

## **HOW WE WON THE FIGHT FOR THE BEST HEALTH INSURANCE IN THE SYSTEM**

In October, the Hospital made its first economic proposal on health insurance and we were left stunned. The Hospital was proposing that we GIVE UP our right to BARGAIN over our health insurance and allow it to provide whatever plans it desired during the next contract. Which, under their proposal, could have included no plans whatsoever. The Hospital was also proposing that almost a hundred part-time members who worked less than 48 hours a pay period, instantly lose their health insurance and that everyone immediately switch to health plans which had large deductibles, out of pocket max's approximately four times our current ones, and significant co-pays and co-insurances (where you pay a percentage of the total cost of the service). It is our job to provide healthcare services. This is OUR Hospital. How could they even propose this!?

We knew our SPHN(PPO) and Blue Cross plans were some of the best plans remaining in the health system and that we were the only employees left who had not cut health insurance for part time members working less than 48 hours. We knew it was going to be a challenge to push back on this proposal because we were such an outlier in the Sparrow system, but more importantly we knew we had to. We work in a Hospital, which meant that we were constantly exposed to some of the most significant health risks out there and it was our job to care for patients who are the most vulnerable to infection. For safety reasons, all part-time and full-time members needed access to quality and affordable insurance.

Right away we began our campaign. We pushed out paper hearts for everyone to explain why they deserved affordable health care and encouraged members to post pictures of those hearts on social media. Members from every department stepped up and posted pictures online, many including their children and families in their photos.

We also took the lead on an MNA project to bring attention to the growing struggle of medical debt for all healthcare consumers. In October, we took a key role in forgiving over one million dollars in patient medical debt in Michigan. Our very own Jessica Lannon, PECSH Secretary and Labor & Delivery nurse, gave a great interview to the Lansing State Journal and a nationwide morning television show "Morning Dose," which plays in large cities across the country, about her own personal struggles with medical debt. By drawing attention to this issue on behalf of all patients, we also made it clear to our employer that we would not accept cutting healthcare for our own membership.

By early December we had made some progress but the Hospital was still proposing to change our plan designs and kick off all part-time members working less than 48 hours from health insurance completely. We decided, for this reason and others, to give notice of our picket. The Hospital seemed to get the message - We meant business! The Hospital put proposals on the table that kept our current SPHN(PPO) plan and Blue Cross plan designs untouched; we would have the same deductibles, co-pays, and out of pocket max's we've always had. Just days before the picket, the Hospital finally withdrew its proposal to cut health insurance for part-time members. We would be the only employees left (in the health system) who had healthcare coverage for part-time members that work less than 48 hours a pay period.