



### Message from the President



As we are nearing the end of another year as HPAE nurses at Cooper, I am thinking of all the changes we have experienced. Those changes happened at our facility and at the HPAE State level as well.

This year Ann Twomey retired and at our convention in October we elected new officials. Our new state officers are Debbie White (President), Barbara Rosen (Vice President) and Alexis Rean-Walker (Secretary/Treasurer). These new leaders will lead us with their new ideas and strategic plans into 2019. We look forward to working with all of them.

In our own facility we are awaiting the announcement of the new CNO, who I am looking forward to working with. I hope that it will be someone who understands our struggles at the bedside, which can only make our working environment better.

Please look out for announcements about divisional unit meetings that are now under way to get a start on thinking about our next contract.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Doris Bell  
President  
Local 5118

### Transports to MD Anderson from the Main Hospital

There are times when patients in the hospital are in need of radiology treatments at MD Anderson. Once again, the hospital had no safe plan for transporting our patients until our Union leadership raised our concerns about what was happening with the transports. Bedside nurses have been made to accompany their patient to MD Anderson. The problem with sending the nurse is it leaves the unit short which means the other nurses have to absorb the nurses' assignment. Not safe!

Union Leadership has met with administration about this situation. It is the Union's position that a nurse should not be mandated to go to MD Anderson with the patient. Hospital administration agreed, and volunteers will be sought. If a nurse volunteers, an ACD, or other leadership will assume responsibility for the nurse's unit assignment. If there are no volunteers, an ACD or other leadership nurse will take the patient.

The MD Anderson nurses have recently been educated on the PCA pumps. This will help them be able to treat some of the patients coming from the hospital without a transport nurse.

A couple reminders if you go with your patient in an emergency;

\*There is NO code cart.

\*There is an AED and ambu bag with oxygen.

\*You must call 911.

If the above process for transporting patients to MD Anderson is not followed on your unit, please contact any of your union Leaders as soon as possible.

## Union Contract Benefits

### Longevity: Weekends and Holidays

The longevity language in our Union contract recognizes the years of service as a nurse at the hospital. We fought hard to win this language. Read it, understand it and use it!

### Article 7.6 Holiday Schedules

All Bargaining unit nurses with 20-29 years of service will work 1 summer and 2 winter holidays. This means you work one less summer holiday AND the winter holidays that you work are DIFFERENT.

Summer holidays are Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day.

Winter holidays are Thanksgiving (which is normally a summer holiday), Christmas Day and Eve and New Year's Day and eve.

If you fall into this category, by January 15th you need to tell your manager which holidays you will be working that year (which summer holiday you are dropping and the 2 winter holidays you want). BE PROACTIVE.

**Part Time Nurses** work one less summer holiday (this is dependent on staffing). Your summer holidays are the

current ones for the whole hospital.

Summer Track C includes July 4th and Thanksgiving. Summer Track D includes Memorial Day and Labor Day. If you are a part time nurse, you need to notify your manager EVERY January which summer holiday you would like to drop. When that holiday schedule is being made there is a possibility that you may have to work it due to staffing needs. Be proactive to ensure that our contract language is adhered to.

If you have questions please ask a union rep, officer or co-worker how this works. Do not ask management to interpret our contract. They may interpret the language differently than the actual intent of the language.

### Weekends

Bargaining unit nurses with 20-29 years of service will work 1 weekend per month. This means a weekend every 4 weeks. Your manager needs to place you on a separate weekend track.

Submitted by  
Jackie Franchetti, RN  
Grievance Chair



## Labor Unions' Efforts Pay Off

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HPAE and other New Jersey organizations have been pushing the legislature to raise the minimum wage for working people to \$15.00 an hour. Thanks to these efforts we are seeing employers responding and doing the right thing for their workers.

Cooper recently announced they are raising the minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour for their critical care technicians, food service workers and other full time, part-time and per diem employees, effective January 1, 2019.

We urge every Union member to contact their State Representatives and tell them to follow Cooper University Health Care's lead in providing a livable wage for all their workers.

**Every NJ working person should be paid at least \$15.00 per hour. Call NJ State House to speak with your Representatives: 609-847-3905.**

## Grievance Corner Update

- ◆ **Health and Safety and denial of a break.** A nurse was placed in an unsafe situation involving isolation/deacon and was also denied her break. The nurses from this area have rallied around their co-worker and are instrumental in this grievance.
- ◆ **Contract Violation.** The hospital violated our contract by using agency nurses instead of us. We work before agency RN's as long as we have told management that we want that particular shift. The grievance was amended to better reflect the violation. The hospital claims we do not have the right to amend a grievance beyond the original file date. We disagree. This may proceed to arbitration.
- ◆ **Dress Code.** A grievance was filed for a nurse who allegedly wore an unauthorized jacket in a patient care area. Remember, we have to follow the hospital dress code.  
  
There are several grievances that are going through the grievance process.

### Need to Know

- ◆ **Lateness.** After five occurrences a verbal warning by the hospital is given.
- ◆ **Lab Errors.** First offense is a written warning.
- ◆ **HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Violations.** Nurses has been given written warnings or terminated for violating HIPAA depending on the circumstances. Do NOT look up any patient information on a patient that is not under your direct care. Do NOT use social media to post pictures of any patient, including friends or family members.

### Ongoing Concerns

- ◆ **The Maternal Child Care units are again experiencing mandation on every shift.** This is due to low census in the PICU, PEDS and NICU. Nurses are exhausting their PTO and are taking mandated days off without pay. We have worked with the hospital to offer cross training to areas outside of the established float district and to make sure the process for orienting and assigning is followed.
- ◆ **Floating.** The daily floating of four and five nurses from a single unit is out of control. The nurses are justifiably angry. We are close to reaching an agreement with the hospital that will certainly minimize the constant floating and will allow for the contractual 1:5 ratio to become consistent.

## UNION UNIT MEETINGS

Our Union LEB (Local Executive Board) are scheduling Unit Meetings across the hospital to discuss what obstacles we face daily when trying to provide quality care. On November 6, we had the Medical Surgical meetings, which included K8, K9, K10/ INCU, P5, P6, P7, N7, P8, P9, TSDU and Psych. The feedback from the nurses is invaluable.

At the meetings the nurses were given a short staffing survey to complete. The survey is also being distributed on the units. The purpose of the survey is for us, along with you to decide what approach to use when proposing change to the hospital.

You have expressed frustration over being pulled, not having supplies/equipment and not being respected.

Come out to one of the

meetings and be part of resolving your concerns.

The unit meeting schedule and times are as follows.

December 6, 2018  
Maternal Child Health Areas. 8:30 and 12 noon

January 9, 2019 PACU and TICU. 8:30 and 12 noon

Saturday, February 23, 2019 10 am SCU/SPU/PAT, CCL, Special Tests, PICC Team, IR/Radiology and OR

March 6, 2019 ED, ICU, CCU. 8:30 and 12 noon.

Saturday April 13, 2019 10am MD Anderson areas (Camden & Voorhee's), Voorhees Surgical Center, Out Patient PEDS, Mt. Laurel GI, Willingboro GI, Pre Admission Testing

Location: All meetings will be held at the ML Hotel on Route 73 in Mt laurel.

## HPAE Convention

October 5th and 6th of this year, HPAE held its convention in Atlantic City. This is an event that all members are invited to. This year a handful of our members from Cooper attended and were able to be part of the election of our new officers. There were breakout educational sessions, an evening reception and dinner followed by music and dancing. Nurses from K10, OR, PACU, Cyber knife and N7 attended. We had a great time and we were able to be part of electing the new leadership for our Union.

Doris Bell



A Newsletter for the members of  
HPAE Local 5118 at Cooper Hospital

110 Kinderkamack Road

Emerson, NJ 07630



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## HPAE Retiree Medical Trust

Being part of HPAE allows you to be enrolled in the HPAE Retiree Medical Trust (RMT). Currently, you are contributing 20 cents per hour. This money is sent each month by

the employer to the Third Party Administrator of the RMT, Zenith-American, whose office is in Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Your contributions and the contributions of all other HPAE members who are participating in the RMT are placed in a collective fund, which earns interest based on the current economic market.

You will be able to use this money to get reimbursed for medical costs once you meet the retirement criteria. For HPAE members who are full-time and have five or more years of contributions to the plan, the age eligibility is 55 years old. You must also have ceased employment with a participating employer to receive reimbursement benefits.

If you have less than five years of contributions to the RMT, you are eligible for reimbursement benefits as early as 40 years old, assuming no contributions are made for two years and you have ceased employment with a participating employer.

For those HPAE members who have five or more years of contributions and are eligible for benefits, you will be able to submit medical expenses based on a monthly reimbursement benefit. The exact amount of the monthly benefit is determined by your length of years contributing and the contribution rate. Any benefits not used in one month are "rolled over" to the next month.

To keep yourself updated on this important trust that you contribute to, please keep the following information filed for future reference:

1. The annual participant statement - this is mailed once a year and will give you an estimate of the amount of monthly reimbursement you will get based on the contributions made as of December 31st of the previous year. As you continue to work and make contributions that amount will continue to go up.
2. The participant information form - this is mailed once a year and it is encouraged that you fill this out to keep your contact information and the names of your beneficiary up to date.
3. If you move PLEASE remember to contact the RMT so you can put in a change of address. If a participant moves and needs to submit a change of address, they have to do so in writing. The easiest way to provide this information is to complete a fillable form on Zenith-American's website - <https://hpae.zenith-american.com>. After printing out the form, mail, fax (201-947-9192), or email the completed form. The participant can also contact the HPAE office and we will advise them of the process.
4. If you have questions regarding the RMT you can go to to our union website at [www.hpae.org](http://www.hpae.org) or contact Zenith-American representatives at (201)947-8000.

If you leave employment with a participating employer and are still working, also remember to contact the RMT when you are eligible to retire.