



HPAE

NEWSLETTER FOR *THE NURSES OF*
HPAE LOCAL 5131 AT INSPIRA

FEBRUARY 2020

LOCAL BEAT NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ever wonder why we work for a union hospital? Why the nurses of Inspira sought out HPAE to organize ourselves? Or what you “get for your dues?” I’ll be honest... I don’t wonder that, ever. But I get to see A LOT of what our union provides us with firsthand. I have been asked that question by nurses who were frustrated with something happening in their work environment. There are innumerable benefits to being in a nurses’ union. I’ve done some research on those benefits and I know it personally so that I could answer that question when it’s asked of me. I will tell you the short reason and that is that I would never want to work for a non-union hospital again. When patient care is suffering and I have tried everything I can think of to make that situation change, it has always been my union that has come through for me and for my patients. That has never been more true than now. The NICU and Labor and delivery units in Vineland have been without hot water for years. Yes, that’s what I said—no hot water. The patients were unable to shower. I don’t know how many of you have given birth, but it may be the one time when a shower is absolutely vital! Hot baths and showers are also frequently recommended for pain control for laboring mothers. Can you imagine how embarrassing it is to tell your patients, day after day, that you can’t provide them with a shower? The nurses in this unit have brought this to management many, many times. It has gone up the chain to higher administration. It’s been documented in meeting minutes and emails. We took it to our Labor Management meeting back in September. All to no avail. And then I met with the our union’s health and safety coordinator who deals regularly with OSHA and the Department of Health. Together, we researched building codes and OSHA regulations. We filed a class action grievance for both units and for the first time in YEARS, there is hot water in labor and delivery and the NICU. It shouldn’t take our union getting involved for things to be done correctly for our patients. But clearly it often does.

Do you have a situation in your unit that seems intolerable? Do you question whether or not your patients are getting the best possible care? If not, I’d be willing to bet you can improve on that situation with the support of your nurses’ union. We’ve got each others backs, and a wealth of knowledge available to us from thousands of nurses. Take advantage of that knowledge. Reach out to an officer to see what can be done. You ARE your union. But you only get from it what you seek.

On that note, please consider joining us for the next **Nurses Take DC, on April 22, 2020**. I’ll be driving and I’m sure the nurses going can work out some transportation cooperation. It is a very important opportunity to influence nursing and patient care in our nation. Safe staffing saves lives. Unfortunately, there are many wealthy organizations fighting against safe staffing laws. It’s up to US to fight for our patients and for our profession. Anyone interested in joining that fight, contact one of your local officers. Be the difference you want to see in the world!

In Solidarity,
Dana Barrett RN
President HPAE Local 5131

HPAE Local 5131 Membership Meetings

Mark your calendar and come to a union membership meeting. Updates will be provided on system-wide issues, education on our contract and upcoming events and trainings.

Meetings will be held **March 24th**
8 am, 11 am & 7:30 pm
Semper Marine Detachment
2041 W. Landis Ave, Vineland

Hello HPAE members and especially my Elmer family! Many of you at Elmer may know I recently took a job in the PACU. I love my new work place, but miss my old coworkers so much. It has also crossed my mind that since I am not out on the floor anymore, you may forget to reach out to me for issues. I know being cancelled is an ongoing problem that continues to happen on 2 South, 2 East, and EICU. There is a proper way to call off staff before a shift. You should receive the call that you are not needed for work within a reasonable amount of time. If you feel you were called off too close to the start of your shift, please reach out so it can be investigated. The call off books are on each unit and are to be maintained by the nursing staff. If you are cancelled, please call into your unit to make sure your name is placed in the cancellation book. If you feel you have been cancelled out of turn or too frequently, please reach out to me or any union representative. Several grievances have been won by nurses cancelled out of turn. What this means is you get paid for a missed shift or your PTO is returned back into your PTO bank. We are currently working on several cancellations thru the grievance process.

I also would like to help clarify the standby language in the contract. If you are canceled you may be placed on standby. Some nurses have chosen to be placed on standby in the hopes of being able to work if census rises. Other nurses have been placed on standby by staffing when they are called off. There are rules in the contract in regards to being placed on standby. You can only be placed on standby for the first 4 hours of your shift. You will receive 4.00/hr for being on standby. The hospital must call you if they need you. If you do not hear from them by 11:00, you are free the rest of your shift. If you are not called into work you can use PTO. There is no set time when you must arrive if you are called into work. Standby is not the same as units with structured on-call language. You are on standby for your unit. The goal of this language is to improve staffing on the units if they get hit with several admissions after the start of the shift. It is also meant to help the nurses with frequent cancellations that need to work. Please let me or another union representative know if the contract language for standby is not being followed correctly.

Do not hesitate to reach out to me or any union officer or representative. Our numbers can be found on our HPAE 5131 website. Issues concerning our nurses are constantly being discussed by our officers and brought to managements attention in the hopes of finding a resolution thru grievances and or in our bi-monthly labor management meetings. Remember as a union we are stronger when we work together!

Caroline Sands
HPAE Vice President Elmer

Hello, just a reminder concerning mandatory education requirements (BLS, ACLS, PALS, NRP, TNCC, ENPC). As long as you are a full time, part time, per diem, or a CRT employee and work **500** hours in a ROLLING calendar year, Inspira will pay for your courses. It has been brought to our Local's attention that in some instances the Education dept. is informing employees they need to pay for these classes since they have not worked 500 hours yet this year. For example, if you are due for ACLS this year in February 2020, and you have worked 500 hours since February 2019 Inspira will pay for your course. This was an issue that our Local Negotiating team bargained for during our contract negotiations to have those hours decreased from 1000 to 500. That was a big win for our nurses. Please refer to Article 29.3.1 in your Handbook.

Tracy Sheppard
Treasurer/ Secretary

Hello all. Since I was recently appointed interim Vice President of Vineland, I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you. I have been a nurse for 16 years now, 8 of them at Inspira. I got my nursing degree at the University of South Dakota. We lived in South Dakota for 11 years while my husband was active duty in the Air Force. I worked in a large hospital there in the Ortho/Neuro/Surgical department. I learned so much there and gained some experience as a supervisor as well. After my family moved back to New Jersey to be closer to extended family, I started working in the stepdown unit at what was then South Jersey Healthcare Elmer. I worked there for four years, and was very lucky to work with some wonderful nurses and staff that I still consider family. Elmer is where I had my first introduction to being part of a union. Throughout my nursing career, safe staffing has always been an issue I felt strongly about. The first contract negotiations I sat with a small group of Elmer nurses across the table from administration, knees and voice shaking, and explained why safe staffing numbers were so important. It has gotten much easier to speak up to administration since then, unfortunately for them! Shortly after that I became a union rep. When my unit at Elmer closed, I made the leap to Labor and Delivery in Vineland, a specialty that had interested me since nursing school. That was like starting over as a brand new nurse, but thanks to some fantastic preceptors and coworkers I have found my groove and I love it. Working in a locked unit means I don't meet many nurses that work in other areas at Vineland. I am always open to emails or texts if anyone needs to reach me. I do work nights, so please be patient with my response times. I am excited about this new role, and hope to meet many more of you through your active involvement in OUR union (hint hint). We are stronger together!

Karen Johnson



Health Professionals and Allied Employees

By Your Side. On Your Side.

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Address Service Requested

Hello Fellow Nurses,

Kelly Fordyce here with some information that has been confusing to some. I know a lot of nurses have been getting cancelled and are using their PTO. Some don't have any PTO left so are going on with partial pay checks. This is extremely frustrating, and detrimental to any household. As much as we would like to have the census high and everyone working, we have no control over that. But we do have a option some of you are not familiar with. During last year's negotiations, management wanted the ability to pull you to more campuses- Mullica Hill and Woodbury. But with involvement from both Inspira locals we were able to block that. But we did leave it open to voluntary reassignment. We all know that no one likes to leave their home unit. However, if you are looking for time and willing to travel, there are many hours available in Mullica Hill. If this is something you would like to consider please contact your manager and the staffing office and let them know you are looking for some time and get an orientation set up in the other facility. If you pick up time in advance you are entitled to a \$5 an hour differential. If you get cancelled at your home campus and offer to work in Mullica Hill or Woodbury they will still take you if available but you are not entitled to the \$5 differential. At this time, Mullica Hill has been offering PIP to many floors for extra shifts and hiring agency nurses. Please reach out to any of our union leaders for further information or clarification. On another note, if you are having trouble getting your classes scheduled in Vineland for mandatory certifications, you are also eligible to take them in the Mullica Hill campus.

Fighting the Big Fight,

Kelly Fordyce RN

