Samaritan Pacific: Some Movement, But We are Still Apart on Wages

Thank you to the many nurses and our coworkers who displayed ONA swag and “greened up” on Thursday, June 3. We really appreciate those who continued to wear green until we reach a settlement.

Nurses’ efforts to visually support our bargaining team has pushed the employer somewhat. Since we began bargaining, the employer moved on fourteen major proposals.

See all of our bargaining documents from our June 7 bargaining sessions on the bargaining unit webpage here, including both sides’ package proposals and our new user-friendly color-coded bargaining tracker.

In their most recent package, the employer moved on these differentials and other provisions:

- Increase base call to $5.00/hour and holiday call to $5.75/hour from current $4.50 and $5.00 (4.E)
- Increase excess call rate to $5.75/hour from $5.00/hour for non-surgical services nurses. (4.E)
- Increase evening shift differential to $2.25/hour from the current $2.05/hour (4.G)
- Increase night shift differential to $5.00 for 0-3 years; $5.75, 4-8 years; $6.25 9+ years; from current $4.50, $5.25, and $5.75, respectively (4.G)
- Increase weekend differential to $1.75/hour from $1.50/hour (4.H)
- When working “beyond regularly scheduled weekend” time and a half plus new $20/hour premium. (4.H)
- A Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital (SPCH) nurse will be included in the new Samaritan Health Insurance Advisory Committee (8.H)
- Increase education funds by $50 per nurse with an overall increase of $5,000 (11).
- New language to further empower direct care reps serving on the Staffing Committee (14).
- Surgical services nurses who work an hour past their scheduled shift shall be treated as callback and be paid 1.5X for a minimum of three hours (Appendix B).
In six areas, the parties have yet to reach an agreement. Nonetheless, in four of them we have moved the employer:

- In across the board wage increases, their most recent package proposal is 2% upon ratification, 1% on 1/1/2022, 2.5% on 7/1/22, 2.5% on 7/1/23. A total eight percent over three years. They moved from an initial offer of 2% annual increase. In our June 7 package proposal, we remained firm at 3.75% upon ratification to match Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center (GSRMC). However, we suggested—as part of a package—a three-year deal, if we received the same wage increase as GSRMC bargains in second and third year. If GSRMC bargains 3.0% in the latter two years, our total predicted increase over three years would be 9.75%. (4.B)
- Increase BSN differential to $1.25/hour from current $1.00/hour and a new MSN differential of $1.50/hour, as part of their proposed package. In our most recent package, we remain firm on 2.5% for BSN and 3.5% MSN, same as GSRMC nurses receive. (4.O)
- For surgical services nurse, they moved on excess call to a base of $6.50/hour, holiday $7.50/hour and $8.50 in excess of 80 hours from the current $5.50, $6.00 and $6.00, respectively. In our June 7 package, we remained firm at $7.50/hour base; holiday $10.00/hour; and $10.00/hour for more than eighty hours per pay period, the same as Sacred Heart nurses receive. (Appendix B, paragraph C)
- For surgical services, an increase in orphan call payment to double the call rate, but we remained firm at 1.5X call rate plus $10/hour. (Appendix B, paragraph C)

In addition to the above four items, we remain apart on two other areas:

- We rejected their proposal to change the cut order by moving volunteers to after extra shifts and overtime nurses. However, we offered a compromise to move “holiday double time” nurses to the top of the cut list, as part of our package. (5.G)
- They were adamant that we will not allow nurses on scheduled call to accrue PTO. (9.L)

Our solidarity efforts have helped, but the employer is not listening to us on our central issue: wage parity. We need competitive wages to recruit and retain experienced nurses. The cost of living is higher on the coast. Yet, the employer suggest that coastal nurses are not worth the same as Corvallis nurses. They suggested wage parity is two to five percent. To recruit and retain experienced nurses, we need the same wage scale as Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center.

What can we do to make them listen? Evidently, our green up helped, but it isn’t enough! Are SPCH nurses willing to escalate our job actions to visibly demonstrate that a large majority of us want wage parity?

If you have any questions, please contact your ONA labor representative, Gary Aguiar, at Aguiar@OregonRN.org.