

Local unit Newsletter

WSNA Local Unit St. Joseph Hospital- Bellingham

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Local Unit Officers

Diane Rientjes-Green	Co-Chair
Patrick Baron	Co-Chair
Sarah Newell	Co-Secretary
Kimberly Finger	Co-Secretary
Roni Kelsey	Treasurer
Patricia Lombard	Co-Grievance
Ina O'Donnell	Co-Grievance
Kathryn Goss	Co-Grievance
Tracy Pullar	Co-Membership
Michelle Corzine	Communications
Julie Rose	Communications
Charles Shoecraft	Occupational Health & Safety

WSNA Nurse Representative

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WSNA Web Site

www.wsna.org

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

WSNA

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NURSES ASSOCIATION**

Your Executive Team has continued monthly meetings with representatives from Management throughout the summer. In addition to safe staffing concern forms (number one topic at each and every meeting!), other topics have included the new scheduling and timekeeping system, the new graduate/residency program, RN recruitment and retention strategies, and guidelines and expectations about the role of nurse team leaders.

Safe Staffing Committee

On September 3rd, the initial meeting of the Safe Staffing Committee mandated by the State Legislature took place at the HEC. Twenty nursing units represented by staff nurses met with management representatives. Responsibilities of this committee include:

- Developing an annual patient care unit and shift based nursing staffing plan based on the needs of patients; this will be used as the primary component of the staffing budget. Factors to be considered in plan development include census, patient intensity, skill mix, experience and training of nursing personnel, equipment and geography of the patient care unit, and nationally published staffing guidelines. The committee may also take hospital finances into account.
- Conducting semi-annual reviews of the staffing plan against patient need and known evidence-based information.
- Reviewing, assessing and responding to staffing concerns presented to the committee.

This committee will produce the hospital's annual nurse staffing plan, and if the plan is not adopted by the hospital, the CEO must provide a written explanation of the reasons why to the committee. The hospital must post the nurse staffing plan and the nurse staffing schedule with relevant clinical staffing for that shift, in a public area in each patient care unit.

Many thanks to those staff members who have volunteered to serve on this important committee. Patrick Barron, Local Unit Co-Chairperson is also serving on this committee as a representative of the executive team. WSNA will be providing training to the staff nurses serving as committee members.



New Grads/Residents

Management has eased some the restrictions placed on staff nurses hired as new graduates/ residents. After completing a one-year residency, new grads will be required to stay six months on their hiring unit and shift, as opposed to the twelve months that was originally proposed. Management has proposed that new grads be hired into more desirable positions ahead of current staff as a recruitment/ retention tool. WSNA opposes any hiring practices not based on seniority, as described in Article 13.2.1 of the contract. As always, we welcome your input on this issue, and if you feel that your contract rights have been violated our grievance officers are here to help.

Good Bye and Hello

We are sorry to say goodbye to a long time WSNA Officer, Linda Smallwood. Linda has recently resigned her position from the ICU at St. Joseph Hospital, and therefore has given up her position as Treasurer. Linda has been a passionate supporter of safe staffing and a tough negotiator at contract time. Roni Kelsey has agreed to step into the Treasurer Position. Roni, a former ICU nurse and current STAT nurse, has previously served as an officer for WSNA. Best wishes to Linda and welcome back, Roni!!! We look forward to working with you.

On a related note, there remains an opening on the Executive Team for a Co-Membership Officer. This is a great opportunity to become involved with our local unit by greeting newly hired RNs at monthly employee orientation and serving on the executive committee. For anyone interesting in taking on this important role and supporting your bargaining group, contact any executive officer.

Nurse Team Leader Guidelines

Your executive team has voiced concerns to hospital management about Nurse Team Leader job guidelines that may include supervisory functions. Contract language around the NTL role (Article 5.2) specifically states that the position is intended to create resources on a shift, not to transfer management responsibilities to bargaining unit members. This discussion is ongoing at our monthly meetings. If you feel that you are being assigned managerial or supervisory duties, please contact a grievance officer.

Mandatory Training

As we all know, hospital census is running high and we are all crunched for time. Are you having trouble completing mandatory education, reading HIPPA updates, and/or reading work related email? Please contact your manager about their expectations for completing these required activities. You must be allowed paid time to complete mandatory/required training and updates.

Caregiver Scheduling and Timekeeping (CST)

The new scheduling and timekeeping system is being phased in as of August. Hospital Management has been providing the Executive Team with updates since last year as the system has been developed to assure that scheduling and compensation is in accordance with contract language. Recommendations from the Executive Committee have been received and implemented. In-services around the use of the new KRONOS time clocks are now taking place. A command center will be available as we go live to assist staff clocking in and out.



Unit Representative Meetings

A pizza party was held for Unit Representatives at Cascade Pizza on Wednesday, September 24 at 6 p.m. Several Unit Reps attended for the opportunity to meet with your Executive Team to talk about issues on the various nursing units, and about helping our coworkers get the most benefit from WSNA and our local contract.

The next Unit Rep meeting is tentatively scheduled for January when we hope to have an informational presentation in addition to our informal discussions. Unit Reps are also invited to attend our monthly WSNA/Management Meeting held on the fourth Friday of every month from 09:30 to 12:30. Reps who have attended have found the meetings useful and informative.



4. This opens a screen with links to several nursing department websites, as well a link to Staffing Concern Forms.
5. Click on the link and complete the form.

Once completed and sent, a copy of this form goes to the manager of the unit involved and to the Co-Chairs of our Local Unit. You should receive a reply from your manager or director. As always, if you have a concern about the level of staffing on your unit, you contact your immediate supervisor. These completed forms are a standing agenda item at the monthly WSNA/management meetings and your input about working conditions is valuable.

Accessing Staffing Concern Forms

Staffing concern forms are accessible within a few clicks on most hospital computers. Follow the following steps (if you have any trouble, please contact your Unit Rep or any of the Executive Officers):



1. If needed, log on the computer.
2. Open the Peacehealth page by clicking on the dove icon on the bottom of the computer screen or under Programs.
3. Click on the Patient Care Division link found in the list on the right side of the screen.

Save The Date!

**Nurse Legislative Day – Olympia, WA
On February 2, 2009**

**WSNA Convention, SeaTac, WA
April 29 – May 1, 2009**