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**WSNA Local Unit**  
Sacred Heart Medical Center

### Local Unit Officers

Martha Avey	Co-Chair
Kathryn Ormsby	Co-Chair
Linda Jones	Secretary
Pat Kandraticz	Treasurer
Camille Sturdivant-Daly	Grievance

### WSNA Nurse Representative

Debi Bessmer  
1-800-231-8482, Ext 3112  
dbessmer@wsna.org

### WSNA Web Site

[www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org)

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

  
**WASHINGTON STATE  
NURSES ASSOCIATION**



### Give Me a Break!

The WSNA group grievance regarding missed breaks is in arbitration proceedings. We will keep you posted on its progress! Thanks to those who came forward and testified and were otherwise involved. We got some good information.

To all of you who filled out Staffing Problem Analysis forms: I know it may have seemed fruitless at times but those forms made a **HUGE** difference in the arbitration hearings! They are being used to prepare our argument. So please document those situations and help both us and yourselves!!!!

### Overtime - If You Do It, Be Compensated.

If you are going to incur overtime (missed meal, leaving late, etc.), inform your Charge Nurse, ANM, or NM as soon as you become aware of it. While advance notice is preferable, we recognize that things can happen quickly and it may not be possible to give advance notice of overtime. If you have worked overtime, document it in your unit overtime log. If you have worked overtime and it has been deleted from your time card, notify Pat Clarry or Lourie Morse in Human Resources immediately. OT is to be compensated! You should not also be forced to leave before completing your work solely to avoid overtime! Some work may be passed on but charting and some other functions need to be kept up to date!

### Negotiations coming this year!

It's not too early to start thinking about contract negotiations. Watch for upcoming educational offerings. Every single one of you is an important part of a successful negotiation. If you are concerned about your working conditions and benefits, you need to be involved!!! If you are interested in being involved in negotiations or have concerns about the contract, speak now! We need to hear your concerns and have your involvement for negotiations!



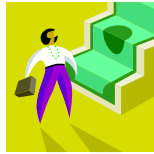
### Birth Control Coverage - Better Late Than Never? Thanks to a WSNA member!

You should have all received E-mail notification of the addition of birth control coverage. This changed due to state law and in spite of appeal, took effect July 1, 2004. Yep, 2004. We don't know how much longer this would have gone on unrepaired had a WSNA member not reported what was happening! The reimbursement E-mail was a response to a WSNA member reporting that the hospital was failing to provide a benefit required by state law! Look at the difference one person can make! Any nurses with prescription benefits who have paid for prescribed birth control out of pocket from that point until now are entitled to reimbursement of prescription costs minus co-pay.

You need to obtain a claim form from Personnel, and a record of prescription and payments from your pharmacy to submit with your claim form. Most pharmacies can provide a printout with the needed information. Submit information to the PHCO address outlined on the claim form to be reimbursed.

### **Parity Step Increase For 2006**

To all staff who are entitled to have seniority steps added due to prior non-recognition of seniority: Check your pay printout to see if you are being paid for the appropriate step you should have been placed on. If you are entitled to an additional step, compare your pay level to the step for 2006 listed in the contract. For example, if your pay level was at the 10-year step last year at your anniversary, you should be placed at the 12-year step as of your January 27 paycheck. These step increases apply only to staff who were given at least one year less seniority credit than they were entitled to at hiring (e.g. -a nurse with 15 years relevant nursing experience being hired at the 10-year step). Affected staff have already been identified. Our contract states that nurses hired need to be given credit for their recent and relevant nursing experience.



### **License Renewal and TB Testing Get-R-Done!!!!**

Please renew your license and TB test in a timely manner.

License renewal and TB testing is mandatory for staff (with exception of those already with a positive TB reading). No exceptions can be made for staff to without either of these due to state and federal regulations. Any work missed due to failure to renew license or to maintain a current TB test is considered an unexcused absence and may be subject to discipline. If your license is up for renewal within a short period of time, it may be expedited by use of priority or overnight mail or use of a



courier service such as Capitol Courier. This will provide the most expedited license renewal. Watch your calendar! If it's close to your birthday, remember - License and TB Test!

### **Summer PTO Requests**

Do you have any issues? Was your request for summer PTO immediately denied? If you received immediate denial of PTO upon submission, contact Voice-tel 1-866-305-5612 and/or your WSNA representatives and share your concerns! We need to know if this has happened!

### **Rapid Response Team**

Get the information you need about this new team! There is a 10-minute in-service available in-house if you need additional information. The rapid response team is available for quick assessment and intervention of a patient with a change in condition including but not limited to: changes in vital signs, cardiac and respiratory status, changes in level of consciousness. A critical care RN can come up to your unit to evaluate your patient and offer guidance. To contact the rapid response team, dial 4-5555 and request the rapid response team listing your location/room number. If you believe that the changes in a patient's condition are consistent with a stroke-call 4-5555 and designate code stroke. This does not mean that you need to call the rapid response team before any physician notification regarding changes in patient conditions. They are a tool to assist staff who would like a "second look" at their patient. Let your team leader-charge nurse, etc. know but you do not need to wait for charge approval to request the rapid response team.



### **Employee Evaluations**

Have you received a "does not meet standard" designation on any area of your evaluation? This is not appropriate unless you have had prior discussion about performance improvement. For example, if you have not been contacted and had EIT/attendance discussed prior to your evaluation, receiving "does not meet standard" in the area of attendance should not happen. Contact Voice-tel or your WSNA Reps if this has happened to you! Signing an employee evaluation means that you have read it, not necessarily that you agree with it. If you do not agree with your evaluation, contact WSNA voice-tel your WSNA representatives.

### **Sign up to get local unit email**

Your WSNA/SHMC local unit forum! Sign up to receive information and updates free and easy! This will be more important towards negotiations! You can also ask questions or get information on upcoming meetings, events, and educational opportunities. Get on the A-list!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Email [nurse-advocate@adelphia.net](mailto:nurse-advocate@adelphia.net) and [dbessmer@wsna.org](mailto:dbessmer@wsna.org).

*Remembering Lynn Warrick!  
WSNA activist and dedicated RN who  
recently passed away. She walked the  
talk and will be missed. Her life  
remembered with a sparkle in the eye.*

## **Nurses Celebrate Passage of Safe Patient Lifting Law**



The Washington State Legislature passed legislation (House Bill 1672) to promote safe patient handling and prevent workplace injuries amongst registered nurses and health care workers. This was a top legislative priority for the Washington State Nurses Association this session, and the victory is the result of efforts made by the WSNA along with other unions and hospitals.

The Washington Senate voted 48-0 to approve the bill while the Washington House of Representatives voted 85-13 in favor of the legislation.

“Registered nurses throughout the State applaud the passage of this critical legislation and are celebrating this key victory which will reduce musculoskeletal injury for nurses at the bedside,” said Kim Armstrong, BSN, RN, President of WSNA.

Health care workers are the leader among all industries in Washington State for musculoskeletal disorders, with injury rates higher than other dangerous occupations such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing and transportation. The manual moving, transferring and re-positioning of patients is the primary cause for the high rates of back injury in the health care industry.

“Health care lags way behind many other industries as they have mechanized to remove the causes of acute and chronic back injuries. These injuries not only lead to higher worker compensation and insurance costs, but also drive many registered nurses out of direct patient care. We look forward to working with the hospitals in the implementation of this law,” added Judy Huntington, MN, RN, Executive Director of WSNA.

This legislation will promote safe patient handling and reduce injuries amongst health care workers by establishing a Safe Patient Handling Committee (with at least half of the Committee be direct care providers) and implement a safe patient handling policy to prevent musculoskeletal disorders among health care workers and injuries to patients. The law will also mandate hospitals to acquire the much needed lifting equipment and provide staff training.

Washington and states around the country struggle with a shortage of nurses and other health care workers. Expanded use of mechanical lifts has been shown to significantly reduce worker injuries.

***WSNA Leadership Development  
Conference***

***Sept. 25 - 26, 2006***