



### President's Update

The quarterly newsletter is a summarized report for RNs and LPNs at The Phoenix Center for Rehabilitation and Pediatrics, Llanfair House, VNA Health group of NJ, LLC and VNA of Englewood.

The nurses week of 5/6-5/12/22 was rounded up with a luncheon provided by the union on Tuesday 5/17/22 to all shifts. The LEB met on 6/8/22 in Person and discussion centered on contemporary issues at Phoenix Center which includes concerns about Patient's family visitation and the use of the facility. The bargaining unit sent the letter below to management.

Letter of Concern – COVID-19 Health & Safety  
June 9th, 2022

To Whom it May Concern,

As healthcare professionals, we all care deeply about protecting our patients, our workplace, and ourselves from potential exposure to, and outbreaks of, COVID-19. As our public health experts agree, masking and testing are two reasonable key practices that can prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Our members have identified several gaps in our COVID-19 safety regimen, which we would like to share with you;

- Patients' family members often sleep over. Since they cannot guarantee they will have a mask completely covering their mouth and nose at all times while asleep, this exposes our patients, coworkers, and themselves to higher risk of COVID-19 exposure. Additionally, we are concerned that the availability of a cot, which employees do not use, makes families believe that sleeping over is an option.
- Patients and their families will often order food delivered to their rooms. These delivery drivers, who we have not tested for COVID-19 and interact with large numbers of people daily, often enter the facility to make deliveries. This presents a high risk of exposing our Phoenix House family to COVID-19.

We all know the safety of our patients and staff is of the utmost importance to both Labor and Management and will continue to work together to keep Phoenix House safe.

Respectfully,

### Current officers and reps for Phoenix Center

Abdul Umoru, President	Abdul.Umoru6@gmail.
Geraldine Simms, VP	gerrisimms@yahoo.com
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### Message from

### VNA Health Group Local Vice President

#### MESSAGE FROM TAMARA WILLIAMS, VP FROM VNA HEALTH GROUP.

Hi members, Its Tamara your VP from VNA Health Group As we welcome the summer months and its warm weather, I would like to keep you updated on our monthly labor managements at both Englewood and Essex. After my conference with Carolyn, she reported Englewood has 4 new hires that are doing well, and management and Reps are working together for better patient care. Essex has also hired several new nurses and continues to recruit them daily. Let's welcome all the new nurses and give assistance if and when needed. Our reps are always available to help. Reps contact information are listed below. VNA continues to offer sign on bonuses for nurses and also if you refer the nurses. Please refer a nurse to help with the shortage that we continue to face at Essex. At Essex we continue to work with management on several project to improve our working environment for our members. For example, case management class where you have questions with educational team and also give input that can help team/ organization. Please reach out to Marie, to order your uniform. I would like to compete this task.

Last but not least, I know everyone has been asking if management will be assisting members with the gas increase that we are facing. We have brought this to their attention several times but to no avail. The government has announced an increased in the standard mileage rate for the remaining half of 2022. This will go into effect July 1, 2022; therefore, the Union will be back at the drawing board with management requesting assistance for mileage/gas reimbursement.

Enjoy your summer until next time from your VP.

Tamara

### Essex Reps Englewood Reps

- |                          |                                |
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## Llanfair House Update

Dear members,

As you know, the contract expires June 30, 2022. Surveys were sent out to all members, if you did not receive one please let one of our negotiation committee members know:

(Lorri Bowlby and Marvei Misa) We have two tentative dates to begin bargaining, 6/23 and 6/27. Please show your support for your negotiation by attending upcoming membership meetings and

## Formal Grievance

### Grievants:

Health Professionals & Allied Employees (HPAE) and Bargaining Unit employees eligible to enroll in the health insurance plan.

### Issues Involved in the Grievance:

The Employer has violated Article 12 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement by providing a health insurance plan not substantially comparable to the previous insurance plan.

### Remedy Sought:

HPAE/AFT and the Employees of The Phoenix Center for Rehabilitation & Pediatrics are seeking:

1. That the Employer return to providing the original health insurance plan, or provide a plan with substantially similar benefits, by November 1st, 2022
2. Per Article 12 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, "the Employer shall provide the Union with notice of its intended changes, and, at the Union's request, shall discuss the intended change during a period of thirty (30) days following such notice".
3. That the Employer continue to ensure all employees are reimbursed in a timely manner for qualifying expenses under the current plan.
4. That the Employer make whole all employees and/or their families who acquired medical or consumer debt as a result of unreimbursed or late reimbursed medical expenses under the current plan.

### Background

- 1) Prior to 2020, the employer provided a Cigna PPO, which reimbursed expenses in a timely manner, was widely accepted by providers in the area, and provided comprehensive benefits.
- 2) On May 1, 2018, HPAE and the Employer agreed that "Employees who regularly commit to working thirty-two (32) hours per week may participate in the Employer's health insurance plan in effect on July 1st, 2017, or a plan providing substantially similar benefits..."
- 3) The current health insurance plan was implemented by the employer after the Collective Bargaining Agreement was signed.
- 4) The deficiencies in the current health insurance plan include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Does not reimburse qualifying expenses in a timely manner,
  - b. Is not widely accepted by providers in the area,
  - c. Does not provide comprehensive benefits.These, and other, facts make it not substantially comparable to the previous plan.
- 5) Moreover, the previous plan has improved since 2020, now offering benefits such as \$0 access to dedicated virtual care, while the current plan has not kept up with industry standards.
- 6) On numerous prior occasions, bargaining unit members and the Union have raised issues arising from the current plan to the Employer, and these issues have not been resolved to their satisfaction.

Signed,

- Abdul Umoru, President, Local 5107, HPAE/AFT  
- Ben Silva, Staff Representative, HPAE/AFT

The grievance is still on step 2 of the publication of this newsletter.

AFT Convention 2022 will be in person in Boston, July 14-17. Abdul Umoru, President local 5107 is the designated officer for this convention.