

# It's Time for KRH to Invest in Their Nurses

We need a wage scale that would lift wages to ensure KRH is competitive with other Montana hospitals to recruit and retain nurses, and that is exactly what we proposed. But at our latest bargaining, management said that nurses aren't ready for a wage scale and withdrew their proposal for a wage scale. Instead, management re-proposed the wage band pay system, which is what we have now.

## Management says we aren't ready for a step schedule

We have proposed a 25-year scale where nurses are placed on the scale based on years of experience. Our wage scale ensures that everyone moves up a step each year on their anniversary date. New hires are given credit for the experience and fairly placed on the wage scale.

### Our proposal provides:

- ✓ Guaranteed across-the-board increases for **ALL** nurses.
- ✓ Even nurses who are at the top of the scale would receive the full across-the-board increases.
- ✓ Our across-the-board increases for each year of the contract would ensure our wage scale remains competitive with other hospitals across Montana.
- ✓ Nurses are placed on the wage scale based on **ALL** of their years of experience right away so that we can ensure everyone is being paid fairly.
- ✓ A wage scale that makes it clear how current nurses are paid and how new nurses should be hired in and paid.
- ✓ Guaranteed wage increases for everyone and a fair way for nurses to move up the wage scale.



“Remember the union is the only way WE, the workforce, can have a voice on being paid fairly and having a say in our working environment. But in order to do this we need to act as ONE STRONG voice.

There are no other healthcare systems in the Valley to keep them in check. We are that system.” Jeanette Luka, RN, OB

## Management **rescinded their wage scale proposal** and reiterated the wage bands, saying that they don't believe nurses are ready for a step schedule.

Management has proposed to allocate \$250,000 to place nurses on the wage bands based on their years of experience, but the only way we would move up a wage band is by receiving an across-the board increase. Under the wage bands, it means there is a minimum we can be paid and a maximum we can be paid but no clear process for how our experience is recognized or how we are moving up the wage bands without a yearly across-the-board increase.

What management means is **THEY** aren't ready for our wages to be in line with other Montana nurses.

What management means is **THEY** aren't ready to recognize **ALL** of our experience.

What management means is **THEY** aren't ready for a transparent process for how we receive wage increases and continue to have our experience recognized.



“Management stated that our highly educated nurses ‘don't understand what a step wage scale is.’ We have shared over the past year with our union members our most important proposals in our contract, and the wage scale is one of them. Management continues to underestimate that as a union, nurses will have a strong voice at the table if we continue to stay united and informed.”

Sue Sweigert, RN, Peri-anesthesia



“People who receive relatively higher increases under our proposal have been behind for years, many working alongside newer or less experienced nurses who are paid anywhere from a lot more to slightly less. We don't want future nurses to have to experience these pay inequities. Getting a clear and transparent wage scale will fix this problem for good in the future.”

Tara Lee, RN, Pediatrics

# Improving Our Healthcare

Ensuring we have affordable healthcare has been one of our top priorities since we began bargaining. We have presented proposals that would ensure we can afford to keep ourselves and our families healthy.

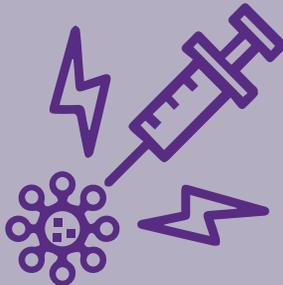
## Our healthcare proposal would:

- ✓ Reinstatement of the 20% discount for receiving care at KRH
- ✓ Incorporate a commitment not to send employees to collections if they work out an affordable payment plan
- ✓ Expand Tier 1 coverage and reinstate the appeals process if a service is not provided in Tier 1
- ✓ Reduce premiums, deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums for the non-union plans to ensure no one is having to pay more by switching plans

50-80 Hour Status	Employee Portion	Paycheck Deduction	Yearly Deductible	Yearly Deductible with Wellness	Out-of-Pocket Max	Out-of-Pocket with Wellness
Employee	\$34.69	\$17.34	\$750	\$0	\$1900	\$1400
Employee (+1)	\$131.88	\$65.94	\$1000	\$0	\$3000	\$2600
Employee (+2)	\$178.41	\$89.20	\$1000	\$0	\$3000	\$2600

## COVID-19 CORNER

It is encouraging news that so many people are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Still, many people including caregivers, patients, hospital visitors, and community members remain unvaccinated.



We have a COVID-19 Memorandum in effect that states that if you are not permitted to work due to a documented COVID-19 illness (your own or someone else's), you can access your CIB without any waiting period. If your exposure was at work, from a patient or co-worker, you will receive administrative pay. The number of hours is unlimited until the KRH Disaster Response is deactivated.

On February 10 we proposed expanding the administrative leave to include absences related to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Management has not responded. If you are not being paid correctly or if you would like a copy of the memorandum, talk to your bargaining team member or organizer.



**“Administration is still not working off the same proposal after our many and our mediator’s requests. We are tired of hearing ‘It is our philosophy...’ from administration instead of a proposal in writing.”** Kim Paulsen, RN, IMCU

**“We are asking the KRH administration not to send people to collections before they even receive a bill. We are asking that employees don’t get sent to collections if they are making payments. This is not a special deal, this is common decency. Though we can only bargain for RNs right now, we strongly believe this should apply to all employees.”**



**Julie Anderson, RN, Big Sky**



**“Wow, I thought I’d seen everything, but bargaining backwards? Management is so uncaring about their frontline workers!”**

**Jan Mueller, RN, Home Options**



**“Management will not put in writing that we can request meeting space at the hospital, comparing us to ‘vendors.’ We are not a third party entity. We the nurses are KRH. We are trusted to provide care for our community as KRH employees. We have a right to meet at our place of employment which is our unifying purpose.”**

**Christina Bradury, RN, CVS**

**“When we bring up uncomfortable information to them, they respond with ‘we are done bargaining for today.’ So disappointing.”**

**Donna Nelson, RN, Pathways**





## Build your Zoom Skills Free trainings April 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>

Everything from contract bargaining to family celebrations has moved to Zoom during the pandemic, and online meetings are probably here to stay even after COVID-19 is over. The SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Training Fund is co-hosting two virtual workshops that will help you learn to make video calls, or build on your Zoom skills to become a great meeting leader.

**You Can Zoom Call: Intro to Zoom**  
Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> 7-9 pm PDT / 8-10 pm MDT  
Call to sign-up: (206)321-1874

**Become a Virtual Leader: Next-Level Zoom Skills**  
Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup> 7-8 pm PDT / 8-9 pm MDT  
Register online: [bit.ly/TF-Zoom-Workshop3](https://bit.ly/TF-Zoom-Workshop3)

“We tried it without a union for the last 10 years and we ended up underpaid, understaffed and underappreciated! Now is the time to stand up for our patients, our community, and ourselves.”

Nichole Cardoza, RN, DHIM



**By joining together in a union, we speak with a united voice. Be a part of the movement for quality care for our community.  
Fill out this form to join!**

[joinseiu1199nw.org](https://joinseiu1199nw.org)

or scan this QR code with your phone camera to fill out a form!

