Pushback at the Table

This week we encountered a large amount of pushback at the negotiation table, and unfortunately did not make any progress towards ratifying our contract.

Thursday morning Morgan Prin, compensation manager for St. Charles did a presentation on how pay increases are derived:

In 2019 St. Charles implemented a “total rewards program” which combines pay, benefits, learning, and development opportunities and the goal of creating a caring work environment for all caregivers.

While pay is only part of a total rewards program we understand the importance it plays in the everyday lives of our caregivers. To ensure that all caregivers are paid fair, competitive wages we have committed to do two things each year for all non-contract and OFNHP positions:

- Give pay increases in the first quarter.

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Complete a market review in the fourth quarter and make any necessary pay adjustments and how they are implemented.

Unfortunately, countless non-union nurses did not receive any pay increases in 2019 or 2020, so their presentation was inaccurate. When cornered on level of education, knowledge, seniority, etc. they tried to explain that they ‘always’ assess employees and increase wages based on these categories; however, they do not do that for home health and hospice nurses, and we pointed that out. They were not able to defend themselves in this case.

Then they provided us with a table of salaries for other hospitals, hospices, and home health agencies, which was to justify to us why we only deserve $2.28 raises, only the information they provided was not accurate or current.

Their total compensation does not include a fair cost of living, no step increases based on education and years working as a licensed nurse, nor does it guarantee the federal rate for reimbursement for mileage. They do not want to give us any money for education, certifications, or continuing education courses, they would just consider these things on an individual basis only. They do not want to give us a say on staffing and patient ratios, they don’t want to give us the same ETO benefits as the hospital nurses, and they don’t want to give the same seniority of 1 year worked = 1 year of service, they only want to credit us a half year per year.

They want things to stay exactly as they are, no fair wages, no fair compensation, no education opportunities, no guaranteed mileage reimbursement, no say in our day-to-day operations and work schedules.

To quote Paula Lehman, attorney for St. Charles, “our intention is to keep ETO and compensation as status quo.”

With regards to our question as to why none of our senior nurses are at the top of the pay scale, Hillary Morgan, HR Director said, “it’s our goal that no one will be at the top.”

They honestly do not care about us nor have any appreciation for our hard work and commitment to our patients.

We have given them an ultimatum to bring all request articles to our next meeting on January 29, ready to review and discuss, or we will go to mediation. We have reached out to the mediator today to let him know that we are not making any forward progress with St. Charles.

We have twenty-one articles in our contract; we have reached a tentative agreement (TA) on six articles currently. They have cancelled six meetings with us, and we have filed various complaints.
Today we met at noon to present our letter to Steve Gordon, President/CEO for St. Charles Health System. Jenny noticed Steve leaving the hospital while we were waiting for everyone to arrive. Kate confirmed that the gentleman was Steve, so we began a hot pursuit to catch up with him so we could hand him our letter. He refused to stop, to look at us, said ‘No’ several times when tried to get him to stop and talk with us.

He said that we did not have his permission to photograph him and told us to have a good weekend. All while his back was to us. It was laughable. We ended up taking the letter to the executive offices and handed it off to Jesta, office administrator. Our hope is that he reads it and realizes that it was a plea for support and nothing else. Please see our Facebook page for the video and pictures. We were thrilled that thirty-five out of thirty-eight nurses signed the letter.

This speaks volumes as to the commitment and passion we all share as home health and hospice nurses. ONA nurses from the hospital’s executive team also joined us and have committed to support us with up to one hundred nurses should we have to picket for our rights, impressive!

Thank you so much everyone!
STC-HHH CONTRACT MEETING & DINNER

We will be holding a meeting and would like EVERYONE to attend. We need to know what you want with regards to compensation and the outstanding contract issues. What you are willing to settle for? What you are not willing to accept? We are getting close and do not want to proceed without your input. This is your contract, your rights, your livelihood.

TUESDAY, JAN. 9
6 - 8 PM
THE REDMOND HOSPITAL CONFERENCE ROOMS
1253 NW Canal Blvd
Redmond, OR 97756
Dinner 6 - 7 PM   Meeting 7-8 PM

Bring your children, spouses, partners whomever, but please come. We will serve pizza and salad from 6-7 p.m., and the meeting will be held from 7-8 p.m.