



# HPAE

## LOCAL 5621 Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE  
MEMBERS OF HPAE LOCAL  
5621 INSPIRA-WOODBURY

OUR VOICE NEWSLETTER

February 2018

## Message from the President

Fellow members of Local 5621, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, April Ferrara, as your new President. But first, I would like to extend accolades and wish Jaclyn Pohler, my predecessor, the best of luck, as she has taken a position outside of Inspira. I, and the rest of the executive board, wish her well in her distinctive career path transformation.

I have been employed at Inspira, formally Underwood Memorial Hospital, since 2000. For the last 15 years I have been a nurse in the Intensive Care Unit. I have experienced the transition of our organization and have been involved since the inception of our union. I have been actively involved as a union representative and staff/labor management board member.

As your new President, I would like to continue the solidarity we have achieved and continue forward with positive attitudes. I would like to remind everyone that we are only as strong as we can be, in supporting the beliefs we enlisted from the beginning, when we felt our patients that we care for, are our top priority. To do that we need everyone's continued commitment. I encourage all of you to be involved. To have satisfied patients we have to employ satisfied nurses. We are the voice to empower our vocation and have to be a united force.

Know that I am available via email or telephone/text if you have any questions or issues. I encourage all bargaining members to attend general membership meetings to stay informed and keep current on union issues.

Safe staffing is a hot topic in the legislature and we are supporting the initiative full force. Please continue to fill out short staffing and safety forms if you feel patient safety and care is compromised. This includes lack of ancillary staff or nurse aides and clerks.

And be aware ... on April 25 & 26, 2018 Nurses Take DC. Nurses will be rallying to support safe nurse to patient ratios. Please take the time to visit <http://www.nursetakedc.com/> and join the movement!!

In Solidarity,  
April Ferrara, RN, BSN

## The Benefits of Collective Bargaining for Professionals

*From the Department of Professional Employees, AFL-CIO*

Professionals have the right to join together with their colleagues and negotiate with their employer on workplace issues that affect them. This form of employer-employee relations is formally known as collective bargaining. Similar to the contracts CEOs have that guarantee pay, benefits, and other conditions of employment, the terms agreed upon during collective bargaining are solidified in a contract called the collective bargaining agreement. The easiest, most common, and legally protected way to collectively bargain is with union representation.

Over six million doctors, nurses, teachers, professors, scientists, engineers, entertainers, performers, sales representatives, administrative personnel, and professionals in countless other occupations use collective bargaining to negotiate for better pay, benefits, and working conditions. Additionally, professionals customize collective bargaining agreements to meet the needs of their specific occupation and employer.

Aside from being able to speak with one voice, professionals who are in unions and have collective bargaining agreements are better positioned than non-union professionals in a number of ways. Union professionals on average have higher salaries than non-union professionals. Union members also have better access to health, retirement, and life insurance benefits, as well as paid sick leave. Employees in unions also averaged more paid holidays than those not in a union. The wage gap is another area where being in a union makes a difference. For employees in unions, the wage gap is much narrower.

Collective bargaining is an important way for employees to come together and let their voice be heard in the workplace. Through collective bargaining, employees can earn and maintain middle-class wages; have access to benefits, including health and retirement; and bargain on issues that allow employees to do their jobs right. One goal of collective bargaining is for employees to be heard on non-compensation issues. Since agreements addressing non-compensation issues are not written in a one-size-fits-all manner, the agreement reflects issues of particular concern to the union members.

## Grievance Corner

As your grievance chair I would like to take this time to remind all of my fellow members of their Weingarten Rights.

*As a union member you have a right to have a union representative at any interview or meeting that could lead to disciplinary action against you. The Supreme Court case of National Labor Relations Board vs Weingarten, decided in 1975, established this basic entitlement and the procedures for when and how union reps may participate in interviews. Collectively, these rules are referred to as "Weingarten Rights."*

I recommend everyone keep a copy of our unit representatives with them, whether on paper or simply a picture of the list on their phones. If you get called to a meeting by management:

- Ask if the meeting could lead to discipline.
- If management's answer is "yes", reach out to a union rep from the list to attend the meeting with you - **DO NOT GO ALONE!**
- You have the right to reschedule the meeting, within a reasonable timeframe, that is convenient for you, your union rep and management.
- Do not put any statements in writing without checking with your union rep first. In most cases, we advise AGAINST this activity.
- If you do not agree a discipline given, you or your union rep should contact me to discuss filing a grievance.
- **Grievances must be filed within 10 calendar days of your discipline!**

I am continuing to file grievances on behalf of our nurses. I am pleased to report that we have had several class action (involves more than one member) grievances won, as well as an unjust discipline removed from a nurse's file. Stop at HPAE bulletin board and take a photo of representative list to always have with you. The board can be found when you're entering the hospital through the tunnel. Also important updates are posted there as well.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or any of our unit representatives with any questions regarding the grievance process.

Tracy L Cefaratti  
Grievance Chair  
TracyCef5621@gmail.com

## National Day of Action to Support Collective Bargaining Rights

Collective bargaining rights are under attack, and we call on all working families to mobilize and make their voices heard during our national day of action on Saturday, February 24th. The national AFL-CIO has designated 14 target cities, including New York City and Philadelphia, where we will rally in order to maximize our collective voice.

We urge all New Jersey working families to show their solidarity next month. **Be there on February 24th to stand up for our middle class values, a living wage, and the right to collectively bargain.** Remember to also wear your union colors and show your union pride.

### Philadelphia

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Thomas Paine Plaza  
1401 JFK Boulevard  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

For more information visit:  
<http://www.hpae.org/>

## Social Media

Social media can be a wonderful tool to reconnect with people in your profession, friends and family. However, it is important for us to realize that social media can also be a problem when it comes to your job. It is important that everyone realizes that if your social media is not private and limited to just your friends, then anyone can see what you post. We urge you to not put where you work on your social media accounts. We also urge you not to post anything negative about your job on social media. This could lead to discipline if management finds this. Please be aware of what you are posting and sharing. It is important that we all use discretion when posting something on the internet.



# Work and Meal Breaks

Our union secured language in our last contract to ensure meal breaks are received AND uninterrupted. Document on a time adjustment sheet if you are not getting the uninterrupted meal break you are entitled to. You are losing a half hour of pay regardless of whether you are getting a break or not. Please review article 44.

## ARTICLE 44 – WORK & MEAL BREAKS

44.1 IMCW shall provide employees who are scheduled to work ten (10) and twelve (12) hours per shift with two (2) fifteen (15) minute paid “work break” periods and one (1) thirty (30) minute unpaid uninterrupted “meal break” period scheduled by the employee’s manager. Employees who are scheduled to work eight (8) hours per shift shall be provided one (1) fifteen (15) minutes paid work break and one (1) thirty (30) minute unpaid uninterrupted meal break. Breaks may not be used to report late or leave the work shift earlier, and may not be combined to extend the work or meal break time. Work Breaks may be interrupted based upon unexpected patient care needs.

44.2 Employees shall make a reasonable effort to notify their manager or supervisor before working through a meal break. If the manager or supervisor denies the request, the employee shall take their unpaid meal break.

44.3 Work breaks are non-accruing and, therefore, if unused, cannot be accumulated for pay or overtime purposes.

**REMINDER: EVERYONE NOT ON THE LAST STEP OF THE WAGE SCALE MOVED DOWN A STEP IN DECEMBER. CHECK YOUR PAY STUBS AND REFERENCE ARTICLE 53 IN THE CONTRACT.**

## Labor-Management Committee and Staffing Committee

Another way that our union contract addresses workplace concerns is through the Labor Management and Staffing Committee. These committees are made up of an equal number of union and management appointees. The purpose is to allow us (the union) and the hospital (management) to raise workplace concerns. These committee meetings are protected settings where we both can express concerns and work to bring them to a resolution.

These committees were created when we negotiated our first contract. We have had some recent success in regard to staffing concerns we have brought forward because so many of you have been filling out staffing forms.

At the Labor Management and Staffing Committee meeting held in December, Management announced there will be a new staffing plan for the in-patient units. They read our electronic staffing forms and said they would be allocating a considerable amount to increase staffing! They cited the need to have a “WOW factor”. With IMCW having solid operating margins, we can expect to see an increase in registered nurses as well as nurse aides. Management also indicated that staffing grids will change favorably for the nurses and grids from day shift to night shift would be evened out. Management plans to begin aggressively recruiting for these new positions once position controls are finalized.

Thank you to all of you that have taken the time to fill out staffing forms! The staffing committee spends time reading each one of them and it helps us bring important staffing issues to management’s attention. They are having an impact so please continue to fill them out.



A Newsletter for the members of HPAE  
Local 5621 INSPIRA-WOODBURY

110 Kinderkamack Road  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
Phone: 201-262-5005

facebook.com/hpaeaft

Address Service Requested

## Nurstoons

by Carl Elbing



www.nurstoons.com

## Sharing Power, Control & Responsibilities

### *Is your unit based council performing as a unit based council was intended?*

Unlike the traditional formal hierarchical power structure, the UBC allows frontline clinical nurses and other staff to share power, control, and responsibility in their work areas across the hospital system. Decentralized decision making is a core component of organizations with Magnet® designation.

Research supports UBCs' contributions to increased staff engagement and frontline empowerment, creating a more satisfying environment for staff and patients. However, leaders must recognize and visibly support these councils to ensure that the components of a shared leadership model are successful and productive.

<https://www.americannursetoday.com/jump-starting-unit-based-councils/>