

## Meeting Minutes

**MEETING:** Whatcom Health and Community Services

**DATE AND TIME:** June 6, 2023 1300 hours

**LOCATION/ MODE:** HR Conference Room Suite 107



**ATTENDEES:**

Nicole Miller MSN, RN		Bea Acland Senior Human Resources Representative	X
Stephanie Peterka BSN, RN	X	Donnie LaPlante <a href="#">SPHR, CLRP Associate Manager HR</a>	X
Lela Riherd BSN, RN, CCRN		Shamika Brooks ARNP Manager CDE	X
Julie McElroy RN			
Sue Dunlap MSN WSNA Nurse Representative	X		

**DISCUSSION:**

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Introductions		
Recruit & Retention of Staff	<p>Report from leadership: currently 2 nurse positions vacant, 5 vacancies in CDE but they have some good news in that area.</p> <p>Two signed job offers have been received. The nurses will start: 1 July 2023 and the other September 18. A third job offer has been extended and they are waiting for a response from the nurse. BSN has long been required for these positions however they are looking at ADN nurses brought in at lower RN scale with caveat to have BSN within 2 years of hire. They are hoping that will open up the applicants and draw additional nurses.</p> <p><b>STEP placement:</b> copy of the policy regarding hiring and step placement was requested and received. HR confirmed they do not hire above step 4 but that has been practice and is not contractual. They did review the wages for comparison from the health departments at Benton, Skagit, Cowlitz, Thurston and Kitsap counties.</p>	Sue to review.

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	<p>Leadership was transparent in stating they abide by making things equitable and expressed some concern about the multiple departments and divisions that would be upset about changes made at this juncture to the nurses hiring.</p> <p>Retention bonuses were discussed and again the same concern expressed about how others would perceive a retention bonus for nurses but not for everyone. Also, anything of substance would not be feasible given the large number of employees and departments working from their budget. It was mentioned that even smaller payouts are appreciated and go a long way to sending a message that they are appreciated for the work they do.</p>	 Administering the Pay Plan _ Whatcom Coun   Request for GTE.FORM.NEW.0626  Sue will research what has been done elsewhere.
Working Conditions	<p>Workspace and conditions were discussed. Stephanie raised potential HIPPA concerns with their current workspace citing that other employees often walk by and can easily overhear confidential conversations. They do not have partitions at their workstations and there is concern at the cost of any upgrades or improvements to existing workspaces. They will however continue to make use of the 1 closed area for conversations that they know will involve sensitive information. In the meantime, it was suggested that HIPPA training and expectation for compliance be rolled out to other employees not necessarily medical so that there is a general understanding and knowledge amongst employees of the standards to which they must abide.</p> <p>Adequate workspace on site was also discussed. It was explained that nurses will come in for meetings etc. at the office and due to inadequate workspace, they will need to return home to complete their "office" type duties thus necessitating unnecessary travel and nonproductive time. The CDE manager, however, updated that their</p>	<p>Leadership to consider feasibility of HIPPA training for non-medical employees.</p>

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	area is going to see the exit of other departments to new locations which will greatly open up office space and utilization of offices to house nurses. The offices will allow for all work to be completed with the added bonus of having a door to minimize distraction noise from outside as well as prevent unnecessary personnel overhearing any sensitive information during a conversation. The current request of the nurses is to please be patient because improvements are coming!	This is good news!
Round Table / Rumor mill	Discussion was had about a potential get together picnic or other similar function in the summer – typically held in August. More information to come on that but it was stressed how valuable these types of things are so that staff can see and interact with each other given the autonomous nature of the work and it does significantly impress that each employee is valued.	

NEXT MEETINGS: Call for Meeting when needed - Nurses are requesting quarterly schedule of meetings to allow for follow up and keep current. That would put our next meeting in September.