

## WSNA Local Unit OVERLAKE HOSPITAL

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### Local Unit Officers

Eunice Bliss	Co-Chair
Pavla Sebelova	Co-Chair
Pam Depolo	Secretary
Vacant	Treasurer
Vacant	Grievance
Joelle Coffman	Membership

Rosie Tillotson  
Ext. 3039

[rtillotson@wsna.org](mailto:rtillotson@wsna.org)

Tara Goode  
Nurse Organizer  
1-800-231-8482, Ext. 3038  
[tgoode@wsna.org](mailto:tgoode@wsna.org)

**WSNA Web Site**  
[www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org)

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



## **THANK YOU**

I would like to thank each and every one of the nurses who so kindly give either money or PTO hours to the negotiation team this year. Each of the team members thank you. Until this year I did not realize just how much work and time was involved in negotiations. There were many missed hours of work and hours away from family during the months before and during the negotiations. It is very touching to know that our time spent was noticed and appreciated by so many.

Thank you,  
Eunice Bliss Co-Chair  
All Members of the WSNA Negotiation Team

## **WSNA/OVERLAKE HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER RN CONTRACT GENERAL SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Opportunity To Receive Additional PTO Hours And \$2,000 Towards A Professional Conference (Page 61):**

Nurses who are in a 0.8 FTE or above position by May 30, 2008, have the opportunity to receive reimbursement of up to \$2,000 for expenses associated with attending a professional conference AND to have an additional 80 hours added to their PTO banks IF: the nurse maintains a 0.8 FTE and actually works 1,856 hours in a calendar year. Worked hours include paid meeting time, paid education leave and mandatory low census hours, but do not include PTO or EIB, or other non-work time.



### **Workplace Issues:**

**Rosters (3.3):** New language stating that employee rosters sent to WSNA will no longer contain Social Security numbers.

**Resident Nurses (5.1):** Residents will be assigned an FTE at the start of their residency and shall apply for a position at least two weeks prior to the end of the residency. Residents will complete a 30-day probationary period after the end of the residency.

**Float Pool (5.8; 8.5.1):** Float nurses must be competent to work in at least 3 units and have a least one year's experience. The float pool premium has been increased from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per hour.

**Reallocation & Schedule Changes (9.2.6):** If days off and weekend rotation patterns are modified because of a reallocation, nurses will have 15 days notice, rather than 10 days.

Low Census (9.7.2): In the event the Hospital decides that it does not need a nurse to work the first part of his/her shift, such nurse shall be given the option of either being placed on low census for a period not to exceed four (4) hours or being placed on standby for a period not to exceed four (4) hours. The nurse shall not be subject to low census for the remainder of the shift. In the event the nurse is called back into work during the standby period, he/she will be paid at time-and-one-half (1 ½) for all time worked during the standby period. Also, nurses who are placed on low census after working part of their shift shall be placed on low census for the entirety of the remainder of their scheduled shift (in other words, they can't be placed on low census for only part of the remainder of their shift).

Low Census Order (9.7): New language stating that short notice agency nurses will be chosen for low census first, and then volunteers, then extended assignment agency/travelers.

Job Postings (9.8): New language requiring that job postings on the unit specify, at least, the range of FTE status possibilities, shift, unit, minimum qualifications and total FTE availability for the posting. Also, job postings will no longer be posted in the HR office, but rather on the Hospital's website.

Extended Illness Bank (14.3): The cap has been increased from 576 to 600 hours.

Bonus Shifts (12.11): Bonus shifts shall be posted on the intranet and in the staffing office and shall indicate the units that are eligible for the bonus or premium, the start and end dates of the program, the amount of the bonus or premium, and other requirements associated with the premium or bonus.

## **New Contracts**

The new contract we successfully negotiated is ready for distribution! WSNA now supplies the contract on a disc. We will be giving the discs to unit reps to handout to the nurses on their units.

The Local Unit Officers believe it is important and valuable to nurses in our unit to have a hardcopy of the contract available in the workplace as well, so we have decided to use our local unit funds to have enough hard copies printed for each nursing unit to have one copy. The contract is also posted on KARLY on the HR web (and at [www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org)). No password is required to access and read the contract.

## **Local Unit Officer Open Positions**

**Your Local Unit Officers are recruiting for a Local Unit Treasurer.** Our current Treasurer is moving to Flagstaff. Thanks for your hard work Connie. Good luck!

Below is a brief description of the position of Treasurer. If you are interested in becoming involved and like to handle money, please contact your Local Unit Officers or Rosie Tillotson at WSNA. Training will be provided by WSNA and your Local Unit Officers.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer keeps an itemized account of all funds the local unit receives or disburses, maintains all financial records of the unit and provides a written report at all meetings of the local unit.

Each local unit has a fund through WSNA. Monies in this fund come from your membership dues. Four percent (4%) of each member's dues are entered into this fund in the local unit in which they are employed.

This money comes directly back to support Overlake members in their work for WSNA.

*The more members you have -  
The more money you have to use!*

### **Grievance Officer Resigns**

As many of you may already know, Peter Burr is no longer the Grievance Officer for Overlake Hospital. Peter spent many of his days off work coming in for meetings to assist nurses who called on him for help. He spent many hours and days doing research and counseling nurses who needed him. Anyone who knows Peter

knows he always gives 100 plus percent to all that he takes on. As Grievance Officer, Peter was there for all the nurses and gave above and beyond what was expected of him.

For personal reasons, Peter has resigned from this role. I will miss having Peter as one of the officers while I am co-chair. But I wish him all the best and do understand that at this time he needs to do what is best for himself and his family. Peter has always amazed me with his knowledge, skills, and kindness. I want to say thank you to Peter for all that he has done for the nurses at Overlake and for his friendship.



*Eunice Bliss, Co-Chair*

### **Your Local Unit Officers are recruiting for TWO Local Unit Grievance Officers.**

Below is a brief description for Grievance Officer. If you are interested in becoming involved and like to help out your peers, please contact your Local Unit Officers or Rosie Tillotson at WSNA.

#### **Grievance Officer**

The Grievance Officer assists staff nurses in resolving disputes between management and staff with the goal of accomplishing this at the lowest possible level. If this cannot be done for whatever reason, there are other procedures outlined as high as arbitration to come to an agreement. Issues that progress to this level are handled primarily by the legal and professional staff at WSNA.

Your job would be to advise your peers as to the contents and intent of your bargaining unit contract. They will look to you for help in obtaining a satisfactory resolution to their problem or issue with management. You will be supported by your Nurse Representative at Overlake Hospital Rosie Tillotson. Training will be provided by WSNA and your Local Unit Officers.

Many believe this to be the most important position because so many issues affect nurses in very personal ways.

### **Nurse Staffing Bill Passed Legislature**

The Safe Nurse Staffing Legislation (House Bill 3123) passed the Legislature with near unanimous votes. Highlights of the new law will include:

- Each hospital, by September 2008, must establish a nurse staffing committee composed of at least half direct care nurses. This committee will develop, oversee and evaluate a nurse staffing plan for each unit and shift of the hospital based on patient care needs, appropriate skill mix of registered nurses and other nursing personnel, layout of the unit, and national standards/recommendations on nurse staffing.
- If the staffing plan developed by the staffing committee is not adopted by the hospital, the CEO must provide a written explanation of the reasons why, to the committee.
- The staffing information must be posted in a public area and must include the nurse staffing plan and the nurse staffing schedule, as well as the clinical staffing relevant to that unit. It must be updated at least once every shift and made available to patients and visitors upon request.

Ensuring safe nurse staffing has been a top priority for WSNA for the past several years. A growing body of research confirms what we all know, that the care provided by registered nurses has a direct impact on quality of hospital care and patient safety. Nursing care requires continuous patient assessment, critical thinking and expert judgment, advocating on behalf of our patients, and educating patients and their families. Those activities are the essence of nursing care and are critical factors in avoiding preventable complications, injuries and avoidable deaths.

#### **Here are the Facts:**

- In a major study, risk of patient mortality within 30 days of admission among surgical patients was found to increase by an average of 7% for every additional patient in nurses' patient assignments.
- Inadequate staffing was found to be a contributing factor in 24% of all unanticipated events that resulted in patient death, injury, or permanent loss of function.
- A higher proportion of hours of registered nursing care per day are associated with better outcomes for hospitalized patients and these outcomes can result in significant cost-savings to the system.

Over the past year, WSNA has collected and synthesized the evidence-based data on nurse staffing, conducted nine regional workshops across the state on the history and development of the nurse staffing outcomes data. Our proposed legislation and regulation are being considered and passed in other states.

WSNA has been working very hard throughout the past year to educate our members, our legislators and our former opponents about the important evidence-based impact of nurse staffing on patient safety and nurse retention and satisfaction. Since last fall, WSNA has been engaged in a mediated process with the Washington State Hospital Association, the Northwest Organization of Nurse Executives and the other nurse unions on the critical issue of nurse staffing.

In addition to the jointly supported legislation that passed in 2008, the collaboration with the stakeholders also includes a Memorandum of Agreement that includes the following ongoing work and discussions on nurse staffing:

- Establishment of a Ruckelshaus Steering Committee composed of two representatives each of WSHA, NWONE, WSNA, SEIU, and UFCW.
- Dialogue through October of 2008 on minimum nurse staffing standards and public disclosure of nursing sensitive quality indicators.
- Conduct a survey of all hospitals to compile the nursing sensitive quality indicators currently collected by hospitals. Based on the results, selected those most meaningful for hospitals to share with the staffing committee of the hospital and the Ruckelshaus Steering Committee.
- Develop a process to identify, standardize, and collect at least five nurse sensitive quality indicators to be collected by all Washington hospitals.
- Pilot project of an immediate staffing alert system designed to address real time staffing concerns in several Washington hospitals.
- Establishment of an advisory committee to support the work of the staffing committees in hospitals. The committee would compile nurse staffing guidelines; collect, develop, and disseminate materials; serve as a resource and collect best practices; and recommend and provide training for nurse staffing committees.
- Jointly urge the Washington State Department of Health to include nurse staffing information on the state's adverse events reporting form in order to

examine the impact of nurse staffing on the adverse event.

## **WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR WSNA DUES?**

*By Pavla Sebelova, Co-Chair*

Your membership dues support the goals and priorities of your professional nurses association at the local, state and national level and your dues dollars are distributed between all three levels.

The amount you pay for dues differs according to County boundaries. Each County can determine what the dues will be and then WSNA collects the dues on their behalf. The following link will allow you to look up your category:

<http://wsna.org/Membership/Application/>

### **Are you a new grad?**

New graduates are eligible for special rates if they become a WSNA member within six months of graduation. They can then remain in this category for twelve months, after which time they are then subject to a rate corresponding to the amount of hours they work on a monthly basis.

### **Dues can be remitted to WSNA in one of four ways:**

- Payroll Deduction - Monthly
- Electronic Funds Transfer - Monthly
- Installment - Three payments per year
- Annual - One payment per year

**Support your Local Unit – the more members we have the stronger our “voice” will be!**

## **Membership FAQs**

**Q:** Why don't we have a “closed shop” at Overlake?

**A:** A “closed shop” means that all nurses are required to become members of the union, in this case, WSNA. This comes about by negotiations between Management and the Association (WSNA) where both parties agree to this. We did introduce



this as a proposal in these negotiations, but Management turned it down.

**Q:** Who can I go to if I have questions about the contract or about membership?

**A:** For questions about membership, call me, Joelle Coffman, membership chair, at home: 360-668-8238 or you can email me at work or home:

[joellegc@yahoo.com](mailto:joellegc@yahoo.com). For any other questions regarding hours, wages, working conditions or contract language, first go to your unit's rep. Look on your unit's WSNA bulletin board to find your unit rep's name and contact information. You can also go the Hospital intranet page, KARLY; and click on the HR web button then "RNS only". Officer names and contact information are posted there.

## **Conference Committee - What is it and why is it important?**

Conference committee meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month to discuss any issues regarding hours, wages and working conditions for RNs in the bargaining unit at Overlake Hospital. The members of the committee are: the Local Unit Co-Chairs, Local Unit Secretary, WSNA Nurse Representative, Barb Berkau, Marcia Johnson, Lisa Brock (HR) and Lisa Morten (HR). The purpose of the committee is to work to communicate and resolve issues that arise during the life of the contract. The agenda is set by the Local Unit Co-Chairs and is sent out to unit reps to post on their unit WSNA bulletin boards, so that all nurses can see what is being discussed. Minutes are also to be posted. If you have an issue that you think needs to be discussed at Conference Committee, contact one of the Officers.

Conference Committee is a very important venue for advocating for nurses here at Overlake and making sure contract language is followed.

## **Labor Studies School 2008-2009**

It's **FREE!!!** The unique educational opportunity you have been asking for is finally here.

What is a grievance and what does it mean to me?

What are negotiations and how do they work?

What do Local Unit Officers really do?

What does the law say about unions?

Classes will be offered both in Spokane and Seattle beginning in September 2008 and going through June 2009. You can choose a track or mix and match the classes to suit your needs.

For more information or to register, call 1-800-231-8482 ext. 3011 or check on-line at

[www.wsna.org/labor/labor-studies-school](http://www.wsna.org/labor/labor-studies-school)

## **Leadership Conference**

Take a trip to Lake Chelan **September 28-30, 2008** (Paid for in part by Local Unit funds!) and learn a little more about what WSNA does for nurses in Washington State.

This year's Leadership Conference is going to cover many topics our members have asked us about like:

**NEW Safe Nurse Staffing Law  
Fatigue  
Nursing Practice Update  
Harassment & Bullying In the Workplace  
Recent Legal Decisions Impacting Unions  
and Your Local Unit  
National Labor Scene Update  
Local Unit Council Meeting**

The theme is "AT THE HOP" for our Local Unit Recognition Banquet where we honor those special nurses and teams that have done outstanding work this year on behalf of nurses in our state. Nomination forms and more information can be found at [www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org).

If you would like to attend, please contact WSNA or one of your Local Unit Officers and we'll tell you how! We look forward to an exciting, informative, and energizing conference!!!

