

# Negotiations

# UPDATE

This week, Kenmore Mercy Hospital and the Communications Workers of America (CWA) held three more bargaining sessions for the Registered Nurse contract.

## Additional Bargaining Dates

Two additional bargaining dates are scheduled before the contract expires on January 31, 2017. Our next bargaining session is scheduled for January 30, 2017.

## Tentative Agreements

This week, the parties reached 18 tentative agreement(s) on the following articles of the RN contract:

3	Recognition	41	Disability and Workers Compensation (current contract)
14	Category of Employees	43	Retirement Plan
23	Overtime and Work in Progress	45	Tuition Assistance
24	Supplemental Pay (Delete)	48	Bargaining Unit Work
25	Shift Differential	50	Contracting Out
27	Call In Pay		MOU #1 Attendance and Tardiness
29	Extended Sick Leave		MOU #2 Enhanced Tuition Reimbursement Program
36	Prescription Coverage		New MOU Weekend Assignment in the ED
37	Dental Coverage		New MOU Operating Room Service Line Leads

**To date, the parties have reached tentative agreement on 67 articles of the RN contract.**

## Other Key Proposals Exchanged

The parties exchanged economic proposals this week, and there was continued discussion regarding elements of the proposals, including salaries, unit staffing plans, floating and PTO.

**Wages**—The Hospital's current wage proposal includes the reinstatement of wage step increases in addition to annual wage increases each January and a new step 20 to reward our long term associates who achieve 20 years of service as an RN at the Hospital. The amount of the step increases alone range from 2.31% to 11.79%. This is in addition to the annual wage increases of 1.75% to 2% annually on top of steps.

**Uniforms**—The Hospital proposed that our nurses wear consistent and professional uniforms that are one solid color. The proposal is intended to highlight the professionalism of nursing staff and make it easier for our patients to identify their nurses. The current variety of colors and patterns makes it more difficult for our patients to identify who is caring for them. The union has agreed that the Hospital may change the dress code during the term of the contract, but the parties are still discussing certain exceptions proposed by the union.

**The Hospital bargaining committee will continue to negotiate in good faith with the goal of reaching a tentative agreement for our associates as soon as possible. We will continue to keep you informed about the progress of negotiations. Associates, managers, physicians and others also can stay informed by visiting our negotiations website at [www.chsbuffalo.org/kmhnegotiations](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/kmhnegotiations).**

**Bonus**—the union proposed a bonus of \$10 an hour for nurses who stay late or come in on short notice. The Hospital has rejected this proposal on the basis that the Hospital does not have significant staffing challenges and prefers to put these dollars toward wage increases and patient care.

**Staffing**— The Hospital did make a new staffing proposal including a provision that new or modified staffing plans will be provided to the union and discussed at the workload and staffing committee meeting. The Hospital was not willing to agree to a proposal by the union to guarantee that charge nurses would never take a patient assignment. Currently, it's the decision of the charge nurse as to whether they will take a patient assignment.

The Hospital also proposed to increase the float pool to 8 RNs, which is an increase of at least three nurses over the current pool. In order to recruit and retain nurses in the float pool, the Hospital committed to provisions that would make the float pool positions more appealing by modifying work requirements, including limiting the holiday obligations. The Hospital is also considering whether it can agree to the union's proposal to add a nurse educator for the evening/night shift.

**Healthcare coverage**—the Hospital proposed to allow an expansion of the grandfathering of associates eligible for 90% employer contribution for single coverage. Under the Hospital's proposal, transfers from within Catholic Health, who were hired in the system prior to May 5, 2013, would receive the 90% employer contribution.

**Other remaining proposals**—The union has proposed additional restrictions on what nurses can be floated or rotated to the evening shift. The Hospital has rejected these proposal on the basis that they would hinder flexibility of management to staff for patient care. It would also result in the remaining nurses being required to float and rotate to evenings more frequently.

The Hospital withdrew its proposal to address call offs before and after a holiday.

The Hospital is committed to working diligently to reach a tentative agreement before the contract expires at midnight on Tuesday.

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