

WSNA Local Unit OVERLAKE HOSPITAL

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Local Unit Officers

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



WSNA’s Campaign to Save Public Health

Our public health system is at a crisis point. Facing budget shortfalls, counties across the state are considering dangerous cuts to public health services and funding. The Washington State Nurses Association knows that our communities can’t afford any more reductions in public health. In response to this looming crisis, WSNA has launched a new campaign to save public health.

The goal of the WSNA Campaign to Save Public Health is to:

- Educate the public and policymakers about the importance of public health
- Raise awareness about the current funding crisis
- Give people the information and tools to get involved
- Prevent additional cuts at the local level
- Secure a long-term adequate and stable source of funding for public health

This issue is a top priority for WSNA because public health and public health nursing are the foundation of our health care system. It is the most cost effective system for disease prevention and health improvement and is also our first line of defense in responding to bioterrorism and in disaster preparedness. Yet, only 2% of the total health care dollars are spent on public health services, and Washington ranks 42nd in the nation in per capita spending on public health. Public health funding in Washington State has been grossly inadequate over the past decade. These additional cuts, as proposed by many of the counties, will place communities at unacceptable risk.

The public education/media portion of the campaign includes opinion editorials, letters to the editor, emails to county officials, paid advertising, flyers, and bumper stickers.

The 4 week advertising campaign (September 16th -October 19th) in Spokane, King, Snohomish and Whatcom County will feature billboards and bus boards to draw attention to this crisis. We will reach nearly 200,000 viewers daily and over 5 million viewers throughout the month at the following locations:

- Spokane – 3 billboards at Washington & Boone, Lincoln & Broadway, and Broadway & Monroe
- Everett – 2 billboards on Broadway and Rucker
- Bellingham – 5 bus boards in downtown
- Seattle – 15 bus boards in Seattle and 6 billboards on Rainier, Lake City Way, Meridian, Queen Anne Ave, Boren, and Smith in Kent.



A critical part of the WSNA Campaign on Public Health is the launch of a new website. It will serve as the central resource center for:

- information about the crisis
- background on public health and public health nursing
- action alert center with easy ways to send messages to your county officials
- sample letters to the editor
- links and resources
- update on WSNA's efforts

Please take a moment and log onto:
<http://www.wsna.org/Topics/Public-Health/Take-Action/>

Email your County Official or write a letter to the editor of your local paper and help us save public health. SavePublicHealth.com

Grievances: Recent Wins!!

A nurse whom has dedicated 32 years to Overlake Hospital was given a written warning - disciplining her for incurring overtime during a 14 day period. It also included an insubordination claim that included the nurse's supervisor.

We filed a grievance and presented at Step 1 and asked this warning be removed. This discipline was unjust because the OT was due to a big change in this nurses' department and she felt the need to prepare the department for this change. A discussion of incurring OT during this period was brought up in a meeting and the nurse understood that OT was authorized, in preparation. With respect to the insubordination claim, it was a matter of misunderstanding. This nurse felt a duty and responsibility, not only to the safety of the patients, but to the staff as well to get ready for this change. However, at Step 1 we did not reach an agreement to the resolution.

We persevered and advanced the grievance to Step 2. At Step2, the grievance is presented to the Director of Nursing Services and the Director of Human Resources. Again, we held

firm and told them this discipline was administered without just cause.

As a result, the Director of Nursing Services considered all the facts and agreed to remove the written warning from the nurses' personnel file. A great grievance win!

Remember, the grievance process is a way of resolving conflict between nurses in the bargaining unit (both members and non-members) and management. It is a way to oversee contract enforcement through the use of the grievance procedure.

*Rosie Tillotson, RN, MSN
Nurse Representative*

If you are interested in representing nurses during the grievance process, become a Grievance Officer for your Local Unit! Please contact one of your Local Unit Officers or Rosie Tillotson at rtillotson@wsna.org

Meet Your New Treasurer!

My name is Emma Larkin, and I am Overlake's WSNA Treasurer. I graduated from Shoreline Community College in the fall of 2006. I have been working in the ER since graduation, and recently joined Overlake Hospital's ER staff this last spring. This summer, I began to work towards my BSN at the University of Washington's Bothell campus. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my husband and our dog, reading, and exploring the northwest (hiking, camping, skiing).



Emma can be reached at
eam547@hotmail.com

ADO - Assignment Despite Objection

The ADO form is a form that you need to fill out if there is UNSAFE staffing on your unit. I suggest that every unit representative put a few in their mailbox on their unit and let everybody know that that is where they are. If

you need the form, please let one of the officers know.

The form needs to be filled out right away, so you don't forget all the details of why there was an unsafe situation on your unit. You can copy the staffing sheet for your shift, and if all the information does not fit, type it up and attach it to the form. You need to notify one of us – either Eunice or myself and give us a copy of the form. A copy also needs to go to your manager and make sure that you keep one as well.

We meet with management every month and among many other issues discuss ADO forms at Conference Committee. I have heard that some of you don't want to take the time to fill the forms out, but unless you do, we won't know that there are problems and cannot do anything about it. So take the time and do it.

Just FYI: you can refuse to take a patient load BEFORE you are given report, but if you refuse your assignment afterwards you can be charged with abandonment of your patients.

Pavla Sebelova, Local Unit Co Chair

Membership

How are we doing? Membership at Overlake Hospital is most definitely on the rise. Congratulations! New graduate nurses are realizing that it is a professional thing to do to belong to a Union. More experienced nurses are also realizing the benefits of membership.

Remember...It is never too late to join! Just give us a call.

So the question is why should you join? When you join WSNA you also join King County Nursing Association as well as the federal level American Nurses Association. Your voice is united with your peers and is very loud when addressing critical issues regarding your hours, wages, and working conditions. You never stand alone! If there are any

conversations that take place between you and your leadership at OHMC that may lead to disciplinary action, you have the right to have a WSNA representative with you.

If you are ever asked to do something you think may be outside your nursing scope of practice, call us and we can answer your specific question BEFORE you get into trouble. Our professional practice department can also help you with CEUs and questions about the latest advances and trends in nursing.



Our government affairs department can help you understand the candidate position on healthcare related issues and allows you to make an informed decision in November. Our Political Action Committee is completely voluntary. NONE of your dues money pays for WSNA political action. WSNA is an active participant in the legislative process by lobbying for changes that will provide a safe environment for both patients and nurses.

Thanks to all of the members and your fabulous officers for all of their hard work in the past months. Growing your membership means you have an increasingly more effective local unit that leads to increased job satisfaction, better retention, and happy nurses all around.

It takes work. If you would like to become more active in your local unit, please call or email Rosie Tillotson, Nurse Representative at 206-575-7979, Ext. 3039 or rtillotson@wsna.org. The WSNA website is also a fabulous place to find out what you've been up to lately around the state.

Local Unit Officer Open Positions

Your local unit officers are recruiting for TWO Local Unit Grievance Officers.

Below is a brief description of Grievance Officer duties. 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.

What is an Investigatory Interview?



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 an investigatory interview. 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 could lead to discipline, you have the right to invoke your Weingarten Rights.

What are my Weingarten Rights?

If it starts to sound disciplinary, you can say: “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.”

More about Weingarten Rules:

Under the Supreme Court’s Weingarten decision, when an investigatory interview occurs, 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.

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:
 - a. Having the interview without representation, or;
 - b. Ending the interview.

Rule 3: If the employer denies the request for union representation and continues to ask questions, it would commit 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.

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 your grievance officer or one of the other local unit officers. If they are not available, you can have a bargaining unit RN. If you can't find someone from your bargaining unit, find staff that can write notes for you.

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.

BEAUTIFUL FALL IS HERE

Falls has arrived in the Great Northwest and with it the beautiful colors of Autumn. It is also a time for each of us to not only think about the up coming holiday season, but our benefits. The Benefits Fair will soon be here. I know for me as my life changes from year to year, my benefits choices have to change to meet and adjust to the changes.

It can often be difficult to make time to go to the Benefit Fair, but it is something that is of great value to each employee. It is a time set aside so we can meet face to face with people for each of the benefits offered and ask questions. Companies that offer these benefits have their people available to answer our questions on how each benefit works and the savings might be offered.

This is made available to help employees become well informed of the benefits offered, any changes, and how they would best meet the needs in the up coming year. I know I will be attending again this year. Watch for the notices of the Benefit Fair and I hope to see you there.

Eunice Bliss, Co-Chair

Safe Staffing Workshops

With the passage of the landmark legislation on safe nurse staffing in



2008, we now begin the hard work to implement the new law. There are several training opportunities coming up for nurses.

***Making the New Staffing Law Work for You:
Tools for Staff Nurses.***

Classes offered at the following dates and locations:

To register, call
1-800-231-8482, Ext. 0
or 206-575-7979, Ext. 0

- **Tacoma**
Wednesday - October 22
5:30-8:30pm
La Quinta
1425 E 27th St
- **Vancouver**
Thursday - October 23
5:30-8:30pm
Heathman Lodge
7801 NE Greenwood Drive
- **Yakima**
Tuesday - October 28
5:30-8:30pm
Clarion Hotel
1507 No. 1st St
- **Bellingham**
Wednesday - November 5
5:30-8:30pm
Hotel Bellwether
One Bellwether Way
- **Seattle**
Saturday - November 8
9:30am-12:30pm
Ray's Boathouse
6049 Seaview Avenue NW