OHA Staffing Survey Comes to Pendleton

As most of you are aware, surveyors from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) have been at the hospital in the past few days. The purpose of the survey is to evaluate St Anthony Hospital’s (STA) compliance with the Oregon Nurse Staffing Law. As part of the law, all hospital must be surveyed every few years. Since it has been more than five years since any hospital in Eastern Oregon was surveyed, we are not surprised to see the surveyors.

Since OHA began surveying last year, over a dozen hospitals have been surveyed. All hospitals surveyed have needed to submit plan of correction, so we expect that STA will have to submit one as well. You can view the OHA audit reports here at [www.oregon.gov/oha/nursestaffing.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/oha/nursestaffing.aspx#469) and scroll down to the View Reports form Nurse Staffing Surveys and Complaint Investigations.

One item that we know will have to be corrected is how nurse members of the staffing committee is selected. Per the state staffing law in hospitals represented by a union, the nurses serving on the committee must be selected by the union. We are clarifying how best to select committee members, whether it is through a house wide or a unit specific election process. Either way, if you are interested in serving on the hospital staffing committee, please let your ONA Executive Team know. Notice of the election process will be posted at least 30 days prior to a vote.

Contract Corner

This is a section of our newsletter dedicated to a review of sections of our contract (also known as a Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA]).

**Article 13. Grievance Procedures:**

A nurse has a grievance when they believe that the contract was violated in some way. The first step would be to discuss the issue with a manager. If the problem can’t be resolved informally with a discussion, nurses may file a formal grievance. The grievance procedure for St. Anthony Hospital (STA) is available online at [www.oregonrn.org/91](http://www.oregonrn.org/91), paper copies of the grievance form are available from Becky Wise, Grievance Chair, or access the online form at [nursestaffing.aspx#469](http://nursestaffing.aspx#469).

If you believe that you have a grievance, please contact your unit rep and/or
Becky to discuss. They are available to review issues and also to let you know what your rights are under the CBA. There is a timeline associated with filing a grievance, so it is important to act quickly.

In the past year, several grievances have successfully been settled by nurses who were placed on low census out of turn or who were placed on low census when they should have been floated to another department. Grievances can also be filed if a nurse is treated unfairly or singled out for discipline in a way that other nurses are not.

In other facilities, discipline have been grieved when policies which have not been enforced for years are suddenly new again. For instance, if there is a policy clearly stating that nurses are not allowed to eat at the desk but a manager routinely brings treats to the nurses station, a nurse later disciplined for eating at the desk would have a strong argument that this policy is not enforced and therefore her discipline should be removed.

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Now that every unit in the hospital has to have a formal staffing plan, it is important to keep track of how well that plan is working. If nurses are staying after their shift on a regular basis to finish up charting or are getting their lunches and one of their breaks, but not all of their breaks, the Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee (HNSC) needs to be made aware of that. This way, as a group, they can track whether the plans that they have created are effective. Evaluation of the plans as well as the audits of overtime are required at least annually. In order to help the committee complete these evaluations, they must be made aware of times when the plan wasn’t followed or didn’t work for the nurses and our patients.

Filling out an Staffing Request and Documentation Form (SRDF) is the way to do that. Paper copies of the form are available in most units, but the form is also available online at www.oregonrn.org/115.

When filling out a form, make sure that you keep a copy for yourself and forward one to the Professional Nurse Practice Committee (PNCC) Chair: Janice Carey, and Staffing Committee Co-Chairs Tammy Graham and Sharon Berlie. Please fill out the form, it is merely a way to collect data about whether the plans are working and it can be used as a way to determine if there is a pattern to staffing issues. No one should fear retaliation or discipline for accurately reporting this information.

Want to Stay Up-To-Date with St. Anthony Hospital or Around the State?

Want updates when new things are happening here at St Anthony or around the state with ONA? Make sure your contact info is up to date. St Anthony specific text messages can also be received by texting ONASTA to 43506. Blasts are very limited to goings on here at the hospital or events that our nurses would be interested in.