



# Our unity works!

## New protections against low census

Our unity in our recent contract fight continues to move management to hear our voice. We petitioned, wore stickers, and marched on management in order to win a contract that raises wages, protects our benefits, and improves our ability to care for our patients.

Our new contract also requires management to meet with us to address mandatory low census and methods for educating members regarding employee assistance programs. Given the uncertainty in the healthcare industry, especially in rural areas, members in the ACU were concerned about the possibility of mandatory low census. Excessive mandatory low census means that we can't rely on a full paycheck which prevents us from being able to budget for our personal lives.

Through our conference committee, we developed an order for mandatory low census when it becomes necessary:

- Management will ask for volunteers before sending workers home.
- Agency staff and members working overtime will be sent home first.
- If low census is rare, a rotation list will be kept and followed.
- If low census is common, then management will look at ways to transfer aids to other units.



"Protection from low census is important because most of us can't afford to lose a day's wages. These changes will guarantee fair rotation of low census and call."

**Bridget McCoy, NAC / Unit Secretary, Acute Care**

### Raises, benefits that protect our families

When we take action together, we win. We get what we need to care for our patients and families. Last year, we took action, signing petitions, marching on management, and filling out membership cards. It was these actions that made the difference.

We protected our benefits for the duration of the contract. We guaranteed wage increases that will allow us to recruit and retain staff and received the first raise in August. We made sure that workers receive credit for their experience in the healthcare industry. We made all of this possible through our unity and action!

### What's in our new contract?

Fair Wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Across the board increases for everyone</li><li>▪ 2% the first full pay period following ratification</li><li>▪ 2% in 2018</li><li>▪ 1.5% in 2019</li></ul>
Bringing job classes up to community standard	<p>Market Adjustments for specific job codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 1% for Environmental Services Aids</li><li>▪ 1% for Dietary Aids</li><li>▪ 1% Cook</li><li>▪ 1% NAC</li><li>▪ 1% Surgical Techs</li><li>▪ NAC / Unit Secretary will be placed on NAC wage scale</li><li>▪ Activity Aids will be placed on NAC wage scale</li></ul>
Increases to premium pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Standby pay now \$2.75 per hour</li><li>▪ Minimum call back of 2 hours</li><li>▪ New lead premium of \$1.25 per hour</li><li>▪ Weekend Premium now \$1.75 for techs and \$1.25 for service workers</li></ul>
Other improvements on pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Guaranteed movement up the wage scale for both part and full-time workers</li><li>▪ All workers will be at \$13.50 an hour or more by June 30, 2019</li></ul>
Improved language around recognition for past experience for new workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ First five years of relevant experience are matched year for year on the wage scale</li><li>▪ Every two years of relevant experience beyond five years is credited for one step on the wage scale</li></ul>
Improved benefit and job security	<p>Language protecting our medical benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ No material changes to out of pocket expenses through 2018</li><li>▪ No greater than 10% premium increase for 2018 and 2019</li></ul>
Protection from schedule changes and low census	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Language on scheduling "restructures" that protects our schedules and seniority</li><li>▪ Commitment from management to address low census at our conference committee in the next three months</li></ul>
Medical debt relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Commitment from management to ensure employees are aware of assistance programs</li></ul>
Respect for our union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Notification of new employee orientations so that a delegate can present the union contract to new hires</li><li>▪ Union leave so that we can continue to grow</li></ul>

# Improved paid sick leave for workers across the state!

Starting January 1, 2018

Because of our work on Initiative 1433 all workers across the state will have access to paid sick and safe leave starting January 1, 2018. As union members we already have contract protections that provide sick leave. Under the new law we've protected and even improved our standards in many workplaces. And now we've raised the standard so that ALL workers across the state can take care of themselves without fear of losing income.

The only way for us to keep those standards and protect our jobs is when we're all members of the union together—it takes all of us!

## Here's what the new law means for us:

**We can care for ourselves and our families.** Employees may use paid sick leave to care for themselves or their family members; when the employees' workplace or their child's school or place of care has been closed by a public official for any health-related reason; for absences that qualify for leave under the state's Domestic Violence Leave Act. Employees are protected from employer retaliation when they use their sick leave in compliance with the law.

**Our contract language is protected or improved.** If a workplace has a sick leave accrual rates or standards below the state law, all workers will automatically be brought up to the standard law effective January 1. If a workplace has sick leave accrual rates or standards that exceed the new state law, the current accruals and standards will remain in effect.

**All workers now accrue sick leave.** Most employees must accrue paid sick leave at a minimum rate of one hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked. This includes part-time workers. In many workplaces our accrual rate is already higher and protected.

**We have certainty when we can start using sick leave.** Employees are entitled to use accrued paid sick leave beginning on the 90th calendar day after the start of their employment. For workplaces that currently allow use of paid leave before 90 days, that timeline will remain in effect.

**We can carry sick leave over into the following year.** Unused paid sick leave of 40 hours or less must be carried over to the following year. In many workplace contracts across the state our standards are much higher and will remain in effect. Employers are allowed to provide employees with more generous carry over and accrual policies.



**Delores Prescott, RN, Short Stay, First Hill**

"I had my first experience gathering signatures for this initiative and I didn't imagine that doing that work would result in such an important change for us and workers across Washington state."