Staffing in SCHS has been an issue for many years. Since February 2021, staffing has been increasingly dangerous for patients, the community and nursing practice.

Your ONA team has raised this issue many times to move management into making a long-range plan to care for our ever-growing population in Central Oregon.

Prior to the Memorial Day weekend flash point of potentially calling the National Guard to help with staffing, we met with SCHS management to get a plan from them to insure nurses were getting proper rest, meals, and breaks. There seemed to be no plan except to beg already stretched thin staff to pick up extra work and to hope travelers could come in to pick up the slack.

In our Missed Meals and Breaks grievance meeting on June 23, 2021 and in our other meetings, your team again proposed to management these and other things that could help in safer staffing:

- Offer critical needs shifts (CNS) to relief nurses to pick up extra shifts over a standard full time equivalent (FTE) in a pay period.
- Schedule relief nurses before travelers to maximize on relief availability.
- Stop the blocking of nurses adding to their FTE (going from 60 to 72) in their home units.
- Follow the contract language with letting good nurses, who want to stay at SCHS drop a shift or move to relief instead of leaving the system when life changes happen.
- Erase subjective, non-patient care/harm issues keeping management from allowing nurses to come back into the system.

Moving forward, the plan is to meet every week to 10 days with management to discuss staffing. We will be offering more viable ideas on how to get to the other side of this staffing crisis.

Your Practice and Your Critical Judgement Should Determine Your Assignment

In the Bend ONA contract and on the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) website, you will find guidelines for how to respectfully protect your patients and your practice by declining an assignment.

Bend ONA Contract 14.3.1 Individual Responsibility:

A nurse may only accept nursing assignments for which they are
Your Practice and Critical Judgement

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Educationally prepared and have the current knowledge, skills and ability to safely perform. Should a nurse have concerns about his or her ability to perform an assignment, the nurse will immediately speak with the department leader or charge nurse to address those concerns. Should the nurse refuse the assignment after this discussion he or she will submit the specific reason in writing to their manager. Nurses reporting good faith concerns will not be subject to disciplinary action.


It is your right and obligation to decline an unsafe assignment.

Department Changes Must Be Bargained with ONA Nurses

Several department managers have sent ONA nurses notices of intended changes to working conditions, job descriptions, and hours/days of operation.

We have sent management notices of demand to bargain over these issues. In the demands to bargain, we have stressed the changes should not be made until we have bargained. We are waiting for management’s response with dates to meet at the table.

Departments include:

- SSU/SSU2/PACU/Ortho-Neuro (individual unit impact and pop-up unit)
- Cancer Center
- Cath Lab (in collaboration with Our OFNHP Tech Siblings)

If management in these departments are reaching out to individuals to make “volun-told” adjustments, we consider this “direct dealing” and could possibly lead us to filing Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaints with the National Labor Relations Board.

Please contact your ONA steward if this is happening.

Short Rest Pay

All classifications are to receive Short Rest Pay incentives if there is less than 10 (ten) hours between shifts.

This is not subject to manager approval. The incentive should be paid to all nurses in ONA represented departments or not. This incentive is also for all non-management employees system-wide.

The Short Rest Incentive went into effect July 2019.

If you are not receiving this incentive reach out to HR and payroll.

From the ONA contract:

Premium pay at the rate of time and one-half will be paid for extra hours worked as follows:

For all hours worked on a shift if the nurse had 10 or fewer hours off duty between that shift and the immediately prior hours that the nurse worked (not including standby and all meeting and education time).
We are in a staffing crisis in Central Oregon. We are all members of this community. We could all be potential patients. It is not on staff nurses to solve it by picking extra and "making" do in a bad situation they are handed.

Your voices, staffing request documentation forms (SRDFs), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) complaints are being heard. Keep them coming.

Know Your Rights

Rights as a Member (and in Organizing to become members)

► Organize with ONA to negotiate with your employer concerning your wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

► Form, join or assist ONA.

► Bargain collectively through representatives of employees’ own choosing for a contract with your employer setting your wages, benefits, hours and other working conditions.

► Discuss your terms and conditions of employment or union organizing with your co-workers or your ONA Labor Relations Representative.

► TAKE ACTION with one or more co-workers to improve your working conditions by, among other means, raising work-related complaints directly with your employer or with a government agency and seeking help.

What Management Cannot Do:

► Prohibit you from soliciting for a union during non-work time, such as before or after work or during break times; or from distributing union literature during non-work time, in non-work areas, such as parking lots or break rooms.

► Question you about your union support or activities in a manner that discourages you from engaging in that activity.

► Fire, demote, transfer you, reduce your hours or change your shift, or otherwise take adverse action against you. Cannot threaten to take any of these actions, because you join or support a union, because you engage in concerted activity for mutual aid and protection, or because you choose not to engage in any such activity.

► Threaten to close your workplace if workers choose a union to represent them.

► Promise or grant promotions, pay raises, or other benefits to discourage or encourage union support.

► Prohibit you from wearing union hats, buttons, t-shirts and pins in the workplace except under special circumstances.

► Spy on or videotape peaceful union activities or pretend to do so.

Any questions? Talk to your ONA executive team, your department ONA steward or your ONA labor representative.

Working Off The Clock

A Reminder from the SCHS Employee Handbook

All caregivers should be paid for all time worked. St. Charles has a zero-tolerance policy for working off the clock. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Oregon overtime laws require all non-exempt caregivers keep accurate time records and record all hours worked. All time worked must be documented in the Kronos timekeeping system. Violations will lead to corrective action up to and including termination.

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Examples of working off the clock for a non-exempt caregiver may include the following:

- Taking work home to complete on the weekend or in the evenings
- Making and/or receiving job-related phone calls at home
- Working before or after regular shifts
- Checking, reading, and reviewing work-related emails or listening to work-related voicemail messages while not on a scheduled shift
- Working through a meal period
- Answering phones, emails or attending to patients or work related matters while clocked out for a meal period
- Completing training sessions and online learning modules at home or outside of working hours
- Taking care of St. Charles’ equipment
- Performing job-related “volunteer” work

Supervisors should limit their after-hours communication with non-exempt caregivers to ensure that work related matters are addressed during working hours. Supervisors who encourage or allow non-exempt caregivers to work off the clock may be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.

**Each supervisor is responsible for the following:**

- Ensuring that caregivers have the correct payroll/department, overtime, and premium codes for their assignments
- Confirming that all caregivers under their supervision maintain accurate time records
- Limit emailing, calling and communication with caregivers outside of working hours. If a supervisor does need to call a caregiver, the supervisor must ensure this time is paid to the caregiver and recorded accurately
- Approving time records and submitting them to payroll
- Coaching, educating, and auditing caregivers on timekeeping issues
- Reporting any working off the clock or false timekeeping suspicions to Human Resources and department leadership