

ARHS RNs
United

UNION CONTRACT UPDATE

RNs lobby for safe staffing



On October 5, Altoona joined other SEIU Healthcare PA RNs in the rotunda of the Capitol in Harrisburg to speak out for the need for safe nurse-to-patient ratios. Nurses highlighted the critical need to improve **patient outcomes**, and argued that better staffing was the best way to achieve that goal. The group also said that more time for nurses to do their jobs would **reduce burnout**.

In a 2010 study, Linda Aiken found that 264 less people would die in surgery each year if Pennsylvania had the same **nurse-to-patient ratios** that are a matter of law in California. Nurses at the rally were joined by Rep. Tim Solobay from Washington County, who is the chief sponsor of the bill.



GET UPDATES ONLINE: For reports on negotiations, an event calendar, news archive, and to sign up for e-mail updates, visit the ARHS Nurses United page at **ARHSNURSESUNITED.ORG**

For more information: Talk to the committee member in your department or call your Organizer, Tommy Whitehouse, at 814-933-6800.



SEIU Healthcare.
United for Quality Care

Re-Union tour Dec. 2!

Join other SEIU Healthcare members in Central Pennsylvania on Dec. 2 at Celebration Hall, 2280 Commercial Boulevard, State College, for a union-wide day of celebrating our successes in 2010, understanding the challenges we face in health care and in our communities, and getting some training.

Training includes: Leadership and Grievance Training, Understanding Healthcare Reform, Domestic Violence Awareness and Advocacy.

The Leadership Re-Union is from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and childcare is avail-

able. If you can't attend the full day, come for part (Session 1 is 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Session 2 is 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.), or join us in the evening from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for a reception with other members and the officers of our local union. Bring your families. Both events are free.

WHAT?

SEIU Healthcare Re-Union Tour

WHERE?

Celebration Hall, 2280 Commercial Boulevard, State College

WHEN?

Dec. 2, 2010



"It was so encouraging at the Quality Care Summit to see institutions where management and nurses actively engaged in decision making. Nurses from Altoona work side by side with Senior Management at this Conference to work a more efficient way to make Patient care and reimbursements a priority."

— Teresa Kozak

Quality care summit

More than 140 RNs participated in the first ever Quality Care Summit hosted by SEIU Healthcare PA and Cornell University. The purpose of the Sum-

mit was to help both union nurses and management assess how to better partner together to achieve better patient outcomes and Union members re-

ceived up to 10 CEUs. Altoona RNs joined fellow RN's from AGH, JC Blair and many others as well as management at the summit.

Management proposes major changes to PTO

The Union and management have many proposals yet to work through, but we have reached some tentative agreements:

- Clarifications on scheduling language
- Secure retirement
- New protection on holiday scheduling

PTO:

Management proposed an entirely new PTO system that would modify the current system of vacation time, sick time, holiday time, and personal time.

The Union rejected the hospital's proposal, as it would result in major changes in many areas. Among the biggest concerns are that after 3 sick days employees likely would be

utilizing vacation time if they are sick, a more stringent disciplinary schedule for absences, and also that any unscheduled time off would be considered an "occurrence."

UNIFORMS:

We have exchanged proposals about the Hospital's desire to implement a new standard uniform with the logo. While RNs understand the need for greater consistency in uniforms and how that could benefit patients, the Union expressed concerns with the hospital's proposal for RNs to have the same uniform, color, and logo.

OTHER NOTES:

Chapter officers are working with man-



"This is my first experience negotiating a contract. As head of the MPCU scheduling committee, I got a lot of opportunity to negotiate with my co-workers over scheduling items. Its rewarding as an SEIU RN to get the opportunity to sit with my own management and exchange ideas."

— Jen Shade

agement on **staffing issues** in BS to make a transitions smoother for B3 and B4 Nurses. Chapter Vice Presidents Starr Romano and Matt Consalvo made suggestions on merging units to 5th floor in BS. This not only will help RNs, but it is a **fiscally sound** decision for the Hospital.

Elected Union leaders also have been working with behavior health management to make the transition safe for patients and RNs alike. RNs now have a plan to get trained appropriately for crisis calls as well as on dual skill levels for adolescence and geriatric psychiatric patients.

OUR PRIORITIES

THE ISSUES:	THE COMMITTEE SAYS:	MANAGEMENT SAYS:
<u>STAFFING</u>	Nurse-to-patient ratios. Address concerns with floating.	More flexibility to adjust staffing levels and float RNs.
<u>BENEFITS</u>	Maintain current benefits.	New PTO plan.
<u>HEALTH CARE</u>	Maintain current benefits and ensure they are affordable.	Proposal for new benefit system forthcoming.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DON'T FORGET THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:



- **Nov. 15:** Negotiations, Ramada Inn, Altoona (*Focus on healthcare*)
- **Nov. 22-23:** Negotiations, Ramada Inn, Altoona (*Focus on patient care and staffing*)
- **Nov. 29-30:** Negotiations, Ramada Inn, Altoona
- **Dec. 2:** Re-Union Tour, Celebration Hall, State College
- **Dec. 6-8:** Negotiations, Ramada Inn, Altoona
- **Dec. 13-16:** Negotiations, Holiday Inn, Altoona

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS?

Contact Tommy Whitehouse, at 814-933-6800, or a member of the union bargaining committee.