Providence Portland Medical Center (PPMC)

What Is Going on With Our Health Incentive Dollars?

Providence Portland Medical Center (PPMC), like many employers these days, has a wellness program that shifts more of the cost of the health insurance onto the employee. If you do not participate in the wellness program you pay much more for your health insurance. The wellness incentive program itself isn’t new. It has been around since about 2012 and they have tinkered with the required participation activities several times. However, this year they changed from using the Red Brick program to this new Choose Well program by Virgin Pulse. This new program has been very confusing and seems to have added a plethora of hoops you have to jump through to get the incentive money.

What Are We Doing About It?

On Feb. 8, 2018, Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) sent a demand to bargain over the change in the wellness incentive program. Providence has thus far ignored our request to have real meaningful bargaining over this change. They have offered “informational” meetings instead to help us understand this new program. Our bargaining unit leadership agreed to the informational meeting because we have a very long list of questions. Our first informational meeting was on Feb. 28, 2018.

What We Learned in The Meeting:

The Choose Well program appears to be internet based, which means you will need to have a smart phone with a data plan and enough memory function/space to install the app on your phone, or have a computer where you can log into the Choose Well website. If you do not have a smart phone or a good home computer you will need to contact human resources, and plan on spending a chunk of your free time, UNPAID, on a computer here at work submitting your information. This appears to be a burden on those who earn less per hour and for those who don’t have a lot of free time.

(Continued on Page 2)
We left the Feb. 28 meeting with PPMC with about as many questions as we came in with. There is a need to ask more clarifying questions, so we have requested, and are in process of scheduling a second meeting. We are trying to send some questions in advance of our next informational meeting.

Do you still have questions? Please contact your bargaining unit leaders or your labor rep. We will be asking for a frequently asked questions (FAQ) sheet to help everyone get a better understanding of this new program. Providence (PPMC) is offering informational sessions to employees. Please attend these if possible and push your questions and concerns to the forefront.

**What We Have Heard from You:**
We are hearing your frustration and dissatisfaction with this new program. Here are the themes we are hearing from you about this new Choose Well program so far:

- Too invasive, violates personal privacy and personal health information
- Is overly burdensome and tedious
- Encourages unnecessary doctor visits
- Is not voluntary; rather folks feel coerced/forced into participation or lose the incentive dollars, $700 for individual and $1400 for family
- ADA concerns for individuals or spouse who may be unable to participate and earn the healthcare dollars

Are your concerns not falling under one of the above bullet points? Please let us know. We want to hear from you.

**What Happens Next?**
ONA will have another meeting to get more information. This change is huge. It affects all providence employees. A union is a group of workers coming together to solve workplace problems. A union is only as strong as its members. We will need your help and involvement to make changes. We believe we will have a lot of support on this issue. Stay tuned!