

IN THIS ISSUE

Everyday Leader

FVPA Members Ratify New Agreement

Sharp Nurses Agree to New Contract

Chino Valley Nurses Vote to Join Us

Kaiser National Negotiations

Union in Brief

Legislative Update



Kathy J. Sackman, RN
President

Ken Deitz, RN
Executive Vice President

Barbara Blake, RN
State Secretary

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State Treasurer

President's Message

It is often all too easy to take the rights and protections we have as union nurses and health care professionals for granted. For many of us, all we have known is the security that our union contracts provide us, protecting us when we speak out for our patients, their families, and our professions.

For a moment, imagine that you don't have the benefit of that safety. Imagine being confronted by your hospital medical chief of staff, who questions your loyalty to the hospital's mission and attacks your personal integrity. Imagine being called into a private meeting to have this hostile and demoralizing conversation. Just to add insult to injury, imagine being accused of bullying your colleagues and being labeled the opposite of the "nicer, quieter" nurses, simply because you wish to join a union.

Hard to imagine, right? Well, it recently happened almost daily to a number of nurses at Chino Valley Medical Center who, in spite of suffering these indignities, endured in their commitment to organize with us. This courageous group of nurses had the fortitude to publicly challenge hospital management to do better by them and their patients, and to respect their right and freedom of choice to vote "union yes." Their resolve paid off on April 2 when they overwhelmingly voted to join UNAC/UHCP.

What an extraordinary group of nurses.

We should never forget how challenging it is for unorganized nurses and other health care professionals to stand up to their employers, to stand up for their rights and the rights of their patients. There are bad hospital employers out there. Prime Healthcare Services, the owner of Chino Valley Medical Center, is one such employer. In fact, they could easily be the poster child for anti-union sentiment within the Southern California hospital community. Prime Healthcare Services seems intent on forcing all of us down a low road -- to marginal staffing levels, low wages and minimal benefits. On principle alone, we cannot allow that to happen.

We are committed to securing a first union contract with the Chino Valley nurses. We are committed to building upon and renewing our contract with Garden Grove, another Prime hospital, later this year. And we are committed to working with nurses at other Prime hospitals in their struggle to gain the union rights and protections we enjoy.

Kathy J. Sackman, RN



United Nurses Associations of California
Union of Health Care Professionals



Negotiations Midterm Report

FVPA Members Ratify New Agreement

Fountain Valley Professional Association (FVPA) members voted on April 20, 2010 to ratify a new three-year collective bargaining agreement. The new contract, retroactive to February 2, provides for annual wage increases, an increase in on-call pay, an additional holiday, restoration of the hospital's extended sick leave program, and other improvements. A record number of FVPA members participated in the full day of voting.



Thuc Do, RN, Radiology

"I think it is one of the strongest contracts we have been able to implement for FVPA and the excitement that it's generating is unbelievable," stated Wendy Burrell, RN and FVPA co-chair of the Registered Nurse Staff. "We were able to get in language to protect individuals who have worked here for a long time and have strong language that clearly specifies member benefits."

Although negotiations extended well beyond the existing contract's expiration date, both the FVPA negotiating team and management worked hard to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion, and avoid having to conduct a Board of Inquiry. "We had a great team that put every effort into getting the best contract possible," commented Susan Adamson-Nelson, CLS, a laboratory microbiologist and FVPA co-chair of the Medical Professional Staff, which includes clinical lab scientists, licensed clinical social workers, pharmacists and rehabilitation professionals. "We were able to firm up the contract language to clarify how it must be interpreted, which helps strengthen our employee protections."

"I look at the full picture, and the full picture is what makes me happy," said Deborah Guinn, an RN in Labor and Delivery. "Benefits are part of my pay, so I am glad they took those into consideration. I attended some of the negotiations and I think that the members representing us did a fantastic job."

Sharp Nurses Agree to New Contract

Sharp Professional Nurses Network (SPNN) members overwhelmingly approved a new 15-month agreement on April 30. The new agreement only modifies a few contractual terms. "With the economy still climbing out of recession, we believed limiting our scope of bargaining to a few topics, like fair wage increases and a relatively short agreement duration, was the right thing to do," said SPNN President Chris McGovern, RN. "Our plan is to readdress the contract late next year when we anticipate the economy will be doing better."

The agreement provides wage increases on October 1, 2010 and on each nurse's anniversary date, and requires Sharp to give advance notice of a unit/service closure. The new agreement runs from July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011.



Chino Valley Nurses Vote to Join Us



In a strong showing of solidarity, approximately 125 Chino Valley Medical Center (CVMC) nurses voted overwhelmingly to join UNAC/UHCP during a two-day NLRB election held April 1 and 2. "As nurses, we want to create a work environment that makes it possible for us to provide the highest quality of care to our patients," said Teer Lina, RN, BSN, in the hospital's Emergency

Services system. The Registered Nurses decision to join UNAC/UHCP follows a 2008 attempt, which resulted in a contested election and the Union filing multiple unfair labor practice charges against the hospital.

"The primary goal of the nurses at Chino Valley is to make sure they can give their patients thorough

Department. "Now that we are members of UNAC/UHCP, we can directly impact patient care without fear or intimidation."

Owned by Dr. Prem Reddy, CVMC is one of 13 hospitals in his Prime Healthcare

and consistent care without worrying about losing their jobs in the process," stated UNAC/UHCP President Kathy Sackman, RN. "Nurses are on the frontlines of patient care, and need to be empowered to speak up for themselves and for their patients. I commend these nurses for standing together a second time to gain a voice in the workplace."

Kaiser National Negotiations

Negotiations for a new national agreement started in early April between Kaiser Permanente and the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions, including UNAC/UHCP. Three multi-day sessions have been held, and a fourth session is scheduled in late May.

Negotiations are being conducted by a Common Issues Committee

continued on next page

Union in Brief

BVRNA – The Bear Valley Registered Nurses Association begin contract negotiations May 20th. All BVRNA members are welcome to attend. For more information, please contact a BVRNA affiliate officer.

UNAC/UHCP – Kyle Serrette, Organizing Director for UNAC/UHCP for the past three-and-a-half years, has accepted a new position

with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in Washington D.C. Kyle helped nurses organize at Kaiser Permanente, Parkview Community Hospital and Chino Valley Medical Center. We thank Kyle for his positive contributions to UNAC/UHCP and wish him well.

UNAC/UHCP – The ballots have been counted. The following

staff and members were elected as delegates to attend the 2010 AFSCME Convention in Boston: Bill Rouse; Suzanne Delaney, RN; Donna Smith, RN; Denise Duncan, RN; Daria Smith, RN; Mike Zackos, RN; Arthereane Brown, RN; Pamela Brodersen, NP; and Tim Uliasz, RN. The alternates are: Moises Alarcon, RN; Richard Joiner, RN; and Susan Davis, RN.

Legislative Update

Issues That Matter to You

(CIC), composed of 68 union representatives and 43 KP management participants. The CIC work to date has been undertaken by four issue sub-groups: the Labor Management Partnership; attendance; performance improvement and performance sharing programs; and workforce planning and development. In the final scheduled session in late May the CIC will consider the recommendations presented by each subgroup, as well as address wages and benefits. Once the national bargaining phase of negotiations is complete, UNAC/UHCP will begin local bargaining with Southern California management to reach a new, complete agreement before September 30. Visit our website – www.unac-ca.org – for the latest bargaining information.

TAKE ACTION

Want to attend the 2010 Convention as an elected delegate? Want to submit a Constitutional amendment to be considered at the Convention? Instructions and forms will be mailed to your home soon.

As previously reported in the Voice, UNAC/UHCP had several concerns about **SB 1111** (Negrete McLeod), the Consumer Health Protection Enforcement Act. UNAC/UHCP is deeply committed to safe patient care; however, we are just as committed to protecting the rights and safety of all health care professionals. Establishing draconian regulations in the name of consumer safety may actually have the opposite effect for patients and health care providers.

SB 1111 would have imposed many changes to the various healing arts regulatory boards and the licensees under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). Three areas of major concern were:

1. Mandatory posting of home addresses on the internet;
2. Mandatory reporting of any suspension or termination for cause, or resignation in lieu of termination within five days of the event, for reasons as defined in the regulation; and
3. A lack of prohibition on “borrowing” fees paid to health care boards for other purposes.

Barbara Blake, RN, UNAC/UHCP state secretary, along with the UNAC/UHCP, AFSCME legislation team, had several meetings with Negrete McLeod staffers and the DCA to discuss our concerns.

The issue of mandatory posting of home addresses on the internet was withdrawn by the Senator, who also agreed to change the employer’s mandatory reporting from the proposed five day period to 15 days. UNAC/UHCP also requested resolution of the clause’s new definition of gross negligence, which was not aligned with the definition in the Nurse Practice Act. The protection of the BRN fees was not addressed as we had hoped.

On April 22, a vote on SB 1111 failed to pass the Senate Business and Professions Committee. Senator Negrete McLeod reaffirmed her commitment to trying to address our concerns should these issues be readdressed in the future. This was a significant achievement for UNAC/UHCP members and RNs throughout California.

PRIORITY BILL SPOTLIGHT

SB 1069

SUPPORT

Would authorize physician assistants to perform and certify physical examinations and other specified medical services, as defined; authorizes state and local government agencies to rely on

certificates executed by physician assistants, as specified; and establishes statute of limitation regulations for claims brought against physician assistants.

AB 1802

OPPOSE

Would have permitted a parent or guardian to designate a non-nurse school employee to administer insulin during school, as specified.

FAILED IN COMMITTEE

EVERYDAY LEADER

sunday monday tuesday wednesday thursday friday saturday



Daniel Quiñones, RN
Sharp Professional Nurses Network

Unit: PSYCH, ICU

Registered Nurse: 7 years

UNAC/UHCP Member: 3 years

Hometown: San Diego, CA

“When I participate in our RN advisory committee meetings, it isn’t just my voice management hears. It’s our voice.”

“My mom is a Registered Nurse and she strongly encouraged me to earn my RN degree. I have always admired nurses for their expertise and compassion and am proud that I chose to work in this respected profession. Becoming an RN has been the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life.

I started at Sharp Mesa Vista as a Travel RN in January 2005 and became a regular staff member on the evening shift. That’s how I learned about the Sharp Professional Nurses Network, UNAC/UHCP and my right to have a voice in the workplace. I wanted to learn more about being a union member, because I didn’t know what it meant to be in a union when I lived in the Midwest.

Back home, I did know what it was like to work at a hospital without a union. We weren’t acknowledged as professionals and had no voice in the workplace. It was clear that our experience as RNs wasn’t considered important to improving patient care. Our jobs were at risk if we didn’t take on heavy patient loads and we were instructed not to discuss forming a union.

Today, I am proud to say that I have the opportunity to represent my colleagues as a union member. When I participate in our RN advisory committee meetings, it isn’t just my voice management hears. It’s our voice. There is power in numbers and we can accomplish so much more standing together than we ever could fending for ourselves. What makes

being a UNAC/UHCP member even better is that the dues we pay to make all of these positive contributions possible are just around the cost of buying one soda a day. I think it’s a great investment.

By getting involved, I’ve learned that RNs and other health care professionals make the most effective contributions to patient care when we feel like we can speak up for our patients and stand up for our profession. I do my best to educate my colleagues about the value of being a UNAC/UHCP member. By listening to what I have to say, they can recognize for themselves how important it is to be active in our union. Our union is our voice.”



United Nurses Associations of California

Union of Health Care Professionals

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