

## President's Message

### Dear Local 5030 Members:

I would like to tell you about some of the new projects that your Local Executive Board has been working on.

1. **UNION BINDERS:** We have placed a binder of union forms in the staff lounge of each nursing floor and ancillary department. The binder holds: no break forms, unsafe staffing forms, mandatory overtime forms and assignment despite objection forms. These forms are now at your fingertips and we encourage everyone to use them when necessary. Some of the forms can also be found on the HPAE website: [www.hpae.org](http://www.hpae.org)

Please make sure after you fill out one of these forms, you give a copy to your supervisor, keep a copy for yourself and please put a copy in the union mailbox on the first floor by the union bulletin board.

2. **UNION REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING:** We have started a rep training program to provide our reps with the knowledge, skills and confidence to represent our members. They will be able to provide contract information, file and represent members at Step 1 grievances, and be our eyes and ears on the floors. The chairs of our grievance committee, Nancy Martell and Zahia Zhort, will be running the meetings.

3. **NEW MEMBER MATERIALS:** HPAE has designed a new member orientation brochure. The new material contains a lot of detailed information about the union, its achievements in collective bargaining, its work in setting standards for safer healthcare for patients and hospital employees, organizing new hospitals, providing educational programs for CEU's and professional development and of course how to get involved with the union.

The brochures and a copy of the contract are given out to each new employee at hospital orientation held in the auditorium the first Monday of each month.

4. **HPAE WEBSITE UPDATES:** Remember to visit the always evolving HPAE website at [hpae.org](http://hpae.org). Find out what's new with HPAE, upcoming events, education and training, members benefits and other exciting news. You can see what is going on in each local, read your contract online, and read the latest local newsletter.

You can also visit HPAE on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/hpat.aft](http://www.facebook.com/hpat.aft) or on Twitter @hpaeaft.

Your local leadership asks its members to please visit the website, read our local newsletter, attend meetings, and most importantly READ YOUR CONTRACT. That small book contains the words, sentences and paragraphs that protect your rights in the workplace. If you don't know what your rights are then you don't know if they are being violated. By better informing yourself you will be helping the union enforce the contract.

Enjoy your summer!  
Michele

### IF YOU ARE A UNION MEMBER AT MORE THAN ONE HPAE FACILITY...

You do not have to pay an initiation fee twice. Whichever employer hired you first would be where you would have to pay an initiation fee. If you think you have paid an initiation fee twice, please contact your HPAE Staff Rep Joel Brooks at 201-262-5005 ext 154 or [jbrooks@hpae.org](mailto:jbrooks@hpae.org)

## SAVE THE DATE

**HPAE CONVENTION 2016**  
**October 6 & 7**  
**Bally's—Atlantic City, NJ**

## My Personnel File; Where's All the Positive Comments?

I recently had the opportunity to review my personnel file from Human Resources here at Palisades. I was surprised by the enormous physical attributes of the file. It weighed over 1 pound, and was almost 500 pages in length. I have only been a Palisades employee for 8 years.

My file would have made Stalin, Tito, or any other communist leader from the Cold War era salivate with envy. Their own secret police did not perform this well. Even Lord Voldemort would have been frightened by the darkness of my HR file.

Any good deed I accomplished in my years at Palisades was devoid from my file. Any positive letter hospital management ever received about myself was missing from my HR file. All of these wonderful letters of thanks or praise that were posted on the walls of my breakroom were absent from my file. Several times I have had the honor of senior management coming to the ED to say thank you for a job well down from feedback they have received, other times I was hand delivered letters written by my patients or their families thanking me for my kind care by senior management. All of this was missing from my Palisades HR file.

It is an obvious conclusion that the HR files for the employees of Palisades are biased and poorly reflect the worth or value of a Palisades employee. This current practice must stop. From now on all letters of thanks from patients and their families must be recorded in every employee's HR file. One must accentuate the positive, not only the negative, to create a fair system for everyone.

It is time HR realizes what makes the care delivered at Palisades so great; it is the hard working and dedicated employees. We encourage all employees that receive a note of congratulations or appreciation from a patient, family member or a doctor, to INSIST that a copy be placed in your personnel file. Any time any employee agrees to overtime, to work on a day off, to arrive earlier than scheduled for your shift, to INSIST that your manager makes an entry in your personnel file.

## New Hiring Process post Hackensack-PMC Merger

The hospital has a new external candidate hiring system utilizing the technology of HUH.N.

The external candidate will:

1. Go online to the HUH.N recruitment website. Here they can choose which HUH.N hospital they want to apply to and complete that hospital's online application.
2. All job postings that are not filled internally at Palisades will be submitted by our HR to the HUH.N recruitment site
3. HUH.N recruiters will source candidates for the unfilled vacancies, and those that meet the minimum requirements will be asked by HUH.N recruiters to complete an online personality/cultural assessment. If the candidate passes the assessment, they will be contacted by the HUH.N recruiter who will then conduct an initial phone screening and Skype interviews.
4. After the candidate completes the phone/Skype screening, they will be forwarded to our HR recruiters for a face-to-face interview. Our HR will determine whether to move the candidate forward to the director trying to fill the position.
5. A discussion will be held with the individual director, our HR recruiter, and the HUH.N recruiter to finalize the selection of the candidate.
6. The chosen candidate will then receive an online offer letter, and will be guided through the hiring process (physical, background check etc.).

Our HR recognizes that this new process will take some time to adjust to. The advantage to us is that HUH.N has a greater pool of candidates and they will be able to refer some to us. What they don't know is if this new procedure will increase the time it takes to hire someone, but HR feels that it might be worth it if it "improves the quality of our candidate pool".

**Please note:** There will be no change to the internal transfer/promotion procedure, per our contract. When a position becomes available it will be posted and the current employees can bid on the position. If no one bids or those that bid are not qualified, then the position will be open to outside candidates.

## Making Memories and Staying Connected



Celebrate Father's Day with union member-only savings from AFT +.

**Stay connected** with 15% off qualified AT&T wireless plans through Union Plus\*.

**Savings on just about everything** from gift baskets to gift certificates. Discounted tickets to movies, plays, sporting events and theme parks. Great deals on car rentals, travel and more.

**UnionPlus.org/AFTDiscounts**

\*AT&T wireless discount is available only to members of qualified AFL-CIO member unions. Member must show valid union membership card and be the wireless account holder. Discount applies only to recurring monthly service charge of qualified voice and data plans, not overages. Discount may take up to 2 bills. Discount subject to agreement between AT&T and Union Privilege. Additional restrictions apply. For details visit [UnionPlus.org/ATT](http://UnionPlus.org/ATT) or visit an AT&T store.

MMFD-05-13-16



A Union of Professionals

**AFT +**  
Member Benefits



## A MESSAGE FROM ANN TWOMEY, HP AE PRESIDENT

### When Hospitals Are also Corporations

U.S. Hospitals started as charitable institutions in the late 1800s, funded by wealthy donors

and religious organizations. The mission was focused on health care and care for the poor. It was clear where the money came from, clear where it went.

Much has changed. More and more, our community hospitals are disappearing, and in their place large corporate systems are emerging. Hospital revenues now also come not just from patient care, but from for-profit subsidiaries, investments, ambulatory surgical centers, and income from hospital-controlled physician practices.

One Bergen County hospital that started in 1880 with 12 beds is now part of a system with 28 hospitals. A recently merged hospital system will employ nearly 50,000 people, with revenues of \$8 billion dollars.

As hospital systems grow, they often begin to act more like for-profit institutions, even while maintaining not-for-profit status. The source and use of their funds becomes both more complicated and less transparent. So does their mission, their relationship to local communities, and their relationship to their employees and physicians.

It's now common for not-for-profit hospitals to own and provide financing to for-profit subsidiaries, to have for-profit entities operating from their tax-exempt property, to engage in profit-sharing with their physicians; and for hospital CEO compensation to reach into the millions.

In Trenton, elected officials are scrutinizing whether not-for-profit hospitals that own for-profit entities and permit for-profit physicians to use their hospitals with minimal control (especially over billing practices) are solely focused on a "charitable" mission of health care service to the community, or are part of a profit-making corporate structure that is not paying their fair share of property taxes.

This debate is happening not only because of the growth of hospital systems, but because many of our towns and cities are facing fiscal problems, and having difficulty absorbing the costs of critical public services. Hospitals, like other corporations, are large employers and large users of local services such as police, fire, infrastructure, and public safety.

Both not-for-profit and for-profit hospitals have an obligation to be good corporate neighbors, reinvesting in healthcare, listening to the needs of the community, and sharing in the costs of local services, whether through community contribution fees or property taxes.

In New Jersey, the average nonprofit hospital receives a \$1.6-million benefit annually as a result of exemption from property taxes. While much of this tax benefit supports charitable activities, profit-making entities and activities at not-for-profit hospitals are benefitting from loopholes in existing law.

In return for exemption, the government requires nonprofit hospitals to provide community benefits, which includes research, health professions training, and community health education programs. It also includes charity care provided to patients who cannot pay, which all hospitals must provide, regardless of their tax status.

Hospitals are anchors in our community, providing essential services and employing large numbers of our citizens. Both for-profit and not-for-profit hospitals

have moral, as well as legal, responsibilities to the hospital's patients and our communities, to focus on promoting health as well as treating illness. Hospitals should continue to be driven primarily by these obligations, rather than profit or competition.

That means doing more than charity care. It means ensuring that 'community benefits' are based on true community need, and will improve health outcomes for our residents. It means using surpluses to re-invest in the hospital, in public health measures, and other activities that are the hallmark of charitable institutions.

I know that many hospitals take that mission seriously. Paying property taxes commensurate with the value of the property used by for-profit subsidiaries or by physicians engaged in for-profit activity independent from the hospital's jurisdiction should be part of that mission.

As the NJ legislature debates new legislation and the establishment of a study commission, we urge the inclusion of community residents, municipal officials, healthcare workers and advocates in the process. Solutions must account for and protect the services of community, urban and safety net hospitals, and include financial transparency, since the size and speed of hospital mergers and subsequent mingling of funds makes it increasingly difficult to 'follow the money.'

**We should expect all of our hospitals to be good corporate citizens and neighbors, and responsible stewards of our healthcare.**

Ann Twomey  
HP AE President

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

When a director tells an employee that they want to talk to them in their office it usually means that they are going to be giving the employee some form of discipline.

As per Article 7.5 in the union contract, management must inform the employee if the meeting is going to lead to a discipline. Also the employee is entitled to have a union rep of their choice present at the meeting.

**Management does not have to remind you to bring a rep. It is your responsibility to know your rights as per the contract and that you need to bring a rep.**

**If management refuses to allow you representation, stay in the room, but remain silent. These rights are referred to as your "WEINGARTEN RIGHTS".**

If a union rep is not available you can ask to postpone the meeting. If the meeting cannot be postponed you can bring another employee to the meeting. The role of the rep or other employee is to be a witness to what is said by both sides.

Since January the union has received 37 discipline forms, 30 of these forms state that the employee declined to have union representation.

Without representation management can use anything you said against you or management can deny anything they had said to you.

The first step in union protection of your rights is for you to be aware of these rights and to apply them.



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Address Service Requested

## Will Short Staffing in HUMC Palisades Ever End?

After two years of constant written complaints about short staffing, finally Hackensack UMC Palisades Center recognizes that we need more full-time positions in nursing and other areas. As a result, ten full-time positions were opened for nursing assistants and two positions for housekeeping. While in nursing, we have had a small positive result, in other departments' staffing has gotten worse.

The Radiology department is one of many departments where technicians and nurses have told union leaders of the high volume of patients with more procedures to be done. Every single day CAT scan, MRI, Ultrasound, Cath Lab and Nuclear Medicine have a full outpatient load, in addition to inpatient and ER department cases that need to be taken care of on time according to the schedule, patient diagnosis and stat condition.

Also, the transporters complain that they do not have enough stretchers to transport patients from Harborage to the Hospital and from the floors to Radiology. In recent years Hackensack UMC Palisades has had a higher volume of patients in Radiology, and the test and procedures of different kind of studies in this department demand more staffing to improve the quality of care. In the last Staffing Committee meeting, we discussed these issues with the Radiology Department Director. Management told us that they are following the legal guidelines, but we as a union advocated for increased staff based on clinical best practices and what the staff has told us.

Staffing issues impact patient satisfaction scores and this issue is obvious in Radiology. I hope Hackensack UMC Palisades does not wait two years to recognize that increased staffing is needed in the Radiology department like management did in the nursing department. Hospital administration must make a commitment to look realistically at the volume of procedures and tests that happen in the imaging department each day. Patients or customers need a high quality of service; it is an essential part of improving service delivery. Adequate staffing makes a difference and improves patients' satisfaction.

Nancy Martell, Staffing Committee Chair and Co-Grievance Chair

## Local 5030 Rep Training: A Fresh Start!

What a successful day June 6, 2016 was! Five of our members at Hackensack UMC Palisades Medical Center decided to become representatives for HPAA. The Local Executive Board decided to hold a Rep workshop every month, to give local Reps the information and resources that they need to become successful at the responsibility they have chosen to uphold.

The first session was held at the Homewood Suites, but hopefully the rest of the sessions will be held at the auditorium at Hackensack UMC Palisades Medical Center. We started with the importance of knowing the **Legal Right of Union Members**. One of the most important rights that I enjoyed teaching was **bargaining in good faith**. Management's refusal to bargain in good faith with union representatives can turn ugly.

We also discussed the **Equality Principle**. Nancy Martell, the co-grievance chair for service and technical employees, enjoyed elaborating on this part of the session. Review questions were answered and discussed in detail in order to enforce understanding of the session.

Last but not least was our discussion of the importance of knowing our **"Weingarten" Rights**. Every member at Hackensack UMC Palisades Medical Center has the right to a union representative when he or she is called into a disciplinary meeting or investigatory interview with management. The right of union representation was established in 1975 under a Supreme Court case. The employee has the right to refuse an interview without a union representative, when the employee has reason to believe that the interview will result in discipline.

I ask every member to please request representation when needed because it is your right, and management cannot deny you. What you say in front of management can have a huge impact, and you have the right to be represented and counseled during that process.

Zahia Zhort, RN, Vice President and Co-Grievance Chair, RNs and Professionals