

Oct. 30, 2017

ONA/Sky Lakes Bargaining Update

Did you know that Sky Lakes Medical Center (SLMC) spent \$8.3 million for 154 travelers in 2016? Given that SLMC's total 2016 labor costs (wages and benefits) for the 210 nurses in our bargaining unit was only \$20.5 million, the cost for travelers is an exorbitant and unsustainable expense for our community's hospital! In the last two years, SLMC's highest month for travelers was October 2016 with 79. The lowest month is October 2017 with 43 travelers.

Our Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) bargaining team will offer several proposals to collaborate with our employer to recruit and retain experienced nurses in Klamath Falls. We hope to return travelers to their appropriate role as designated in our contract—that is, travelers should supplement short-term and predictable vacancies, not serve as a permanent replacement for core staff.

Our ONA team begins bargaining with our employer this week. All bargaining unit nurses are welcome to observe negotiations! We will negotiate 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 2-3, at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 2430 South Sixth St. (near the intersection with Washburne St.).

We strongly urge bargaining unit nurses to visit our negotiating table! Nurses are welcome to stop by for any portion of the day or stay the entire day. If you cannot attend bargaining, please ensure that someone from your unit and shift is present, so you can receive first-hand information.

On both Thursday and Friday, we expect to lunch from 12:30-1:30 p.m. You are welcome to break bread with our team! Reach out to a bargaining team member for the meal location.

The employer asked us for a "protocol" for visitors who come to observe negotiation sessions. We agreed to establish a protocol and negotiated these [visitor recommendations](#), which are available on [our bargaining unit webpage](#).

If you cannot make it to the negotiating table, our ONA team is hosting "bargaining update" sessions for all nurses next week on Friday, Nov. 10, at the Gaucho Collective, 1038 Main St. (next door to the Gathering Grounds Café). One session will begin at 4:30 p.m., and a second session will begin at 6:30 p.m.—come to either or stay for both! Refreshments will be provided. Please make every effort to hear directly from our team on our proposals!

For more information, contact any ONA bargaining team member: Jaime Beck (ICU), Juliann Underwood (OR), Monica Meier (ICU), Robyn Ewing (Flex), Rose Keppinger (Medical), Sabrina DeVall (PCU), and Stacey Mathis (ER). Or, you may reach out to our ONA labor relations representative, Gary Aguiar, at 503-444-0690 (text/call) or Aguiar@OregonRN.org.