Bargaining Continues

Your ONA/SAB negotiation team met with representatives from the hospital to restart contract negotiations. We began this morning by presenting a summary of the issues that you, our members, have shared with us over the last three months. Those issues are as follows:

The paid time off (PTO) plan changes are not acceptable. Nurses want to keep the flexibility to use PTO as they see fit, especially when PTO is used to fill for low census regularly. The wage increases proposed in exchange for agreeing to the PTO plan changes were not enough. Even with 3 percent increases in addition to yearly step increases, our wage scale is still well below that of other Eastern Oregon hospitals. Changes to bonus shift language that allowed the hospital to put nurses on call without the nurse being able to decline (the “use me or lose me” provision) were not acceptable to many nurses who use bonus shifts to ensure that they have the ability to pay their bills. In the OB department alone, two nurses had over 1,100 hours of low census. While they each volunteer for low census above their contractually required caps, imagine if they no longer did that? The other nurses would have to significantly increase an already high level of low census and use PTO to pay their bills. Three other issues were also raised throughout our conversations with nurses:

- Changing language from “will provide” to “may provide” regarding a phone for staff on call.
- Issues around patient sitting.
- Lack of a restful space for nurses to go when on meals and breaks.

After we presented on the issues detailed above, hospital management reiterated that the PTO program, “is a [system-wide] program,” implying that there is no room to make changes. The hospital attorney also reviewed the differential increases and other economic gains in our prior proposals and suggested that if more money

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was put into the wage scale, it would have to come from some of those increases.

At the end of our first day of meetings, we are still far apart on wages and disagree with administration on the impact that the PTO program changes will have on our nurses.

Please come to negotiations on Tuesday, Oct. 15 in the Powder River room. Be there by 0850, we start with the hospital at 0900.

Don’t Miss Important ONA Emails

Fixing Problems to Receive ONA Emails

1. Check your junk/spam/clutter folder for ONA emails: Flag ONA emails as “not junk/spam” and add News@OregonRN.org to your safe sender list.

2. Email ONA: To fix reasons 2-6, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.

Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails

1. Mislabeled: Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider.

2. No Email: ONA does not have an email on file for you.

3. Bad Email: ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.

4. Blocked: Due to several failed delivery attempts, our system has stopped attempting to send emails to your email address.

5. Opted Out: You have opted out of receiving emails.

6. Work Email Filters: Some health care systems filter out ONA emails so nurses don’t receive ONA-related emails. This is why we encourage nurses to use their personal email addresses instead of work emails.

If you are unable to attend the next bargaining session, please wear your “We are moRe thaN” sticker to show support of your negotiation team. Wearing your sticker is a protected concerted activity as defined by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). If hospital administration asks nurses to remove these stickers it could be considered an unfair labor practice on the part of the hospital. We did voluntarily change our stickers’ wording from “some cuts don’t heal” after a patient reported feeling anxious reading that message prior to surgery. Since we all want the best for our patients, we chose to update our slogan.