

local unit Newsletter

WSNA Local Unit ISLAND HOSPITAL

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Local Unit Officers

Catherine Wood	Chair
Kathryn Clary	Vice-Chair
Carrie Gibson	Secretary
Rozetta Ludwigsen	Treasurer
Barbara Brunisholz	Grievance

WSNA Nurse Representative

Sara Frey
(206) 575-7979, Ext 3039
sfrey@wsna.org

WSNA Web Site

www.wsna.org

*The Oldest and Largest Union
Representing Registered Nurses
in Washington State*



Meet Your New WSNA Nurse Representative

My name is Sara Frey and I am your WSNA Nurse Representative. I started with WSNA in April. I have been an RN since 1988 with the majority of my experience in ER and flight nursing. Most recently, I was a flight nurse with AirLife of Denver. I am from Washington and I am excited to be back in the beautiful Puget Sound area. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. 206-575-7979 ext. 3039. sfrey@wsna.org



Message from Joanne Jordon

It has been both a pleasure and a challenge to serve on the Executive Committee of WSNA here at Island Hospital for the last 14 years. I know that our affiliation with WSNA has been a positive and beneficial one as we have talked through meaningful and critical issues with management for truly excellent outcomes. Increased family responsibilities have made it necessary for me to move on at this time. I will remember my association with WSNA Executive Committee as a job well done and continue to be an active bargaining unit member.

Moving into the Local Unit Chair position per Local Unit Rules is Cathy Wood. Kathryn Clary is now the Vice Chair. Rozetta Ludwigsen was appointed as Treasurer. Thank you Joanne for your commitment and contributions over the years.

Reminders From Your Local Unit Officers:

DISCOUNTED SERVICES PROVIDED BY ISLAND HOSPITAL

Last fall your team of WSNA Nurse Representatives negotiated a new employment contract with Island Hospital. A new element of the contract, about which you may not know, is that you are now entitled to a discount on any service provided by Island Hospital. 14.5 Island Hospital Medical Discount. *When a nurse has medical care provided at Island Hospital, the nurse shall receive a twenty percent (20%) discount on the patient responsibility portion of the final hospital bill.*

This does not include services for your family members, only employees. After you receive your final bill, take it to patient accounts and let them know that you are a WSNA member so that your total can be adjusted.



FREE LAB TESTS PROVIDED BY ISLAND HOSPITAL

In addition to the discount, under section 14.3 of your contract, it states:

14.3 Health Tests. *Nurses shall be entitled to routine blood examinations, including lipid panel, CBC, CMP, and urinalysis performed annually at the Employer's hospital without cost.*

To obtain your free test see Penny Snarrenberg at the Home Health Office to get an order slip.

By Kathryn Clary, LU Vice Chair

Remember your Weingarten Rights!

Remember your WEINGARTEN RIGHTS - it is under the Supreme Court's Weingarten decision, when an investigatory interview occurs. First, what exactly is an investigatory meeting? Any time you are asked to attend a meeting with your manager or director about any issue that you are involved with that could possibly lead to disciplinary action is considered investigatory interview. If you find yourself having to explain or defend your actions, that is investigatory. That can include absenteeism, tardiness, overtime, patient complaints, peer complaints, etc. You can ask at the beginning of the meeting, "Is this a meeting that is disciplinary or that can lead to disciplinary action?" If they answer "Yes" then you have the right to ask for representation. If they say "No" and indicate that you don't need anyone, listen carefully to what is being discussed. If it starts to feel like it is discipline, you have the right to invoke your Weingarten rights.

If you determine it is investigatory, the following rules apply:

Rule 1 - The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. The employee cannot be punished for making this request.

(Note: If you ask the employer, "do I need union representation?" the answer may be no. It is up to you to make the statement that you want union representation.)

Rule 2 - After the employee makes the request, the employer must choose among three options. The employer must either:

- a. Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee; or
- b. Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
- c. Give the employee a choice of: 1) having the interview without representation, or 2) ending the interview

Rule 3 - If the employer denies the request for union representation and continues to ask questions, it commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. The employer may not discipline the employee for such a refusal.

So if called into a meeting with management, read the following (or present this card) to management when the meeting begins.

"IF THIS DISCUSSION COULD IN ANY WAY LEAD TO MY BEING DISCIPLINED OR TERMINATED, OR AFFECT MY PERSONAL WORKING CONDITIONS, I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT MY UNION REPRESENTATIVE BE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING. WITHOUT REPRESENTATION PRESENT, I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION."

Why do I need representation?

You need to take a representative from WSNA in for meetings that are disciplinary or that could lead to discipline. The person's role is to take notes of what you say and what your manager says. Usually these meetings are emotional for the RN involved. After walking out of your director's office, often the RN doesn't remember all that was said, how it was said, and what was agreed to, etc. Having a note taker can also prevent the "He Said/She Said" situations.

Who can represent me?

Your first choice is one of your local unit officers. If they are unable to attend then you can have a local unit representative or if they are unavailable a bargaining unit RN can attend the meeting. Most of the meetings are set up in advance and the sooner you let one of the officers know the easier it is to arrange to have someone at the meeting. In rare circumstances you may not know about the meeting until the day you come to work. In these circumstances please notify or call the Unit Chair or one of the Officers immediately and we will arrange to have

someone there. Let us know if there are any problems in making arrangements. If it just isn't possible to get someone there, then attend the meeting if they are unwilling to reschedule but advise them that you will withhold comment until arrangements can be made to get a rep. Your rights allow for you to have a *reasonable* opportunity to find someone.

If they keep asking questions, can I leave?

No, stay at the meeting, but do not answer questions until your representative has a chance to arrive. If you walk out, you can be disciplined for insubordination. Also, do not refuse to meet if they insist, simply reply that you will withhold any comment until you can arrange to have a rep with you. If you start to answer, you may waive your rights.



2009 WSNA Local Unit Leadership Conference in Lake Chelan, Washington - September 27 - 29, 2009

Be on the lookout for the flyers and emails about the conference. We have many fine speakers lined up to talk about topics that are important to you! Some of the selections include these topics:

- Monique Lambert – Can Technology Really Help? (If you missed her speak at the WSNA convention in April, Monique is a fabulous speaker and we are thrilled to have her join us to present more information.)
- HIPAA topics
- Topics to help improve your Local Unit

This conference is held in a fabulous setting. Every room has a view of the lake. Also, did I mention that the temperature last year was in the 70s - 80s during the fall in Lake Chelan? Please see the WSNA website at www.wsna.org for more

information and the registration form.

Our Unit Representatives

Unit Representatives fill a unique spot in the bargaining unit. They are often the first contact for a nurse newly employed at the hospital. They also act as a resource for other nurses who may have questions on their units and want to learn more about WSNA. Our Unit Representatives can also help nurses who think there may be an issue about the contract and can assist the nurse in obtaining further help. Currently, we have an opening for a representative in the Emergency Department. Greg Barley our previous representative is currently deployed. We thank him and all our Representatives for the work they do. If you think you would like to be a Unit Representative for the Emergency department or elsewhere, let us know. Prior experience isn't necessary. WSNA has many training opportunities.

Surgery: Leon Guidry

Emergency Department: Open position

Acute Care: Sherry Dent

Acute Care: Marcia Kucera

Cancer Care Center: Susan Paulsen

Home Health: Kathy Crawford

ICU/CCU: Dawna French

Labor and Delivery: Tonja Dunton

OP/PACU: Sara Beadles

Safe Staffing Committee

In 2008 the Safe Nurse Staffing Legislation was signed into law. This law requires each hospital in Washington State to establish a nurse staffing committee to develop, oversee, and evaluate a nurse staffing plan for each unit and shift of the hospital. The law specifies that the committee be composed of at least half direct patient care RN's. Washington State is one of 13 states which has enacted legislation to put into effect staffing plans to ensure patient safety and address Nurse Sensitive Quality Indicators. Some of the quality indicators we have chosen are patient falls in the Acute Care/ICU area, Antibiotics given within 1 hour of incision time in Surgical Services and EKG's within 10 minutes of

arrival for cardiac patients in the Emergency Dept to name a few. The data is then collected and reviewed. Patient outcomes are measurements of how well the staffing plan is working. In June a decision was reached by the committee for a safe staffing plan at Island Hospital. In August the CEO had approved the staffing plan and it had been signed off and presented to the committee. The committee is ongoing and meets quarterly to review issues and address any new staffing concerns or changes. The members include:

Jeanne Chudy-Chair (Acute Care)
Alice Harstad-Acute Care
Jaimee Dvorak-Labor and Delivery
Soni Tobey-Emergency Department
Debbie Stoppelman-Acute Care
Dawna French-Intensive Care Unit
Cionette Epilepsia-Cancer Care Center
Mary Neumann-Acute Care
Cathy Wood-Acute Care
Kathleen Crawford-Home Health
Cindy Sikkenga-Acute Care
Kathy Corrion-Surgical services
Gerri Bamonte-Acute Care
Sheryl Robinson-Emergency Department

What you can do to help us:

Notify your area representative of staffing changes or concerns you have on your unit.

Go to www.wsna.org and read about the new legislation and the ongoing changes which are occurring.

Read the Safe Staffing Committee minutes which are located on the hospital web page.

ANA Source: www.safestaffingsaveslives.org, They have recently published their newest Safe Nursing Staffing Poll results. It's interesting and revealing! We are listening to your concerns and we are all working hard to improve your working conditions.

Assignment Despite Objection (ADOs) and Your Rights Under the Contract

Article 19 in our contract addresses staffing issues and concerns. This written article will focus on the last 3 lines of 19.1 of the contract and the use of Assignment Despite Objection Forms or the more commonly called "ADO Forms." These forms have been developed by WSNA to assist nurses in their bargaining units to document unsafe staffing. The function of the ADO form is to have available, a tool for RNs to use to accomplish this purpose. An ADO form is used when an RN is floated to an unfamiliar unit or is asked to take a patient load that compromises patient care; if there is insufficient support staff; if charge nurses are unable to complete their responsibilities due to their own assignment, equipment not working or unavailable; or is not trained in use of equipment. The ADO form is also used to track missed breaks and meals. If you are not getting your lunch and breaks we encourage you to fill out the form and to document this in the KRONOS notebook.

Why fill the form out, nothing ever changes?

It is the Registered Nurse's responsibility to notify their employer of problems in the work place and their ability to deliver safe patient care. Your documentation of these concerns helps to create a paper trail. If trends are seen in an area, or a particular shift, with a manager, or equipment, the information helps to highlight these problem areas and lets us know a more formal look is needed into these occurrences so needed changes can happen to prevent the issue from reoccurring. Filling out an ADO form could also protect your license if an untoward event should happen on the shift you are working. ADO's are discoverable in a court of law. An ADO shows a good faith effort to notify your employer of difficulties which were occurring at the time of the incident. An ADO is how you protect your patients and yourself. Also, if you fill out an ADO and end up being disciplined later for a problem that occurred during that shift, you can produce the ADO showing that you had voiced concerns over unsafe staffing, an unsafe assignment or other problems that may have contributed to the occurrence. Change takes time and documentation. Data collection (filling out the ADO) takes time and persistence to make changes happen. Your WSNA Officers or WSNA Rep can't know an issue or problem exists unless you take the time to advise them that a problem exists.

Where do I find the ADO forms?

ADO forms are kept at the Main Nurses Station in the top forms drawer where the HUC sits. They are also kept at the L&D Nurses Station. All nurses are asked to get an ADO form and review it to become familiar with all the different categories on it. If we should run out of the ADO forms please contact an Officer or our WSNA Rep Sara Frey.

When and how do I fill the form out?

When you are aware that there is a problem let the Coordinator or House Supervisor know. Tell them what the problem is and that you are going to fill an ADO form out. Your Coordinator or House Supervisor can make an adjustment in your assignment and redistribute patients differently. They have the ability to utilize management resources in an attempt to resolve the situation, such as calling someone in who may be on call. It is possible the issue could be resolved without delay if the right person knows what's occurring! If the situation can't be resolved the ADO form should be filled out. Even though things seem to be "coming apart at the seams" or you are tired, it's still important to fill out the ADO documentation. An ADO form can be filled out at any time after notifying your supervisor about the situation that could not be resolved, including at the end of your shift or even the next day. However, you want to fill it out as soon as you can so important details are not forgotten about the unsafe situation which occurred. You can make a copy of the recap sheet (staffing sheet) and attach additional documentation such as profiles, with **NO confidential patient information**, that you believe helps to tell what occurred and what you tried to do to resolve the issue. Try to fill in as many areas of the ADO as possible. You will need to press hard to make all the copies on the ADO form readable. You may make a photocopy if needed. Send the original white copy to Cathy Wood in Acute Care or leave it in her mailbox, give the pink copy to your Coordinator or House Supervisor and keep the yellow copy for yourself.

Then what happens?

The WSNA Officers, along with WSNA and the Manager of the department in question, investigate all ADO's. They may ask you clarifying questions about the information you have submitted as well as ask you for any suggestions on what could be done to resolve it. They are then reviewed and discussed at Nurse Conference Committee when they meet. Currently, we meet every other month.

I've filled out the ADO form and then I'm made to feel bad?

As per the contract in 19.1 "Nurses who raise staffing issues shall be free from restraint, interference, discrimination or reprisal." If you feel you have been retaliated against for filling out an ADO form or raising staffing concerns notify one of the Officers or our WSNA Rep Sara Frey immediately. This is unacceptable.

REMEMBER!!!

You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with Department of Labor and Industries Website and Workplace Rights Complaint Forms. These reports are necessary in an effort to create ongoing accountability for items such as Missed Breaks and Lunches, Mandatory Overtime, inappropriate use of On-Call and others. Please visit <http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/ComplainDiscrim/WRCComplaint/default.asp> website to access forms and answer any questions you may have.



We Need Your Updated Home Emails! Please forward these to:
membership@wsna.org

Up Coming Events

Mark your calendars for
September 27th thru 29th, 2009—our annual Leadership Conference is coming up!

Hope to see you there!

Also!
October 23, 2009 –
Restoring & Retaining Nurses in Recovery

Go to wsna.org for registration forms