

October 26, 2010

Dear PECSH/MNA Member:

By now you are likely aware, the intensity of the negotiations process has picked up significantly since we last communicated with you. Last week, PECSH/MNA held a press conference in which a report was filed with the Michigan Department of Community Health outlining instances of short staffing at Sparrow Hospital. To say that Sparrow Management was upset with this report would be an understatement. However, to be fair, they should not have been surprised. We have not only shared this data with them during negotiations, but on a monthly basis the PECSH Executive Team has reported staffing concerns data to the Mutual Gains Committee well before negotiations began. For the last three years our concerns basically have not been addressed.

This report was compiled from a thorough examination of not only filed short staffing forms, but also a comprehensive review by PECSH/MNA of all shifts worked on nursing units. Despite Management's assertion that in this report PECSH/MNA "misrepresented" these facts, there can be no argument of the ongoing lack of staff that our bargaining unit members continue to endure. We would state that in a claim to membership in a letter dated October 25, 2010, Management's assertion that staff have worked short only 366 of 42,220 shifts is absolutely ludicrous. We all can see the falsehood of those remarks. We continue to negotiate with Management about how additional positions will be implemented and posted.

A great source of frustration that the Negotiations Team is enduring is -- despite Management's claim that they have offered to increase 69 full-time nurses -- that we still do not have any kind of proposal from Management that does not ask Nurses and other Health Professionals to lose our current rights regarding Administrative Absences (furlough days), our rights to be compensated appropriately for picking up extra shifts, or our rights to be able to work available shifts before any agency staff would be used.

We also continue to try to understand the Management position on the benefit reductions in retirement and health insurance. They are proposing are the same reductions they have implemented on all other staff. We ask why is it that these benefit reductions are even necessary? Our hospital loves to tout how we are a Magnet institution for advertising purposes, but now that they have that status they are not interested in actually living up to the benefits that helped get them there. We have a right to negotiate our own contract with benefits that are not slashed even when Sparrow made a \$61,000,000, last year.

Also worth mentioning is an inaccuracy that was presented in the same letter date October 25, 2010. We have not received a proposal that would only increase our SPHN health premiums to 10% as was stated. As we have previously shared with you, by the end of the contract we would have the premium increased to 15%. They have stated that if associates participate in a "wellness program", which we have not seen an actual proposal for, premiums could be reduced to 12.5%, and if you are married and your spouse meets the "wellness" criteria you then could be reduced to 10%...but if you are unmarried this incentive does not exist.

We continue to hope that an agreement can be reached that we can recommend to you. We have a lot of work to do, and we continue to fight hard for our members. It is likely that between now and the end of this negotiating process you will continually see many more mailings sent from Management and also from PECSH. We will try to keep you up to date as much as possible, but please continue to go to www.pecsh.com and www.sparrowwatch.org for updates, as well as attend our next membership meeting on this Thursday, October 28, 2010 at 5pm in the Sparrow Auditorium. Please feel free to share this e-mail with your PECSH/MNA co-workers.

In Solidarity,

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