

# Providence Wage Offer, Benefit Takeaways Are Holding Us Back



"After 10 meetings, Providence has not yet presented a wage proposal that addresses what it costs to live in Thurston County for our aides and other lower wage workers, or the outrageous disparity between the salaries of top executives and the average worker; or how certain job classes lag far behind their

colleagues working at St. Peter and other healthcare institutions. In addition, our census has boomed with no corresponding increases in staffing, causing too often mandatory overtime.

Despite the profitability and financial health of Providence, they have so far failed to recognize and reward the great dedication and sacrifice of each of our members during this crisis. They have even proposed major benefit takeaways in the middle of the pandemic.

Ira Byock MD, the Founder/Chief Medical Officer of the Providence Institute for Human Caring, writes in his article Heroism and Hypocrisy — 'If we are to authentically address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion, we must cut the chains of margin-driven care and model the values we espouse. Only then will we be able to chart a course to a more healthy and equitable future.' We need some real justice for caregivers and patients now." **Wendy Katz, MSW Hospice**



"Wages are a really important part of our bargaining, and members have said pretty clearly how they feel about Providence's pitiful

proposal. I have heard 'That is a slap in the face' and 'Do they really expect us to agree to that?' When we spoke at the table about the wage issues and presented data showing how far behind we are, Providence couldn't deny the data, but said that people don't work here for the money.

All of us would like to see a fair contract reached as soon as possible, but Providence has not shown they are serious. We need to stand together and do whatever it takes to get a good contract." **Vikki Eckerson, Hospice RNCM**

With no new proposals from management on wages or benefits in our last two meetings, our team decided it was time for a "reality check" with management.

Our team let Providence know that that the Providence pay offer is completely inadequate at best, and insulting at worse.

Team members explained that another major impediment to an agreement are the three "takeaways" Providence has on the table — elimination of EIB, reduction in our benefits protections **and reduction of weekend premium**. We are ready to compromise to come to an agreement, but not go backwards!

We asked that the management team communicate to Providence's financial decision-makers that the inadequate pay offer and the benefit takeaways are holding up this contract.

**Our next bargaining is Thursday, December 16.**

## Our Bargaining Team:

**Murinda McCuller, LPN, HH**

**Cheryl Harper, LPN Clinical Coordinator, HH**

**Sophia Risorto, PT, HH**

**Judy Hickmann, PTA, HH**

**Deb Gorman, RN, HH, Shell St. Onge, Bereavement Counselor, Hospice**

**Sheila Drew, Hospice Aide, Hospice**

**Wendy Katz, MSW, Hospice**

**Cat Thomas, MSW, Hospice**

**Masami Hutchins, MSW, Hospice**

**Meghan Murphy, MSW, Hospice**

**Vikki Eckerson, RN, Hospice**

**Crystal Trabue, RN, Hospice**

**Andrea Hautala, RN, Hospice**

**Paul Catterson, RN, Hospice**

Summary of bargaining as of December 10, 2020

Highlighted in red is a management proposed “takeaway” (eliminating or reducing a standard we have now). Our team is here to make improvements, not go backwards.

At our session on October 21, in the interest of getting to an agreement and focusing on issues of wages and staffing (elimination of mandatory call, mandatory OT and restricting weekend work), the team also made a big move: To withdraw our proposals on increasing PTO and EIB accruals and expansion of our “maintenance of benefits” if management would withdraw “takeaways” on PTO/EIB and maintenance of benefits. Management rejected that offer, but it still stands.

Union	Management
Wage Increases	
Across-the-board wage increases 7% 8/31/2020 1.5% 2/28/2020 4% 8/31/2021 3.75% 8/31/2022 Contract expires 8/30/2023	Across-the-board wage increases 1% following ratification 1.5% 8/31/2021 1.25% 8/31/2022 1.25% 8/31/2023 Contract expires 8/30/2024
Other wage adjustments <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New step 23 (8/31/2020) and step 25 (8/31/2021)</li><li>Double time after 12 hours</li><li>Case manager pay: \$1 per hour (effective 8/31/2021)</li><li>\$1 licensure pay for social workers</li><li>“Experience audit” and pay adjustment where new hires have come in at higher rates than current employees</li><li>Additional 2% (above the 9% increase) for job classes far behind market (RN, MSW, PTA)</li><li>5% adjustment for materials mgt. tech</li><li>Schedulers to team assistant rate</li></ul>	Other wage adjustments <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No to new steps, 2X after 12, case manager pay, “experience audit</li><li>100% experience credit for all job classification for new hires</li><li>Additional 2% (above the 1%) for RN, PT, OT Speech Therapist, 2.5% for PTA and COTA Therapist 1/1/2021 and 1% for MSW; then additional 1.25 % 8/31/2022, then</li><li>1.75% (above the 1.25% increase) for RN, PT, OT and Speech Therapist 8/31/2023</li><li>“No” to adjustment for materials mgt. tech, schedulers to team assistant rate</li></ul>
Differentials <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>From \$2.50 (RN/OT/PT/SLP) and \$2.25 (MSW/Counselor/ HH aide) to \$3.00</li><li>Night: \$3.50 (RN/OT/PT/SLP) and \$3.25 (MSW/Counselor/ HH aide) to \$4.00</li><li>Standby: From \$3.00 to \$4.25</li><li>Preceptor: From \$1.00 to \$2.00</li><li>Double time after 12 hours</li><li>Call back: From straight time to time and a half for being called back to work</li><li>Report pay (showing up for work and being sent home): From minimum of 3 hours to minimum of 4 hours.</li><li>Per diem pay from 10% to 15% premium</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Standby from \$3.00 to \$3.25</li><li>Reduce weekend pay from 20% of regular pay to \$4.50 an hour.</li><li>Per diem pay from 10% to 15% premium</li></ul>
Improved Staffing and Quality of Care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No mandatory on-call or overtime</li><li>Weekends worked by employees hired for specific weekend schedule</li><li>Caseload/workload maximums – if over maximum for one week, supervisor must take action to address</li><li>Daily adjustments to patient assignments based on mileage, acuity, new admits, recertification, meetings</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No to union proposals on on-call, mandatory overtime, weekend work, caseloads, daily adjustments and additional FTEs.</li><li>Workload caseload issues will be “standing item” on agenda labor management committee.</li><li>Any daily caseload adjustments/reductions may be taken into account in productivity calculations.</li></ul>
Commitment to Organizational Equity and Inclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Strengthening of non-discrimination language – include gender identity, genetic information, political ideology. Non-discrimination applies to all personnel actions.</li><li>Labor-Management development of program and monitoring of data to improve cultural competency, awareness of hidden bias and equity, throughout agency.</li><li>No retaliation for raising discrimination issues.</li><li>Accommodation of all religious practices</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Addition of gender, gender identify, disability, genetic information to non-discrimination clause.</li><li>Labor management review of Employer policies regarding discrimination and harassment.</li><li>No retaliation for raising complaints of discrimination.</li><li>Rejected: non-discrimination for political ideology; application of non-discrimination to all personnel actions; Labor-Management development of equity, cultural competency and hidden bias program, training, data monitoring system; accommodation of all religious practices.</li></ul>
Secure and affordable health benefits and sick time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide maintenance of benefits: no increased costs or reduced benefits for the life of the contract</li><li>Improvement of PTO/EIB:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Immediate access to EIB</li><li>Increase accruals on PTO/EIB (to 2013 levels)</li><li>Easier access to health incentives to pay out-of-pocket costs (annual PCP visit and health risk assessment)</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No to maintenance of benefits.</li><li>Elimination of EIB and replacement with short term disability that pays 65% of income and is accessible after 7 days.</li></ul>
Expanded training and professional development opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Access to up to \$5,250 annual tuition assistance (upfront money not reimbursement)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Yes to \$5,250 annual tuition assistance, reimbursement (as part of “package”).</li></ul>
Other improved working conditions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Allow members to donate vacation to the bargaining team</li><li>Add MLK Holiday</li><li>Increased restrictions on “shift rotation” (e.g. working evenings or nights when hired to work days)</li><li>Once PTO scheduled, only changed by mutual consent</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No to vacation donation to team.</li><li>Weekend defined as starting 12:01AM not 8AM Saturday.</li><li>Once PTO scheduled, only changed by management in emergencies or by mutual consent.</li></ul>