



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 16, 2010

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NEGOTIATIONS END BETWEEN NURSES AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND SPARROW HOSPITAL

(Lansing, MI) Contract negotiations between the registered nurses and health care professionals working at Sparrow Hospital (PECSH) ended today. Sparrow offered a new contract proposal on Monday, and nurses and health care professional made numerous concessions during negotiations, but talks ended without an agreement in sight. Nurses and health care professionals are moving forward and preparing to strike at the hospital on Monday, November 22, 2010.

"The little progress we made in the past two days at the bargaining table was painfully slow," said MNA/PECSH president Jeff Breslin, RN. "The hospital clearly does not respect employees, and we continue to have very serious concerns about the lack of staffing and safe patient care at Sparrow. Fewer nurses treating more patients is simply not safe and not acceptable to the hardworking, dedicated nurses and health care professionals who are at the bedside of patients day and night. The people of our community deserve better, and we truly appreciate the support."

Appropriate staffing levels between nurses and patients are a top priority for PECSH/MNA. The PECSH/MNA has agreed to concessions in their health care benefit program resulting in a 33% increase in cost to workers. Employees and health care professionals have agreed with Sparrow on proposed wage increases of 1 ½% for the first two years of a new three-year contract, but have not agreed to a third year and are a fraction apart from the hospital's latest offer.

"Sparrow has agreed to increase staff in some areas of the hospital, but not until September 2011 and we have a staffing CRISIS at the hospital TODAY," Breslin said. "Unfortunately, Sparrow hospital has a history of agreeing to increase staffing and then ignoring the contract."

PECSH members told hospital negotiators they will not agree to concession demands in retirement programs made by the hospital.

No further negotiations between Sparrow management and PECSH/Michigan Nurses Association (MNA) are scheduled. The 2,100 nurses and health care professionals have been working under a contract extension that expires on Friday, November 19, 2010. Workers will be assembling strike signs **beginning at 11 a.m. tomorrow, Wednesday, November 16, 2010 in the exhibit hall of the Lansing Center** for an employee strike at Sparrow that is scheduled to begin on Monday, November 22, 2010.

"We are prepared to return to the table and attempt to resolve remaining critical issues, if Sparrow will bargain in good faith," said John Karebian, MNA Executive Director. "Sparrow management has not been honest at the bargaining table or with the public, and workers will not allow the hospital to jeopardize safe patient care."

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The Michigan Nurses Association is the largest, most effective union for RNs in Michigan. As the voice of all registered nurses in Michigan, MNA advocates for nurses and their patients at the State Capitol, in the community, and at the bargaining table. MNA is a constituent member of National Nurses United and an affiliate of the AFL-CIO.