

Building Our Union at Kaiser and Beyond

We are moving forward on the work of implementing both our local and national contracts

We clarified the eligibility requirements and process for retiree medical

As members of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions we bargained our way into the National Partnership Agreement and won a new retiree medical benefit. Before we retire, we need to submit a notice of retirement. That notice is submitted from our local KPWA to the "National Retirement Center." That center determines one's eligibility and sends a letter regarding eligibility for the retiree medical. The letter has instructions on how access the Health Reimbursement Account. We do not need to initiate anything other than retirement notice per the usual process of sending written notice to the supervisor. Additionally, the Retirement Center also now handles the retirement notice and service awards.

To be eligible for the Retiree Medical benefit, we need to be age at least 55 and 0.5 FTE or higher at retirement, with at least 15 years of service at a 0.75 FTE or higher. The years of service don't have to be continuous or in same region of Kaiser. If we are eligible, we get \$350 for each year we've worked at Kaiser into the Health Reimbursement Account to be used for medical expenses on a Kaiser plan after we retire.



"Thanks to the support of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions we were able to win a Retiree Medical benefit at National Bargaining. By standing together with other coalition

members nation-wide we went from not having any retiree medical, to an agreement reached for coalition members represented by SEIU Healthcare 1199NW to get \$350 for every year of service going into a HSA at the time of retirement if we sign up for the KP Medicare Advantage Plan. Remember, there is strength in numbers and thanks to the Coalition of Unions standing with us."

Nancy Wittman, RN,
Consulting Nurse Service

We're working in partnership to fix our weekend scheduling in Primary Care

We know weekend access to care is important to our patients. We also know that time off on weekends is important for our family relationships and work-life balance. We bargained language into our new local contract that guarantees us at least two out of four weekends off, unless we voluntarily work more weekends. We also bargained a fair process for staffing weekend shifts that includes the option for us to volunteer and rotate weekend work. We have had meetings at clinics where staff were forced to bid into every weekend schedules in Primary Care to come up with processes to get those staff out of every weekend schedules if they don't want them, and to decide how to staff weekends moving forward.



"At our Silverdale clinic we are successfully working in partnership with management to appropriately cover Saturday work using the new weekend rotation contract language. Rotating weekend shifts ensures a happy and

healthy work-life balance for our team."

Jamie Vanden Bos, MA, Family Practice,
Silverdale Clinic

We are helping build our union's power at Swedish-Providence and in Olympia

We walked the line with our striking union colleagues

Many of our co-workers stood in solidarity with our Swedish union colleagues on strike last month. The energy on the picket lines was powerful! Healthcare workers across all Swedish locations engaged in a three-day unfair labor practice strike to send a clear message to Swedish-Providence about the importance of patient care and staffing in their hospitals. Each day of the strike, thousands of Swedish members, community allies, elected officials, and other healthcare workers walked the picket lines to urge Swedish-Providence to settle a fair contract. Now that our union colleagues are back at work, they are stronger and more united than ever and committed to the fight for a fair contract. Despite Swedish members taking bold action, Providence management is moving backwards and bargaining in bad faith. We have to continue to have our fellow union member's backs and step up when they call on us for support again.



Tim Ma, PT, Bellevue Medical Center

"The Swedish strike brought together local legislators and partnering unions. We recognize that this difficult fight is pivotal for the community and the region to protect good patient care, good staffing, and good worker wages and benefits to support families. United we stand. When we fight, we win."



Noel Galang, EVS Tech, Environmental Services, Swedish Issaquah



KPWA member Val Finkley, HUC, Bellevue Urgent Care joins the line

"The three days of our strike were very powerful as well as emotional for all of us. I decided to participate in the strike to show support to my fellow caregivers who are engaging with management for all of us, to attain a fair and just contract that will be beneficial not only for us but to the patients that we serve. It is my fervent hope that once everything has been said and done, we shall once again embrace and work hand in hand with better working conditions and staffing in our departments."

Swedish-Providence Strike



We made our voices heard at the capitol

We worked hard to elect our healthcare champions this past November in Olympia and Washington, D.C. Now it's up to us to work with them to advocate for our patients and our professions. We are the experts on patient care. As frontline staff, we are in the best position to know what our patients need and what it takes to improve the care we provide. Lobby Day is our opportunity to share our stories with our elected representatives on the issues that matter to us. Together, with members from across our union, we went to Olympia to speak up for policies that protect our patients, expand access to healthcare, improve the quality of care, and stand up for working families.



"Lobby Day was my first experience getting involved in politics aside from voting. It was a good perspective in seeing how through our union, we actually have the opportunity to have our voices heard by elected officials in Olympia. I shared with legislators how some of our pediatric patients are impacted by lack of affordable housing. We have parents calling and asking if they can do appointments by phone because they don't have gas money left after paying rent. We have parents making the tough decision between rent and that specialty appointment in Bellevue. With election years especially, we get tied up in presidential stuff, but we have a real opportunity to make big changes at the state level. We as a union are supporting several bills right now to address the housing crisis that will have a direct impact on our patients, families and communities. Getting involved on a smaller scope is easy and important."

Sheree Trammell, MA, Peds, Steel St. Medical Center (second from right with KPWA member Mala Williams, MA; CHC member Dorothy Challenger; State Representative Mari Leavitt, 28th LD)



"Since I became a union delegate and then was elected to the Executive Board, I've been very active in local politics. I've interviewed candidates who were seeking our union's endorsement and I contribute to the Healthcare Leadership Fund so we have the resources to get those candidates elected. Attending Lobby Day was the next step in holding candidates I helped get elected accountable to passing the laws we need to support our communities. One important topic I spoke with legislators about was prescription drugs costs. We see diabetic patients who can't afford their insulin. They have to choose between eating or filling their prescriptions. They end up rationing insulin and getting very sick. Sometimes they end up hospitalized. We as healthcare workers have to be the voices for our patients. Lobby day showed me the importance advocating for what we need. Politicians don't know what it's like to do our jobs, so we need to be there as experts to testify to our experience. The best part of going to Lobby Day was being an example to my children and hearing my son tell me he was proud of me for making my voice heard."

LeNae Jackson, MA, Family Practice, Olympia Medical Center