 4.75% COLA for 2023, 3% COLA for 2024, and 3% COLA for 2025.
- Increase night shift differential to the current market rate of $6.00 per hour; but the hospital failed to address many other differentials.
- A requirement that the union withdraw all Association grievances (including the Genesis payroll grievances) and all unfair labor practices.
- A pro-rated ratification bonus of $1500 for .9 FTE, $1000 for less than .9 FTE, $500 for per diem nurses.

Your union bargaining team has many concerns.

If we accept the hospital’s latest offer, we would be agreeing to below-market wages and trapped again with a contract that doesn’t address needed contract language improvements.

Examples of language that need to be improved:

- Safe staffing language to be added.
- Unit based staffing practices strengthened.
- Increase below-market PTO levels.
- Strengthen access to use earned PTO.
- Lower the cost of health insurance to market standards.
- Address multiple differentials that need updating.
- And more…

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Our bottom line

PNMC nurses who have been working under highly stressful conditions deserve fair market wages now and in the next contract. We should not have to lock ourselves into a bad deal to get paid below market for the next 18 months.

Our next bargaining date is **Jan. 11 at 8:30 a.m.** Stop by one of the union meetings on Jan 18 for more information and to provide your feedback.

Oregon Paid Leave

Oregon's Paid Family and Medical Leave Law goes into effect in 2023 and will provide 12 weeks of paid leave for welcoming a new child, your own serious health condition, or to care for a family member. Employers can choose to participate in the state plan or offer an equivalent of their own. Providence has chosen to participate in the state plan. Under the new law, about 2/3 of wages are replaced. It renews each year, unlike other accrual-based leave benefits, and union members have the right to negotiate higher standards before the law takes effect.

The law is a huge victory by unions and workers to provide paid leave to all Oregon workers. However, the law is a minimum, and employers must negotiate with us over the benefit and any changes it could create to our current benefit structures. Our power remains with the irreplaceable value of our nurses’ work, and our union intends to make improvements through the strength of ONA RNs!

Here are ONA elected RN leaders’ priorities as we initiate negotiations during the coming weeks with Providence over paid family and sick leave:

- **Fully Paid Leave:** Oregon's most extensive health system making $4 billion in annual revenue can pay 100% of RNs' wages while on leave!

- **Providence Covers Employee Contributions:** Providence may begin deducting 0.6% from employees to support the new paid leave program, amounting to about $2 million dollars of diverted wages for ONA RNs across Providence. Other hospitals have already committed to their RNs that they’ll cover the cost. It’s time for Prov to do the same.

- **Paid Leave Available Right Away:** Providence lags behind other health systems in the amount of leave we can use on day one. Oregon's most extensive health system needs to address this disparity.

- **PTO Up to Market Standards:** Providence remains behind the market for total hours of accrued paid time off in our contracts. Let’s change it during these negotiations. We have proposed increased accruals of between 20-56 hours per year, depending on years of service.
2023 Officer Elections for ONA Leadership Positions

It is time again for ONA PNMC officer elections. Every two years officer elections are held to either validate current leadership and/or to invite new leadership and new energy to work with bargaining unit members to amplify nurses’ voices, advocate for solutions, problem-solve issues, and help bargain a fair contract with the support from our ONA labor representative.

Nominations for officer positions will be accepted by our current ONA PNMC Secretary, Denise Arnold from Med/Surg at dmaathome@frontier.com.

Nominations will be accepted from now to Jan. 23 for the following officer positions: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair, and Grievance Chair.

A complete list of duties for officer positions can be found at: https://bit.ly/3X7OjZ7

Or by contacting Timothy Welp, ONA Labor Rep at welp@oregonrn.org

The election will be held electronically through confidential email beginning on February 17 and closing on February 23.

Jan. 18 Union Meeting in the Dundee Conference Room

Do you have questions about bargaining for fair wages? Do you need information about Oregon's new paid leave program? On January 18 there will be two union meetings to get information about bargaining, staffing, wages and much more. Join your leaders from:

Noon to 2:00 p.m. and 6 - 8:00 p.m.

Drop by the Dundee Conference Room to chat and enjoy food and drinks.

Contact your ONA leadership team if you have questions or are willing to help make sure nurses on your unit are getting updates about Nurses Uniting to Raise Standards.

Get Involved—Be a Unit Representative

Does your unit get regular updates about changing workplace issues?

Unit representatives are invaluable by helping unit coworkers be informed about workplace issues in real-time. Unit representatives can provide direct feedback to our bargaining team.

Our union does its best work when we have good feedback from all units. Strong unit communication multiplies our collective power and is critical to helping advocate for better contract language, safe staffing, and better patient advocacy. When we are well informed, we can take stronger actions. If you are interested in being a unit representative, reach out to an executive committee member to get more information.
Nurse Staffing at PNMC

State of Emergency (SOE) crisis standards of documentation went into effect this month due to the influx of patients in our Emergency Department and the increase in respiratory illness in our community at large. Please familiarize yourself with what this means for your practice, your patients, and your unit:

- During an SOE, unit-level nurse staffing plans can be suspended or adapted, but our ONA contract is not. Nurses who have picked up an extra shift can decline a helping hands assignment, but if there is a need for helping hands in the hospital during an SOE, the nurses who are on straight time from that department may be floated as helping hands in lieu of an extra shift nurse (and the extra nurse can work on their own unit).

- Ultimately, as a registered nurse, you are a licensed professional with standards you are held to per your license, despite the working conditions around you.

- Us working together as a team always helps our patients and our practice as individual clinicians, no matter the strains on the system we work in.

- Being uncomfortable and being unsafe aren’t the same thing, but they aren’t mutually exclusive either. If you are asked to do something in your practice as a nurse that you are uncomfortable or unsure about, ask questions and for support to do what is best for our patients.

- Taking care of yourself makes it possible for you to take care of others—so make sure you are taking your breaks and doing what you need to do our work together.

Now is the Time for Safe Staffing Stories

ONA along with other nurse unions have proposed significant improvements to Oregon’s Hospital Nurse Staffing Law and accountability improvements for the Oregon Health Authority.

Right now there is a high need for fact-based nursing stories to help the legislators understand the staffing crisis and patient conditions that are occurring daily.

If you have an important story, share it with our ONA legislative team by going to

https://www.oregonrn.org/page/nursingstories

Your experiences need to be heard by the legislators who will be making decisions about staffing and hospital accountability during this legislative session.