Management Won’t Move, Info Picket Authorized

On Thursday, May 27, our ONA/Unity Center for Behavioral Health (UCBH) bargaining team continued mediation with Legacy Health. We provided Legacy a comprehensive proposal that reflects significant compromise but addresses nurses’ primary issues: staffing, safety, meaningful input into patient care, and the right to bargain over our wages and benefits. Management’s immediate response to our comprehensive proposal was to scold our bargaining team and not offer any counterproposals thereafter. To say that we’re disappointed is an understatement. We spent hours writing a package proposal that serves us and our patients while compromising with management. Management continues to emphasize that they don’t think Unity nurses deserve what’s standard for nurses across Portland.

Because management is refusing to acknowledge and respond to our priorities, we will be holding an informational picket outside Unity Center on Wednesday, June 16 from 3 – 7 p.m. Management doesn’t believe Unity nurses will stand-up for what we and our patients deserve. Let’s prove them wrong.

Unity nurses come to work every day to advocate for our patients and we won’t stop at the bedside. June 16 is the two-year anniversary of our union election. We’ll show management nurses are as strong on day 731 as we were on day 1!

Bargaining and contract action team members are circulating informational picket RSVPs and will be signing you up. Union and community allies, including elected officials, will be joining in solidarity. Inviting your friends and family is highly encouraged! Our informational picket will operate according to the CDC’s public health guidelines.

See you on the picket line.

In Solidarity,
Sarah Mittelman (PES), Christine Allen (Unit 5), Rebecca Brunk (Unit 1W), Kristen Sharp (Unit 2), Tracie Henry (Unit 6/Adolescents), Sherrie Neff (Unit 5), Haley Choi (Unit 1W), Amer Filipovic (Unit 1W)
We, Unity nurses, are united for a contract that respects nurse voices and puts patient and nurse safety first! Together we are fighting for a union contract that ensures:

- **Quality Patient Care**
- **Safety in the Workplace**
- **Nurses as Partners in Care Delivery**

We demonstrate our commitment to our patients, our community and our profession every day. We are committed and unified to achieving standards in our collective bargaining contract that ensures a safe environment for patients and staff, gains a real voice in decision making, secures fair representation for nurses and provides for trauma informed patient centered care. After a year of negotiations, it’s time for Unity to bargain in good faith to achieve the same.

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<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>UNITY NURSES</th>
<th>LEGACY RESPONSE</th>
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<td><strong>STAFFING &amp; SAFETY</strong></td>
<td>• Accountability and a strong nurse voice in the PNCC to address staffing and workplace safety issues. Ensure guaranteed mechanisms for nurse voice in committees is in the contract so Unity can be held accountable to those standards.</td>
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| **HOURS OF WORK**            | • All nurses scheduled to work every third weekend (even Unit 6) and all nurses can use APL on some weekends without having to find our own coverage.  
  • Give nurses option to combine meals and breaks. | NO              |
| **COMPENSATION**             | • 4% in 2021, 3.75% in 2022, 3.75% in 2023 to keep up with inflation  
  • Pay parity with all Legacy RNs & wage scale transparency. | 1.75% across the board raises, no movement  
  Pay parity OR wage scale transparency. |
| **HEALTH AND WELFARE / RETIREMENT** | • All employees are offered the same benefits. Prevent changes to amount of APL we earn, the cost of health insurance, and retirement contributions during the term of the contract. | NO. Unity could change benefits whenever they want without bargaining with our union. |
| **NURSE VOICE IN POLICY, PRACTICE, AND SAFETY** | • Unity cannot unilaterally change a policy because it’s not spelled out in the contract. Unity must negotiate any proposed changes with our union. | NO. Unity could terminate or change any benefits or terms of employment not explicitly defined in our collective bargaining agreement without bargaining with our union. |
INFORMATIONAL PICKET FAQS:

♦ **What is an informational picket?** Picketing is a demonstration in which workers congregate outside a place of employment to bring public awareness to nurse issues. It is not a strike.

♦ **Why informational picket?** Nurses will have to show up and demonstrate how much they care about their issues for management to take nurses seriously and to inform the community about what we are trying to achieve in negotiations. Picketing may either cause management to give us a better deal, or at the very least get them back to the table to negotiate.

♦ **When will we do an informational picket?** We don’t know yet. Our bargaining team will decide if an informational picket is necessary if Unity continues to refuse to do the right thing for nurses and patients. We will provide the hospital with 10 days’ notice prior to doing an informational picket.

♦ **What does a successful picket look like?** As with all collective actions we take together, the more of us that participate the more successful we will be. A successful informational picket requires at least a supermajority of us participating. You and your co-workers will need to ask your fellow nurses to show up to the picket.

♦ **Can I get in trouble for joining the picket line?** You are protected by labor law to take collective action with your coworkers — as a union we all have each other’s backs.

♦ **Can I just join the information picket when it happens without signing a pledge card?** Getting a good contract depends on our ability to prove to our employer and ourselves that we have the numbers to pull this off if it becomes necessary, we’ll only call for a picket if we can count on folks committing to participate.

♦ **Is it a good idea to hold a gathering like this during Covid-19?** As frontline nurses, our union is committed to upholding COVID safety precautions during this action to maintain everyone’s safety — masks and social distancing will be required. We are confident that we can maintain safety measures while making our voices heard on these important issues.
This year’s Bargaining Unit Leadership Conference will look at the concept of Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG), how it impacts bargaining in health care, how it impacts our communities we care for, and how ONA might utilize these concepts to further our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the future.

Bargaining for the Common Good is a return to the roots of unionism – the basic idea of advancing shared interests. We are not just nurses, we are community members, parents, users of public transportation, social justice advocates and renters too! Our employers are required by law to negotiate employment contracts with us, but that only addresses one part of our lives and largely ignores the community members we live with and care for.

Failing to support our community members outside the hospital leads to problems inside our workplace. For example, nurses have cited the lack of community-based mental health services as a factor in increasing boarding and violence in hospitals. This is the definition of a lose-lose issue. Patients, nurses, and our community are all needlessly suffering because of the same problem. So, what happens when union members, especially nurses, take the power of bargaining and pull in the concerns of the communities we live in? How can we use our collective power to advance social justice goals and our values of diversity, equity and inclusion?

Join us virtually for ONA’s 2021 Bargaining Unit Leadership Conference, Friday, June 25 to learn more about the BCG framework and how negotiations can achieve win-win results both for ONA members and our communities.

Who Should Attend?

ONA members who are in a bargaining unit can attend for FREE. If you want to attend but are unsure about your membership status, please contact us.

Continuing Education

Limited continuing nursing education contact hours will be available.

Oregon Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

Registration

Registration is open through June 4.

Visit www.oregonrn.org/event/2021BULC to register today!