

MEMBERS Improve Staffing and Push for Action Plans

As union members, we are taking unprecedented steps to push for safe staffing. At our insistence, the administration has restructured the position approval process and replacement positions are now being posted in record time.

For all other postings, managers are moving a lot quicker than they did in years past and Sparrow is hiring at increased rates. Administration acknowledges that they are behind, but they are actively working on filling positions. Recruitment continues to be a barrier and a request for more agency nurses has been placed by HR to the Chief executives. These agency RNs would be dedicated to inpatient units as floats and would be "variable" shift employees. We currently have ten agency RNs with more on the way thanks to our nurses on retention and recruitment committees.

YOU can help end unsafe staffing practices by documenting problems as they occur. Be sure to fill out your staffing concerns forms online with as much detail as possible. Be sure to include the unsafe occurrences that took place during your shift.

NOTE: It MUST be an PECSH/MNA-represented employee working THE SAME SHIFT who fills out a staffing concerns form. PCTs cannot fill it out. Day shift cannot fill it out for night shift and vice versa unless that PECSH/MNA worker has stayed over to assist with staffing (ie: 0700-1100/1900-2300).

Our contract is an amazing source of tools to address short staffing, and we have been utilizing every tool available. Article 46.1 requires that if call-in and overtime in certain units exceed certain standards that PECSH/MNA will meet with the Hospital COO, CFO, CNO and Vice President of Human Resources. The parties are required to create an action plan to address the staffing issues in those departments. Units that have qualified for that contract threshold, and for which we have requested meetings, are:

- 7F – Medical Intermediate Care
- Patient Support Services
- Patient Placement Center
- OB Special Care Unit – 3 South
- SANE
- Critical Care Transport
- Emergency Department
- Intensive Care Unit – 3 West
- Endoscopy Unit
- Radiation Oncology
- General Lab
- Blood & Blood Products Department
- Laboratory Administration
- Cardiac Cath Recovery Unit

While we work through the contract process to force management to address staffing, be sure to keep reporting any issues that you experience on the staffing concerns form. We will send out updates as they develop.

St. Lawrence Effects Bargaining **VICTORY:** an Increase in Behavioral Health Staffing

In June, our St. Lawrence effects bargaining team - led by nurses from the St. Lawrence ED, Main Campus ED, and Behavioral Health - reached an agreement that provides increased staffing on the night shift in APU in Behavioral Health.

Lori Certo, the nurse representative for Behavioral Health, was critical in advocating for the staffing concerns on the unit. As a result of her advocacy, nursing administration met with staff. After hearing our concerns, managers and the administration worked together with our union to reach an agreement to create a positive improvement to the unit's staffing numbers for the staff and patients in that department.

There is still work to be done in GPU staffing in Behavioral Health, and we continue to work towards resolving that.

Because we have a union, Sparrow administrators must bargain over the effects of drastic changes, such as the St. Lawrence ED closure.

COMMUNITY ACTION: PECSH/MNA members are working with Sparrow administrators to support a local charity that provides shoes to our community's school-aged children, the **Old Newsboys Association of Greater Lansing**. We are excited to work together to bring more awareness to this organization and assist with fundraising. To learn more about this organization, you can check out their website at lansingoldnewsboys.org. If you're interested in getting involved, please reach out to Katie Pontifex at PECSH88@gmail.com.

New Recruitment Bonuses

Our elected union officers have worked hard with the hospital and negotiated three new recruitment bonuses agreements to attract new nurses to the Emergency Department, Surgery, and Labor & Delivery.

Unit-based Recruitment and Retention Committees

Our grievance chair, Jessica Lannon, led an initiative to start unit-based recruitment and retention committees in the Emergency Department, 4S, and Labor & Delivery. The committees have worked to post positions, fill vacancies, develop retention programs and find other creative and immediate solutions to short staffing. As a result of these newly formed committees, the hospital has approved 20 new agency nurses to be contracted immediately. This will offer some temporary relief while hiring and onboarding new staff.

Further **ACTION** on Staffing:

More "Five Times a Month" Meetings

In the last few months, we have exercised our contract rights for an unprecedented number of "five times a month" meetings with the Hospital CEO and CNO. Our union contract requires that management meet to resolve the short staffing issues in units which pay a fine five times or more in a preceding month.

Since January, we have met for 14 different units to express our concerns over short staffing to Sparrow executives. 18 additional meeting requests are pending. **As a union, we have made it clear to hospital administrators that they need to develop an action plan for these units and fix the issues in these areas.**

While we work through the contract process with management to address staffing, be sure to keep reporting any issues that you experience on the staffing concerns form. We will send out updates as they develop.

401(k) Late Payment Arbitration

We are currently scheduling an arbitration date to hear the two grievances over the last two years' 401(k) payments.

Our union contract requires that Sparrow make a 401(k) payment at the end of each calendar plan year. Traditionally, that has occurred in the early spring. Our 401(k) payment for 2016 was not made until August of 2017. Our 401(k) payment has yet to be made for 2017.

Each month that we do not receive our 401(k) contribution, we miss a month of interest. That is money that we earned but may never see.

Updates on the arbitration will be forthcoming. If you have questions, please contact our MNA representative Andrew Smith at: andrew.smith@minurses.org

PECSH/MNA Arbitrates for **Patient Support Services** in Two Day Hearing

In late June and early July, PECSH/MNA officers and nurses from Patient Support Services (PSS) participated in two days of hearings to contest management's unilateral implementation of an additional weekend shift scheduling requirement. **Our union believes that Sparrow managers violated the scheduling guidelines in our contract, as well as the language regarding the implementation of a change in shifts.**

Karen Hunsaker, RN, testified on behalf of the nurses in PSS. Jeff Breslin, RN and PECSH President, provided lengthy testimony on past practices in developing scheduling guidelines to cover weekend scheduling.

We expect to have a decision from the arbitrator in the early Fall. Regardless of the outcome, **PSS nurses have made clear that it was unacceptable for administrators to make this decision without input from staff.**

Grievance and Representation Update

by Jessica Lannon, RN, Grievance Chair



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| Grievances Currently Filed and Open | 46 |
| Grievances Recently Settled | 10 |
| Grievances Currently Pending Arbitration | 3 2 on contract interpretation, 1 individual grievance |
| Informal Resolutions Prior to a Written Grievance | 21 |
| Unfair Labor Practice Charges | 0 Open 1 Positively Settled in June |
| Investigations and Individual Representations | 17 since June 15th |

As part of my new role as PECSH/MNA Grievance Chair, I want to find different ways to convey all the hard work that our members, grievance representatives, officers, and MNA Representatives do to advocate for a better workplace. In order to do that, I hope to give you regular updates on the big picture of the grievance and legal work we do.

This table provides information on open grievances and other legal actions.

Our members, grievance representatives, and elected union officers have been hard at work. Most of our grievances are resolved by working directly with human resources and nursing administration to reach a positive result. Our goal is always to reach a settlement in favor of our members. In some cases, the parties are unable to resolve the grievances, and we move them forward to arbitration. We will continue to work hard to resolve all of the issues that we can and to advocate for the ones we are unable to resolve.

Questions? Contact the **PECSH/MNA** office at 517-364-5111.