Department News & Updates

Surgery
Since the departure of several surgeons earlier this year, nurses in OR, PACU and Short Stay have experienced severe reductions to their hours of work. Many nurses are reporting that they have seen as much as a 40 percent reduction in hours during certain pay periods. In addition to having union meetings and internal discussion on this topic, union members have been advocating to Silverton Hospital management for a solution to this problem.

At present, management has proposed voluntary hours reductions in the form of additional unpaid leave. While we hope that these measures are enough to give nurses who don’t opt for unpaid leave the opportunity to work more often, we are concerned that these efforts won’t be enough to make up for the economic difficulties. (If you are experiencing a reduction in hours, please see “Lost Hours? Need Unemployment Benefits?” article later in this newsletter)

Emergency Department (ED)
Many of you may have heard that management has proposed the elimination of one of the mid-shift positions in the ED. On being informed of this plan, we called for a meeting of the affected nurses in the department. We understand that management was upset by this.

ONA strongly believes that nurses should be provided with information about their working conditions so that they have the ability to make informed decisions as a group, this is what it means to be in a union.

We also have an obligation to defend nurses’ rights under your union contract, which is why ONA has taken the position that any nurses who have their positions eliminated are due the rights under the contract that relate to layoffs and recalls. (See the Legacy Silverton Layoff Procedure on page 3 for more information on nurses’ contractual rights.) If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Aaren Brown or our ONA Labor Representative, Aaron Giesa.

Family Birth Center (FBC)
After a productive, positive meeting with Chief Nursing Officer, Karen Brady, management agreed to post two part-time positions, which was a desire expressed by several nurses in FBC. We were pleased with the outcome and the tone of this discussion.

STEPS
Nurses in the STEPS clinic, currently located in Woodburn, decided to remain in that location until the remodel of the Silverton clinic is completed.

We do not have an exact timeline for this project. We very much appreciated management’s willingness to follow the wishes of the nurses on this issue.

Med Surg
There is currently an open slot on the Nurse Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee. At present, only one ONA
member has indicated interest. In order to serve on the Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee, you must be a member in good standing of ONA. If you are interested in being the Med Surg rep for the Nurse Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee, please fill out the Consent to Serve form at the back of this newsletter.

The nomination period will close 5 pm, August 17

If there is more than one member who wishes to serve as the Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee Representative, we will hold an election the following week to determine the representative.

Legacy Unity Bargaining Update

Nurses at Legacy Unity Center for Behavioral Health continue to bargain for their first contract. This union contract will be the second one that Legacy nurses have won after Silverton. Currently, nurses are fighting for the same rights that Legacy Silverton nurses have, including the right to Just Cause. Another way of saying this is that nurses have the right to due process before being disciplined, which is a right non-union nurses at Legacy don’t have. Nurses are also working to achieve a grievance process with binding arbitration, which means there is a neutral third party who can hold management accountable if nurses’ contractual rights are violated. Finally, nurses are advocating for increased safety measures for themselves and for their patients.

Rebecca Brunk on Organizing

Why we organized our union at Unity:

I wanted to see nursing have a voice in the things that applied to nursing, such as the daily changes to policies that impacted nursing practice and care delivery. We are often told that we should be practicing at the top of our scope, but we are limited from doing that because we aren’t consulted as changes are being made.

What we are advocating for in negotiations:

I want the community view of our work to accurately reflect the heart and soul of what nurses put into our hospital. The picture that the public has been presented through the news is that it’s not safe, but if we can get Legacy to listen to the voices of the bedside nurses and allow us to inform policy change, we could make this a really great place for the community that comes here for treatment.

How things have changed since we formed our union:

I feel like management has started making an effort to seem like they are listening. There are more committees, and more places for nurses to raise concerns, but it’s hard to tell if Legacy is actually listening or putting our suggestions into practice. That’s why we are fighting to win standing committees in our contract where nurses set the agenda and we can sit down with management as equals to discuss nursing practice and care delivery concerns.

ONA Virtual House of Delegates

To ensure the health and safety of our members through the COVID-19 pandemic, ONA made the decision to hold the ONA House of Delegates virtually on Sept. 22, 2020.

Click here to learn more and register today or go to www.OregonRN.org/Events
Lost Hours? Need Unemployment Benefits?

Lost Hours?
Nurses across the country are losing hours due to COVID-19. We led the nation by winning critical COVID-19 contract protections including 80 hours of sick leave and administrative pay. However, Providence has let those protections expire.

We are fighting to win back key COVID-19 provisions for nurses at the bargaining table but we are also exploring new options to support you, including encouraging nurses to apply for unemployment benefits or pandemic unemployment assistance.

If you’re being low censused you may qualify for either benefit.

Unemployment Benefits
If you are losing hours and worked at least 500 hours last year OR earned more than $1,000 last year and worked throughout the year, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits.

For most nurses, if you were paid less than $648 in a week, you’re likely eligible. Note: Unemployment is not a substitute for paid leave. If you used paid leave to fill in for hours you would normally be working, unemployment benefits will not cover those hours.

Benefits range from $151/week to $648/week per person. Individuals are eligible to receive 1.25 percent of your yearly earnings per week.


Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
Even if you don’t qualify for regular unemployment benefits, people out of work due to COVID-19 are eligible for pandemic assistance.

Assistance ranges from $205/week to $648/week. You can receive 1.25 percent of your yearly earnings per week.

How Do I Apply? Apply for pandemic unemployment assistance click here, or go to: https://govstatus.egov.com/PUA

Please note that this is not legal advice. This summary is based on our understanding of Employment Department rules. If you have a legal question, you should speak with an attorney. ONA members receive a free half-hour consultation with a local law firm as a member benefit.

Contact information is available at the ONA website. www.oregonrn.org/465

ONA COVID-19 Resource Center

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, ONA is dedicated to keeping nurses and our communities safe. One key aspect of this work is providing up-to-date information and guidelines related to COVID-19.

Declining an Unsafe Assignment
ONA has issued guidance to our members on declining unsafe assignments for COVID-19 patients when lack of PPE, safe staffing levels, or breakdown of triage protocols put your health at risk.

Share Your COVID-19 Stories
We invite everyone to share your stories about how COVID-19 has impacted your practice, your workplace and your life. Your stories will help educate officials, elected leaders, the media, and the general public about what is really happening in our health care system.

Share your stories today to help in the advocacy efforts as we push for safer conditions for nurses, health care workers and patients!

To learn more about all of these issues and to stay up to date on the work being done and to take the COVID-19 Workplace survey, visit:

www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus
Nomination Form

Med Surg Nurse Staffing Committee Nomination and Consent-to-Serve Form

For Med Surg nurses: please nominate any member in good standing from Med Surg that you would like to serve on the Nurse Staffing Committee to represent your department. Please endeavor to obtain their signature so we know the nominated nurse is willing to serve if elected. If multiple nurses who are ONA members are nominated and consent to serve, an election will be held via email during the week of August 17, 2020.

(you may nominate yourself or any other ONA Member in Good Standing)

(The nominee must submit a consent to serve form prior to election or appointment)

You must be an ONA member to serve.

If you have questions, contact Aaron Giesa at 503-293-0011 ext 1370, Giesa@OregonRN.org

CONSENT TO SERVE

If appointed/nominated, I consent to serve for the following:

Med Surg Nurse Staffing Committee

Signature__________________________________________________________
Printed Name____________________________________________________
Date______________________

Home email:______________________________________________________
Mobile phone:_______________________

Best time to reach me:____________________________________________
Best way to reach me:____________________________________________

RETURN by fax to 503-293-0013 or by photograph to Aaron Giesa Giesa@OregonRN.org

No later than 5 p.m. on August 17, 2020