



Association of University Registered Nurses

An Oregon Nurses Association Bargaining Unit at Oregon Health Sciences University

Bargaining Update

July 15, 2010: Number 6

Recommendations from the Work Groups

As a part of the interest based bargaining approach, ONA and OHSU agreed to set up four different work groups around the topics of unscheduled absences (dealing with attendance), vacation scheduling (making it easier to take and cover the annual accrual), shared governance (finding more and better ways to involve nurses in operations and patient care planning), and recruitment and retention (how will we attract and retain nurses to work at OHSU).

The idea behind the work groups is to make it so that more people can get involved in the bargaining process and address problems and issues that have not always gotten attention. They were charged with having discussion about the topic and making joint recommendations to the bargaining team for contract proposals, process improvements, task forces, etc. for the mutual consideration of both ONA and OHSU's bargaining team members.

Each work group met several times and involved both staff RNs and nurse managers and human resource professionals. All of the work groups have completed their work.

Here are the highlights of some of their recommendations.

Unscheduled Absences

- Have some positive incentives to encourage good attendance -- RNs with good attendance could take an extra 24 hours in a year off or allow the conversion of some sick leave hours into vacation hours.
- Have the UBNPCs monitor the units' attendance and examine it quarterly for trends.
- Hire more PT RNs or make more PT positions available.
- Use Resource RNs for replacement and not schedule them like regular staff. If Resource RNs are filling in like regular staff then post a job.
- Have managers more strictly enforce the current policy.

Vacation Scheduling

- Revise the request form and put it on line on the nursing portal with a calculator to help determine the allotments and the encumbered hours.
- Post on each unit the annual allotment distribution throughout the year.
- Keep the vacation calendars on the units up-to-date.
- Allow Unit Based Committees to approve special circumstances requests.
- Change to 4 block periods instead of 3 and put December and January in the same block.

(See the back for more details)

AURN/ONA Officers

- President
Katy Cooper, CMICU 12K
- Vice President
Susanna Rhodes, DNCC
- Treasurer
Harold Fleshman, 4A
- Member At-Large
Louise Darling, Peds. Float Pool

Bargaining Team Members

- Maggie Rising, 5A
Cheryl Rice, DCH OR
Phyllis Lee, South OR
Stew Levy, Pain Clinic, CHH

ONA Work Group Participants

Unscheduled Absences

- Julie Jorgensen, Peds ER
Julie Castro, Cardiac Surgical ICU
Nancy Lee, Short Stay
Katy Cooper, CMICU 12K

Vacation Scheduling

- Helga Promitzer, Care Management
Terry Stephens, Lactation
Frank Hunt, 5A
Susanna Rhodes, DNCC

Shared Governance

- Gitta Gaida, 7C Medicine
Intermediate Care Unit
Clarice Gerlach, Cardiac Medical ICU
Dawn Fisher, Nursing Resource
Louise Darling, RN Float Pool

Recruitment and Retention

- Marietta Sisca, HC Operating Room
Carma Stone, Digestive Health Center
Robin Vesey, Oncology Treatment
Phyllis Lee, South OR

(Work Groups — continued from the front page)

Shared Governance

- Put more references to shared governance in the OHSU/ONA contract.
- Define the role of the UBNPCs further and make explicit that it is the main vehicle in the unit for shared governance and staff RN involvement in unit operations.
- Include in the performance appraisal comments about the RNs support for shared governance.
- Create a joint taskforce to look at reward and recognition systems tied to a professional practice model.

Recruitment and Retention

- Create a joint work group to explore the creation of a career/clinical ladder for RNs.
- Increase the RN Educational Benefit (currently only guaranteed one paid day and \$200 per FTE on a unit for expenses.)
- Maintain a mix of 8 hour, 10 hour, and 12 hour opportunities as different shift lengths have different appeal to RNs depending on age and length of career.
- A step for greater than 25 years of service.
- Tri-met passes.

If you would like to see the other recommendations not listed in this update please contact one of the ONA labor representatives and copies will be sent to you. Please keep in mind that these are recommendations to the whole bargaining team both OHSU and ONA. Just because they were recommended does not necessarily mean they will get implemented. But with that said, there is a lot here to be excited about. Stay tuned.

How should new hires be placed on the wage scale?

We started discussions around what experience counts toward an RN's initial placement on the wage scale and we also started talking about what the process should look like for placement. This is ONA/AURN concerns numbers 1 and 2. While both ONA and OHSU agree that what ever we do should be consistent, fair, and easy to understand; we have not yet reached an agreement about how to make these placements. We decided to table the issue for now and come back to it at a later point. Stay tuned.

A new and final economic issue from OHSU. What differentials should ambulatory care RNs qualify for

July 14 was the last day that any new issues or concerns could be brought forward. OHSU resented one more concern. It states, "**OHSU wishes to review the applicability to the ambulatory care nurses of various differential and premium pay components designed for application in a 24 hour acute care environment.**" From this point on, no new concerns may be presented by either OHSU or ONA. Given the economic nature of this issue it will probably be dealt with later in the process. Stay tuned. We suggested no additional issues.

What should happen to nurses on units who experience prolonged low census that are not likely to lead to layoffs?

Over the last few years some units have experienced prolonged low census that lead to the unit being closed temporarily. This happened because the patient census did not justify having any staff around. Some of these units were closed for more than three days with some units staying closed for over two weeks.

Together the parties developed language for the contract that defines the rights of RNs and what OHSU will do in these situations when temporary closures are predicted.

We agreed that when prolonged closures of units are to occur (greater than five days) and are known, notice will be given to RNs on the unit. Options for taking additional approved vacation, working elsewhere in similar units or to gain experience in another unit through cross training, as well as the option to take unpaid time away from work will be provided. Regular RNs who were not getting hours and wanted and could do the work would be given priority for work over Resource RN. Despite a lack of work, if time is spent not working, benefits would be maintained. We also spelled out what happens to the caps on curtailment in these situations.

We have concluded our discussion on this issue, and we think we achieved a good outcome. If you would like to see the details please see the proposal we have posted on our websites.

Our next bargaining session is on July 21 at OHSU in the Kohler Pavilion