

# WASHINGTON STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION

Sacred Heart messages  
August 2019

## TALKING TO THE PUBLIC

We're getting media attention and soliciting community support. How we talk about our bargaining efforts matters. That's why we've put together some guidance on what you can say to educate those who may ask about our issues – and get them on our side!

The messages below are suggestions for keeping the attention on the important patient safety/staffing issues we're fighting for and letting supporters know what they can do to help us win a fair contract that puts the safety of patients first.

### NOTE: BE CAUTIOUS AT WORK

Patients may ask you about our contract negotiations or offer words of support. It is important that we don't get into conversations with patients in the hospital about our strike preparation. Simply say, "Thank you for your support." Work time needs to be spent doing our jobs of caring for patients, not for discussing union business. Be sure to keep union communications on the job in non-work areas and on non-work time (breaks, etc).

## POINTS ABOUT CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

- The WSNA-represented registered nurses at Sacred Heart have been in contract negotiations for nearly 10 months and have held 12 negotiating sessions to date, the last one with a federal mediator. The next scheduled session is set for August 28.
- The Medical Center has failed to address our concerns about staffing and safe working conditions.
- We stand united for safe staffing and to stop deep cuts to sick time, paid time off, and benefits.
- We stand united in our fight for a fair contract that includes safe staffing to protect our patients and the needs of nurses.
- We are holding union meetings to launch strike preparations. We have not yet set a strike authorization vote. That would be our next step.
- We hope it doesn't come to a strike, but we are prepared to strike if we have to.

## POINTS ABOUT SAFE STAFFING AND PATIENT SAFETY

- Without adequate staffing, nurses are stretched to care for their patients.
- WSNA's staffing proposals have asked management to commit to minimum staffing standards and to ensure established staffing plans are followed.

## POINTS ABOUT PATIENT SAFETY IN THE EVENT OF A STRIKE

- If nurses strike at Sacred Heart, we will be standing up for our patients and safe patient care.
- If we do go on strike, we will be giving the hospital 10-day notice, as required by law, so they can plan for continued patient care.
- We would also establish an RN emergency standby team committee to solicit volunteers to work in the case of an emergency.
- We would never leave our community without the critical, emergency care it needs.

- The Nursing Code of Ethics states that “the nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.”
- By demanding that Sacred Heart address nursing staffing and patient safety issues, nurses are doing nothing less than making an ethical stand on behalf of the patients we serve.

**FOR FRIENDS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, OTHER COWORKERS, LABOR PARTNERS AND BUSINESSES WHO WANT TO SUPPORT US**

- Nurses at Sacred Heart are fighting for our patients and our community.
- We care about giving our friends, neighbors and community members safe, high quality care every time they are in the hospital.
- To do that, we need safe staffing, we need to be able to take care of ourselves and our families when we are sick, and we need to be able to take time off occasionally.
- We don't want to go on strike, but we're willing to do it if that's what it takes to get the safe staffing and safe patient care our community deserves at Sacred Heart.
- You can support us by putting this sign in your car or your window.
- Take a photo and share it with us on social media!  
<https://www.facebook.com/NursesAtTheHeart/>
- Stay tuned