



# HPAE

# LOCAL 5131

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

LOCAL BEAT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2017

## Message from the President

Hopefully everyone has received their new contract!! Keep it handy, look through it, and become familiar with your contract rights. It is crucial that we, as members, know the way things are supposed to be done. For example, did you know that article 25.3 states that “Inspira shall notify the union as soon as practicable before the implementation of any new department or unit. The planned staffing and skill mix for such unit will be discussed...” Working together with administration, I believe we would do a much better job of planning and maximizing care of our patients, than when members have no input.

There has also been a flier presented by management, directing nurses to attend a mandatory photo shoot, so that our photos may be hung in patient rooms. Our local has demanded to bargain over this because it impacts our rights and we have numerous concerns. As you can see, it is vital that you bring forward any proposed changes you see. We must keep each other informed and up-to-date with what is going on in our work environment.

It may not seem like it, but spring is coming!! It is time to plan summer vacations—already! Article 42.6 gives the framework for how this is to be accomplished. Please read it so that you know if the scheduling is being done correctly in your unit.

There will be general membership meetings in March—more information to follow. Even though this is not a bargaining year, make every effort to attend a meeting. Bring your concerns and your joys and accomplishments. We look forward to hearing from you!

Finally, it just wouldn’t be a newsletter without my reminding you—your union is only as strong as its members. Is your unit/department represented? Who do you and your coworkers call when there is pending discipline? When there are changes proposed that you aren’t sure you agree with? When patient care is potentially suffering? Being a union representative doesn’t take an enormous time commitment, but it does have enormous impact.

In Solidarity,  
Dana Barrett  
President HPAAE Local 5131

## Staffing & Labor/Management Report

In the last newsletter, I told you that we would be highlighting a particular unit at each Staffing committee meeting. At our last meeting, the M/B nurses came to address their staffing issues. We have been asking since the last negotiations why the Vineland Mother Baby unit has a higher patient load per RN than either Elmer or Woodbury. Our contract says that Inspira will consider the recommendations of professional nursing organizations where staffing is concerned. Elmer and Woodbury both follow AWHONN guidelines but Vineland does not. There were varied reasons given for the difference and the staffing committee will be working with this unit to see what else should be done to ensure the best care for these patients.

While communicating with these nurses, we found out that some of them were cancelled prior to their shifts, but were told that they needed to remain available and call back at intervals to see if they had to report later. This was referred to as "rehire" for the shift but is actually "stand-by." Regardless of the name, Article 71.10 of our contract states that an employee who is cancelled "may consent" to be placed on standby. The employee may agree but cannot be forced to be on standby. If called into work while on standby, the employee is paid according to the On Call Pay Article, 51.1.2.

We discussed growing safety concerns, especially when census is high and wait times are long. Administration is encouraging staff to utilize safeguards already in place. When waiting rooms outside each unit are crowded, make Security aware. They can increase rounds and can lock the unit so visitors have to be swiped in. There is a daily safety call with managers and top administrators. Immediate solutions are available but they need to know what is happening in real time.

A new "temporary" unit was opened to help with the large number of admitted patients who could not get an admission bed. 1 West was opened in the beginning of January as part of the surge plan. Kristen Maurer, our new Grievance Chair, was assigned to this unit. She outlined some of the problems she and other staff faced in the beginning with lack of supplies and inappropriate admissions to that area. Your Union officers have encouraged administration to include us in plans such as this so that we can work collaboratively to avoid problems in the future.

Since a Detox unit is planned for the near future, Kelly Fordyce, the VP of Bridgeton, has requested a meeting to discuss the staffing and skill mix, per Article 25.3. Your Union officers have encouraged administration to include us in plans as early as possible so that we can work together to avoid problems in the future.

One final point: some nurses are submitting staffing forms without a name. The committee cannot follow up if we do not know who to call. If any nurse feels intimidated or has been retaliated against for submitting a form, let an officer know as soon as possible. These staffing forms are the "official reporting mechanism for staffing issues." Remember your HRO training...."If you see something, say something".

In Solidarity,  
Michelle Silvio RN

## Safe and healthy workplace

Employees in Elmer Radiology brought up the problem of mold in their working areas. Employees reported the problem several times and even though we were told the problem had been fixed, the mold continued to reappear. Our union made the decision to file a grievance using our health and safety language in Article 63 of our contract.

The Hospital is obliged to "provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace, free of recognized hazards". After an investigation by Engineering, it was determined that the roof had been leaking in many areas. OSHA became involved and a plan of remediation was developed. The roof has since been replaced, ceiling tiles have been replaced and the rooms affected have had extensive repairs. This is an ongoing process as there are still several areas that need to be replaced.

When we met with Inspira about this issue, they agreed that this was a problem and they committed to fully execute their plan of action until the issues were fixed. Employees have been examined by OCC Health to measure any health effects. This is just another example of "if you see something, say something." If nothing is done, go to your next chain of command and contact our union to bring further attention to the issue.

Debbie Pacitti  
Secretary/Treasurer

## Rep Corner

### Social Media Risks!

Do you use Facebook? Twitter? Instagram? Most of us do. Social media is a great place to connect, network and have fun. Unfortunately, it can also expose you and YOUR JOB to harm.

Across the country, nurses have been disciplined, fired and reported to the Board of Nursing for inappropriate use of social media. At our facility we have had nurses disciplined regarding comments they posted on Facebook. Everyone should be aware of the risks but as professional nurses we have an added burden. We are ethically and legally bound to protect patient confidentiality.

The best advice is to use those privacy settings! Without them, anyone in the world can see what you post.

Using privacy settings already? Great! But understand that some patients, co-workers and employers may still see your postings. People share and we all know things on the internet last forever.

More helpful tips:

1. Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, co-workers or employers- even if they aren't clearly identified.
2. Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices.
3. Avoid posting on social media while on the clock.
4. Work selfies or friend shots can breach confidentiality if any identifying info is shown (i.e badges, signs).

For more information, check out social media guidelines on [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org) and [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org)

Karen Bailey  
Rep Coordinator

## Per Diems Requirements

Per Diem employees, please be certain to fulfill your time obligation. Some employees have been let go by Inspira for failure to do so. Those employees are eligible for rehire, but lose all system and bargaining unit seniority.

According to Article 14.3 of our contract, Per Diem employees must work a minimum of sixty (60) hours every ninety (90) days. Thirty-six (36) of those hours must be weekend hours but not necessarily consecutive weekend hours.

In addition, PD employees must work one Winter and one Summer holiday on a rotating basis.

Winter Holidays -Thanksgiving ,  
Christmas, New Year's

Summer Holidays – Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day

PD employees are classified as eight hour employees by Inspira so they fall under the eight hour rule for holiday pay. Article 18.1

Hours cancelled by Inspira count toward this obligation.

## Grievance Chair

Hi! For those of you who don't know me, I'm Kristen. Here's a little bit about me: I'm 25, getting married in May, I love animals, I have 4 dogs and 2 cats (yes, I'm crazy!), and I have been an RN for 4 years. I was hired in February 2015, and I have been involved with the union since almost the very beginning. I wasn't really interested in being a part of the union at first because I didn't want to ruffle any feathers with my new bosses. But then I was written up for a bogus patient complaint. I took this issue to our union and the Union officers had my back and the discipline was dropped after a couple meetings. After that, I became a union rep and started going to meetings with management regarding complaints and disciplines. I loved being able to help when someone needed me. When the grievance position was vacated, I thought it would be the perfect opportunity to step up and continue to fight for my co-workers. Hopefully, you'll never need me; but if you ever do find yourself in that position, just know I'll be in your corner every step of the way!

Kristen Maurer  
Grievance Chair



HPAE  
110 Kinderkamack Road  
Emerson, NJ 07630

 facebook.com/hpaeaft

Address Service Requested

## SAVE THE DATE:

**General Membership Meeting: Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> @ 8:00am, 4:00pm and 7:30pm  
Wingate, Vineland**  
**Annual CEU dinner: May 11, 2017 – Topic to be announced.**

### Elmer VP

New contracts have been mailed to members' homes. If you did not receive your copy, please see me, email me at [bjслав@aol.com](mailto:bjслав@aol.com), or text me at (609) 319-3862, so that your contact information can be updated as needed. We will be sure you get your contract and make sure you receive all future mailings from HPAE.

We recently heard from the Same Day Surgery RNs that management changed some of their shift times in their department to help in other areas of Surgical Services. This caused a hardship for some of the staff involved. We scheduled a meeting with management and Same Day Surgery staff nurses, and an agreeable schedule was reached with input from both sides.

We still need more unit representatives from all nursing departments in Elmer. We will provide extensive one-on-one training. Please contact me if you are interested.

Barb Slavoff  
VP Elmer

### Bridgeton VP

Hello everyone, hope this letter finds everyone well. This flu, GI big season has been brutal for everyone, showing its ugly face throughout the hospital system, affecting staff, and increasing patient numbers through the entire system. I would first like to thank everyone for working so hard and trying their best to keep the "the ship from sinking". Although, at times, we all felt like we were/are drowning. Moving forward, management has hired some agency nurses to help us get through all this ugly.

New construction has begun to increase the size of the Vineland ER, and approval for the new wing has been passed to increase in house beds. This is a step in the right direction. As we all know, Rome was not built in a day, but our new wing will hopefully be done by the end of next year.

As far as the construction of the new detox unit and the Bridgeton ED expansion, this is currently on hold. I will keep you posted on updates.

As always, be the voice, be the change; if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. Reps are needed on all of our units.

Sincerely yours  
Kelly Fordyce RN  
VP Bridgeton campus