

WSNA Local Unit St. Joseph Hospital- Bellingham

In This Issue

- Safe Staffing Committee Update
- Kronos/CST
- Required Training
- Uninterrupted Breaks
- Increasing Your FTE
- Helper Nurses
- Unsafe Staffing Concerns
- Nursing Recognition Banquet

Local Unit Officers

Diane Rientjes-Green	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	Membership

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*The Oldest and Largest Union
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Safe Staffing Committee Update



The Safe Staffing Committee made their presentation to Nancy Steiger on February 17 as previously reported. This included a detailed, department-by-department, shift-by-shift plan for staffing for nurses and ancillary staff. Unfortunately, due to illness,

the CEO's written reply regarding their proposed staffing levels was delayed until April 27, at which time a counter proposal was made. The committee will be reviewing this proposal before a final plan is agreed upon.

Once a plan is finalized, the next task will be how and where daily and current shift staffing levels will be posted for the public, as directed by the legislature (HB 3123). Please let your department representative know your appreciation for their hard work.

Kronos/CST

Issues such as staff not receiving entitled premium pay continue to arise with the timekeeping and scheduling system, and unit officers discuss these issues at the monthly WSNA/Management meetings. The staffing office reported to WSNA that they have fixed a recurring problem with Kronos regarding on-call pay. All staff should monitor their electronic time cards and pay stubs, and report any inaccuracies as soon as possible. You can access Kronos from home via this link:

<https://schedule.peacehealth.org/wfc/applications/wtk/html/es/s/logon.jsp>

If your concerns are not being resolved, please bring them forward to your representative or a local unit officer.

Required Training

Do you work in a department that requires specialty training such as ACLS or PALS/ENPC? You are required to renew these specialty certifications before the end of the month in which they expire. It is up to each staff member to track their expiration date and register for classes in order to stay current. Information on class availability and registration is available on the SJH Learning & Development (education) website. The good news is that the contract requires the hospital to pay for the training and your time spent at the training (section 12.5).

Uninterrupted Breaks

WSNA has filed an association grievance with the hospital regarding a recent memo stating; “5 minutes here or there spent surfing the Internet or visiting with your friends count toward your allotted rest breaks.” The association’s position is that you are entitled to uninterrupted break times, off of your unit instead of several mini breaks. If you are on your unit, carrying a phone or pager, you are still answering call lights, pages, and phone calls, not



visiting with friends and therefore not on a break. We can support each other by urging our co-workers to take their well-deserved breaks off of the floor.

Increasing Your FTE

These have been financially challenging times for all of us and the hospital has been brainstorming on where savings can be made. The decision has been made to not renew and/or cancel contracts for traveling nurses, in hopes that hospital staff can fill in those positions. WSNA has agreed that the hospital may post temporary or permanent positions allowing staff to increase their FTE both within and outside of their primary department. Postings are available online to anyone interested.



Also as a reminder to all, job postings are to be made available to all St. Joseph Hospital’s nurses, not unit specific. Section 13.2 states, “presently employed nurses.” Moral of the story: if you see a position posted that you are interested in, apply.

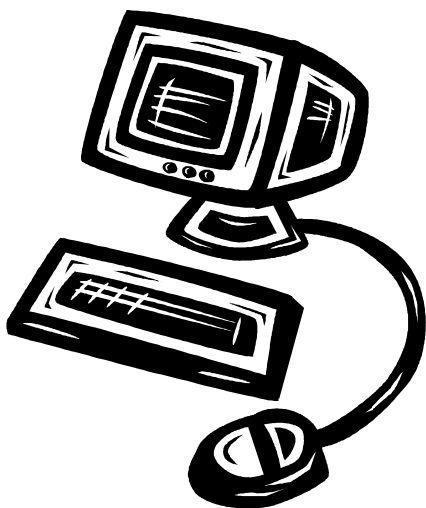
Helper Nurses

Please be cautious when you are floated to an unfamiliar area as a “helper nurse.” You are entitled to have clear guidelines about exactly what your duties are. If you are unfamiliar with a duty or

procedure, you may decline to perform it or expect an orientation. You are a licensed professional and are responsible for your actions and performance in accordance with the nurse practice act, and hospital and department policy. Also, you should review articles 7.15 and article 13.7. Per our contract, nurses changing departments are entitled to an orientation with a preceptor based on their level of skills and abilities.

Unsafe Staffing Concerns

Your executive committee continues to see a decrease in staffing concerns forms (SCF) and is hopeful that this is because of improved staffing levels and conditions. The hospital management has reported that nursing position vacancy rates are decreasing and 4South is continuing with their work re-design. Your voices were heard! Please continue to fill out a SCF when warranted. They can be found online under the "Patient Care Division" link at the bottom of the page.



Nursing Recognition Banquet

A huge thanks goes out to local unit officers Roni Kelsey and Sarah Newell, and local unit member Lisa Starinchak for their efforts in planning the first annual nursing banquet, along with the Mount Baker Nurses Association and the Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Committee. Local unit funds were used to provide on-campus meals for those staff nurses working the evening of the banquet and thus unable to attend.

Save The Date!

***2009 Leadership
Conference
September 27-29,
2009
Lake Chelan, WA***