ANSWERS to FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS from NURSES

Our RN bargaining team, representing the interests nurses communicated in our survey last year, is looking forward to concluding a contract with management. Here are some questions we have been asked recently:

Q: Where are we in the bargaining?

A: From September through November, our staff nurse bargaining team successfully negotiated many provisions of our new contract and, through collective action, was able to stop management’s attempts to cut or reduce our benefits. Our team was able to secure many gains. However, the #1 issue from our contract survey remains undressed: staffing. Additionally, we demand cost of living wage increases, for ALL nurses at the hospital: 1.5% increase now, 1.75% later in 2015, 2% in 2016. The NLRB has declared that management’s proposal to potentially cut our pension, health insurance, and PTO is unlawful – and must be withdrawn and renegotiated. The issues that remain are small in number, but important.

Q: Why aren’t we bargaining?

A: Management gave us their offer on November 14, on November 17 86% of the nurses voted to reject that offer. Our RN bargaining team has provided three unconditional offers to return to the table – one in November and two in January. MedStar Executives have stated that they will not return to the table unless we drop all staffing proposals. Nurses are now and always have been willing to resume bargaining without such conditions.

Q: Is it true we no longer have a union?

A: This is not true. Our union is strong and doing well – we continue to file grievances and work for fairness on the job. We are working to improve staffing at all DC hospitals (including MWHC). We had shop steward training a few weeks ago and held a successful grievance meeting with management on 4/17 – where a discipline was overturned.

Q: I hear that NNU nurses across the country are winning good contracts. How can we make gains?

A: Nurses in the Kaiser system were able to win 14% increases over 3 years and new grad pay of $56/hr because of the unity and solidarity that they demonstrated on their picket line. When we stand together we will advance.

Upcoming events:

- April 25, Canvassing for LaRuby May Ward 8.
- April 28, Poll work for LaRuby May, morning
- May 12, Nurse to Patient Lobby and Action Day, buses leaving from MWHC 8:15 am
- May 15, Shop Steward Training. Contact Stephen Frum to sign up.
- July 17, Labor Night with the Nationals baseball team. Free tickets for NNU nurses. Game starts at 7:05. Contact dberry@nationalnursesunited.org for your free ticket (limited quantity).
- July 30, Lobby day to protect improve & expand Medicare.

Retention Undermined by Unsafe Staffing

While MedStar management continues to waste time and refuses to bargain over our core issues, hundreds of nurses have left the facility and patient care declines. Since May, 2011, more than 1,432 RNs have left MWHC.

While we welcome new nurses to our hospital, this level of turnover is unsustainable and unsafe. The expense is huge (more than $50,000 to train each new nurse) and takes away from patient care dollars. Our patients pay for this turnover in insurance premiums and by risks they face when cared for by inexperienced clinicians. The cost to replace the 1,432 nurses who have left in recent years is an estimated $71 million.

It is time for MedStar to set conditions that improve RN retention.

Why Are Nurses Leaving MedStar?
Nurses report that the greatest factors in MWHC’s low retention rate are:

- Unsafe staffing
- Unsafe working conditions
- Stagnant wages
- Potential cuts in benefits

How Can MedStar Retain Nurses?
Addressing our major concerns would go a long way to improving retention:

- Improve Staffing
- Fair, across the board wage increases that keep up with inflation
- Maintain our benefits: No cuts

Since 2011 Medstar Washington Hospital Center has seen 1,432 RNs walk out the door.
Around The Union

New Chief Shop Steward
Stephanie Sims, RN in the NICU is now the Chief Shop Steward. Stephanie is on the bargaining team and has been at MWHC for 9 years. She can be reached at ssims4854@gmail.com. Stephanie is looking forward to working with MWHC RNs to win a fair contract and build an even stronger union.


Labor Representative: Stephen Frum RN is now the full time Labor Representative. He can be reached at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org

DC RN Metro Council
On Thursday April 17, NNU nurses from DC area hospitals met and formed a Metro-DC RN Council. This RN-led group of union nurses in DC hospitals will coordinate actions city wide to advance nurses agenda for improved patient care standards and better working conditions for nurses. The next meeting is May 28. Contact sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org if you would like to be apart of the movement.

Help Build a Strong Nurses’ Union in D.C.
May 12 2015, RN Lobby Day on the Patient Protection Act

On May 12 nurses from across the country will be in Washington D.C. to lobby on our Federal nurse to patient ratio bill. This national legislation would establish nurse to patient ratios in the US.

We will also lobby on our District bill at city hall, buses will leave from MWHC 8:15 am.

RSVP to Stephen Frum at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org to reserve a space on the bus.

May 28th: Continuing Education Course
9:00am-4:00pm
Double Tree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Class Subject » Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Healthcare Restructuring
Health information technology has long been used by healthcare corporations to undermine the skill and professional judgment of registered nurses in an effort to shift the responsibility of direct patient care onto non-nurses or even automated systems. This class will connect the dots between the redefinition of patient care and the larger restructuring of the healthcare industry by focusing on the common role of HIT in both of these transformations.
Attendees must remain for the full session to receive CE credit (6 CEHs).

Sign up today at: http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/pages/ce-classes to reserve a space in this important class.


May 12 2015, RN Lobby Day on the Patient Protection Act

On May 12 nurses from across the country will be in Washington D.C. to lobby on our Federal nurse to patient ratio bill. This national legislation would establish nurse to patient ratios in the US.

We will also lobby on our District bill at city hall, buses will leave from MWHC 8:15 am.

RSVP to Stephen Frum at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org to reserve a space on the bus.

May 28th: Continuing Education Course
9:00am-4:00pm
Double Tree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Class Subject » Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Healthcare Restructuring
Health information technology has long been used by healthcare corporations to undermine the skill and professional judgment of registered nurses in an effort to shift the responsibility of direct patient care onto non-nurses or even automated systems. This class will connect the dots between the redefinition of patient care and the larger restructuring of the healthcare industry by focusing on the common role of HIT in both of these transformations.

Attendees must remain for the full session to receive CE credit (6 CEHs).

Sign up today at: http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/pages/ce-classes to reserve a space in this important class.

Help Build a Strong Nurses’ Union in D.C.
May 12 2015, RN Lobby Day on the Patient Protection Act

On May 12 nurses from across the country will be in Washington D.C. to lobby on our Federal nurse to patient ratio bill. This national legislation would establish nurse to patient ratios in the US.

We will also lobby on our District bill at city hall, buses will leave from MWHC 8:15 am.

RSVP to Stephen Frum at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org to reserve a space on the bus.

May 28th: Continuing Education Course
9:00am-4:00pm
Double Tree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Class Subject » Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Healthcare Restructuring
Health information technology has long been used by healthcare corporations to undermine the skill and professional judgment of registered nurses in an effort to shift the responsibility of direct patient care onto non-nurses or even automated systems. This class will connect the dots between the redefinition of patient care and the larger restructuring of the healthcare industry by focusing on the common role of HIT in both of these transformations.

Attendees must remain for the full session to receive CE credit (6 CEHs).

Sign up today at: http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/pages/ce-classes to reserve a space in this important class.

Help Build a Strong Nurses’ Union in D.C.
May 12 2015, RN Lobby Day on the Patient Protection Act

On May 12 nurses from across the country will be in Washington D.C. to lobby on our Federal nurse to patient ratio bill. This national legislation would establish nurse to patient ratios in the US.

We will also lobby on our District bill at city hall, buses will leave from MWHC 8:15 am.

RSVP to Stephen Frum at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org to reserve a space on the bus.

May 28th: Continuing Education Course
9:00am-4:00pm
Double Tree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Class Subject » Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Healthcare Restructuring
Health information technology has long been used by healthcare corporations to undermine the skill and professional judgment of registered nurses in an effort to shift the responsibility of direct patient care onto non-nurses or even automated systems. This class will connect the dots between the redefinition of patient care and the larger restructuring of the healthcare industry by focusing on the common role of HIT in both of these transformations.

Attendees must remain for the full session to receive CE credit (6 CEHs).

Sign up today at: http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/pages/ce-classes to reserve a space in this important class.

Help Build a Strong Nurses’ Union in D.C.
May 12 2015, RN Lobby Day on the Patient Protection Act

On May 12 nurses from across the country will be in Washington D.C. to lobby on our Federal nurse to patient ratio bill. This national legislation would establish nurse to patient ratios in the US.

We will also lobby on our District bill at city hall, buses will leave from MWHC 8:15 am.

RSVP to Stephen Frum at sfrum@nationalnursesunited.org to reserve a space on the bus.

May 28th: Continuing Education Course
9:00am-4:00pm
Double Tree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Class Subject » Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Healthcare Restructuring
Health information technology has long been used by healthcare corporations to undermine the skill and professional judgment of registered nurses in an effort to shift the responsibility of direct patient care onto non-nurses or even automated systems. This class will connect the dots between the redefinition of patient care and the larger restructuring of the healthcare industry by focusing on the common role of HIT in both of these transformations.

Attendees must remain for the full session to receive CE credit (6 CEHs).

Sign up today at: http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/pages/ce-classes to reserve a space in this important class.