This is the first in an occasional series highlighting the work of charge nurses throughout Sacred Heart Medical Center (SHMC) RiverBend and University District. As we’ve shared in previous newsletters, the SHMC surgical services nursing administration is proposing elimination of the charge nurse positions in the main operating room (OR). Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) leaders would like to thank charge nurses for what they do every day to support the nurses in their unit.

Charge nurses are the backbone of the unit and evidence shows they have a positive impact on patient and employee satisfaction. Thank you, charge nurses!

SHMC Charge Nurses Meet the Challenge

Alyssa Ayoma began her nursing career in 1997 when she was accepted into the perioperative training program at SHMC University District just months after graduating from nursing school. She’s worked in the OR since then and became a charge nurse for neurosurgery and pain management three years ago. We asked Alyssa how she feels about being a charge nurse.

What do you love most about your work as a charge nurse for this unit?

Alyssa: The environment is very fast-paced, demanding, high-pressure, and constantly changing with new technologies and advancements in equipment and procedures. I love the camaraderie that is essential in this environment working as a team with patients, colleagues, anesthesiologists, and surgeons. Being an OR charge nurse provides the opportunity to be a part of the bigger picture by overseeing new procedures and products in my specialty, planning and coordinating in advance for every surgery within my specialty, and creating an environment that is efficient and organized.

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Welcome, Laura Lay!

We’re thrilled that Laura Lay has accepted a permanent position with ONA! Many of you know Laura already, but now she has taken a permanent position as an ONA labor relations representative working alongside Claire Syrett and Maureen Smith.

Laura has been working for ONA part-time for the last eight years, working on contract campaigns, representing and advocating for nurses, and handling grievances. She’s also been a leader at the local level, chairing the SHMC grievance/steward committee, conducting steward trainings, and participating in the labor management committee and contract negotiations.

Laura has done a fantastic job and has been a steadfast advocate for nurses. In addition to all her hard work on behalf of our members, Laura has worked as a nurse at SHMC for almost 18 years and will continue to practice as a per diem nurse in mother baby.

Welcome, Laura! Thank you for being part of our team!

ONA labor relations representative
Laura Lay, RN
ONA Holiday Social – A Great Success!

We held our first ONA SHMC/Sacred Heart Home Care Services (SHHCS) holiday social on Dec. 6, 2017, at Hop Valley Brewing Co. in Eugene. We had a great turnout and nurses enjoyed the chance to talk and connect outside of work or meetings. Thanks to all who joined us for the fun! We plan to have these more often so stay tuned about a summer gathering.
New Nurse Residency Program Begins Second Cohort

SHMC started a new nurse residency program in August 2017, and since then approximately 56 new nurses started work at RiverBend as part of the program. Another 25 nurses are starting the second cohort this winter. University District has joined the program and will have up to five of the new participants.

On Oct. 30, 2017, ONA leaders joined the new residents for a pizza lunch gathering to welcome them to our hospital and congratulate them on being part of the beginning of this program. In December we were pleased to negotiate an updated agreement for the nurses in the second new residency cohort. This agreement covers the terms of employment for these new graduates, and it can be found on the ONA/SHMC bargaining unit webpage.

These nurse residents are either hired into an unassigned position (in the intensive care unit [ICU] and women’s services) or are offered vacant positions in the bargaining unit that do not have internal applicants after the seven-day posting requirement. The orientation phase for the programs varies from three months to one year, depending on whether the residents are part of the medical/surgical, critical care, or surgical services program.

Heather Wall, senior director of nursing, and Steve Buck, nurse residency coordinator, are working with ONA leaders to develop three surveys:

- For program participants, so we can learn about their experience in the program.
- For preceptors to share their experience with this new program.
- For nurses on the units with nurse residents, so we can learn about their experience with this new program.

There are more new graduates in this program than normally supported by the contract at one time, and we want to make sure all voices are heard about the impact of this program on nurses at SHMC. Thanks to Steve and Heather for their collaboration in evaluating the success of this program. More information about the surveys will be coming out soon.

Welcome to the new nurses—we’re glad to have you on board!
As we described in detail in our October 2017 newsletter, ONA issued a demand to bargain regarding the terms of the proposed clinical ladder, which at SHMC has been named the professional nurse advancement program (PNAP).

ONA and SHMC reached agreement on several important elements of the program; however, we were unable to reach agreement on compensation for program participants. Our notes and agreements on the PNAP program are available on the ONA/SHMC bargaining unit webpage.

SHMC’s proposal was for nurses to be compensated at $1.00/hour for the first stage of the program, $2.00/hour for the second stage, and $3.00/hour for the third stage.

Your ONA leaders conducted research on similar programs in union hospitals in our state and found SHMC’s proposed PNAP compensation to be much less than what other hospitals paid participants in their clinical ladder programs. We presented information from Providence Portland Medical Center (PPMC), Providence St. Vincent Medical Center (PSVMC), and Kaiser Permanente as comparators. However, after further investigation by the ONA team, it was determined Kaiser’s compensation model was so different from SHMC’s it was not a good comparator.

Here is a summary of information from the Providence facilities:

- **PPMC** – $2.25/hour certification pay, plus $1.60/hour for step one of the clinical ladder, $2.90/hour for step two, and $4.50/hour for step three.
- **PSVMC** – $1.75/hour certification pay, plus $1.75/hour for step one, $3.00/hour for step two, $5.00/hour for step three, and $6.00/hour for step four.

In addition to the Providence facilities paying more for each step of the clinical ladder, their certification pay is much higher than the $1.00/hour currently paid to nurses at SHMC.

Based on this information, our ONA leadership proposed a $2.00/hour differential for the first advancement stage/competent nurse; $3.00/hour for the second advancement stage/proficient nurse; and $5.00/hour for the third advancement stage/expert nurse.

We did not receive a response to this proposal from SHMC administration, and after we made several requests, SHMC told us it was not possible to increase the dollars allotted at this time. Dan Kelly, SHMC chief nursing officer (CNO), did say he agreed with our proposal, and would advocate for a higher amount moving forward in the next fiscal year but needed to get approval from PeaceHealth leadership. He said if he succeeded in getting approval for an increase, nurses in the first cohort of PNAP would have their compensation increased in July 2018.

We are glad Dan Kelly is willing to advocate for more pay for this program, but we couldn’t sign an agreement without a commitment from SHMC on compensation.

We applaud the work of the research council in their efforts and their willingness to invite our ONA leaders to be part of the discussion. It is vital this work is overseen by nurses who are committed to this program and willing to do the work to ensure its success, and we hope that the research council is able to find participants to serve on the PNAP council.

It will be up to each nurse to decide whether or not you would like to participate in this first launch of the PNAP program. ONA leaders are committed to continued advocacy for compensation that reflects the extra work nurses will be required to do in order to successfully participate in the clinical ladder. We have asked for information about the ultimate decisions on funding PNAP in the budget process and will share it with our members when it’s available.
On Jan. 31, 2018, at the end of two days of balloting, the nurse care managers (RNCMs) and utilization review (UR) nurses ratified their tentative agreement to be represented under the ONA/SHMC contract in a unanimous vote. These nurses are now bona fide members of ONA protected by our collective bargaining agreement.

In addition to gaining the benefits of a union contract, these nurses will have their own interim labor management committee to help their unit integrate into the contract and a greater voice in the development of staffing plans for their unit. Nurses coming to cast their votes expressed appreciation for the hard work of the ONA RNCM/UR nurse bargaining team, which included Anne-Marie Burns, Tami McNealy, Tammy Strehlow, and Michelle Zoller.

Please join us in congratulating and welcoming this newest unit of SHMC nurses to join ONA.

Each session includes a two-hour basic training, followed by a short break, and then the two-hour intermediate training. Completion of the basic component is a prerequisite for the intermediate portion. So, you can come for two hours one day for the basics and another day for intermediate training. Or, power through the full four hours all in one day!

**Basic Training — Topics**
- ONA Structure & Activities
- Workers’ Rights
- Member Benefits
- Rights and Responsibilities of Union Stewards

**Intermediate Training — Topics**
- Build Nurse Power
- Member Mobilization
- Discipline and Factfinding Meetings
- Grievance Process

**RSVP to Gary Aguiar at** [Aguiar@OregonRN.org](mailto:Aguiar@OregonRN.org).