

DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

March 2015



Negotiation Updates

Compensation Unit 13/Dept. of Behavioral Health

A federal mediator has been appointed to resolve the contract impasse between DCNA and the Government of the District of Columbia, affecting RNs at the Department of Behavioral Health and all other District agencies. DCNA proposes to maintain all benefits currently enjoyed and provide for wage increases of 3% for each year (FY15-FY17), beginning retroactive to October 1, 2014. Edward Smith, Acting Executive Director, DCNA remains hopeful that the matter will be resolved without resort to arbitration, stating that “the District has advised us that it has forwarded the compensation package to the Mayor for review.”

United Medical Center (Not for Profit Hosp. Corp.)

DCNA and management met on February 18, March 4 and March 16, negotiating over issues concerning temporary staff, seniority, safe staffing and the staffing matrix, health & safety, performance evaluations, discipline and the flexible benefits program. We reached some agreements; however, we are close to an impasse over scheduling, flexible benefits, discipline, performance evaluations and seniority. We resume bargaining on April 1st. We expect to discuss safe staffing and compensation matters then. Please make every effort to attend the upcoming union meeting on April 9th. We will discuss in detail the negotiations.

Children’s School Services

DCNA and CSS met on March 10th and discussed issues of joint labor-management committees, overtime and preceptor pay, unpaid leaves of absence, health insurance and damage or loss of property. Management has yet to provide DCNA with a wage proposal. The negotiations have been very difficult, with management taking very uncooperative, yet cordial, bargaining positions. We have scheduled several bargaining sessions in April and May and we remain hopeful that the meetings will be productive and will result in additional contract protections for our members.

Labor Law Corner: Right to a Shop Steward

Who should you call when management requests a meeting regarding your conduct or disciplinary action? Call your Shop Steward immediately and do not respond to any questions without your Shop Steward present. A Shop Steward is a union member who represents unit members in disciplinary meetings. *NLRB v. Weingarten, Inc.*, 420 U.S. 251 (1975), is a Supreme Court case that outlines the rules on when a Shop Steward can participate in a disciplinary meeting. The meeting must be designed for management to ask questions or solicit information from the employee and the employee **must fear discipline**. The employer is not required to inform you of your right to union representation; you **must request that the Shop Steward be present in the meeting**. If you are not sure why management is requesting a meeting, you should ask your manager or Human Resources before agreeing to meet without representation. Additionally if management calls you or stops by your office to interrogate you about an error in patient care or a patient’s or co-worker’s complaint about your conduct, do not respond to any questions without a shop steward present. If you have questions, contact Walakewon Blegay at wblegay@dcna.org.

How to File a Worker’s Compensation Claim - What happens if you are injured on the job and your supervisor or employer does not file a worker’s compensation claim? You have a right to file the claim. You should make sure to promptly report the injury or illness to your employer. You must then report the injury or illness in writing to the Office of Workers’ Compensation (OWC) within 30 days of its occurrence. The OWC reporting form is DCWC Form 7. It can be obtained from your employer, the insurance carrier or the Office of Workers’ Compensation. You have one year to file a claim for benefits. This form is DCWC Form 7A. Go to www.does.dc.gov to review and print the forms.

DCNA Labor Relations Training – On March 17th, 15 RNs from HUH, DBH, UMC, Children’s Hospital and DDS attended training. Ed Smith and Wala Blegay presented material and led discussions relating to Weingarten rights, duty of fair representation and investigating and processing grievances. The training concluded with a spirited and well acted “role playing” of a case, based on a real incident. DCNA thanks the members who attended and looks forward to their activism in the future. DCNA also raised \$ 135.00 at the training in contributions to the DCNA Needy Nurses Fund.

St. Elizabeths Hospital AWS Pilot to Commence in June

On March 11th, DCNA Acting Executive Director Edward Smith and St. Elizabeths Hospital Chief Nursing Officer, Dr. Clotilde Vidoni-Clark, met with RNs to explain the alternative work schedule pilot program to nurses in the units in which it will be established. Dr. Vidoni-Clark stated that she planned on implementing the new schedules in June. For over a decade, DCNA has advocated for expansion of shift options at St. Elizabeths Hospital. In August 2014, DCNA and the Department of Behavioral Health finally reached an agreement on a six month pilot program for RNs in two units at the Hospital to choose between an eight or twelve hour shift. Additional shift options are important recruitment and retention tools. DCNA will monitor the success of this program, with the goal of introducing AWS throughout all areas of the Hospital and the Department of Behavioral Health.

Contributions to the DCNA Needy Nurses Fund Are Needed

The District of Columbia Nurses Association (DCNA) is extremely proud of the nurses that serve on the DC Nurses Foundation (Needy Nurses) Committee. This committee provides financial support to those nurses that have experienced a hardship in their lives. Because of the work of the committee, we have been able to save homes, provide food on the table, pay bills and assist nurses with other basic needs that otherwise would not have been met. DCNA members serving on the committee are Garnett Freeman (Chair), Bridgett Cameron, Mary Jones-Bryant, LaKisha Little and Margaret Shanks.

We know that if we do not replenish this fund, many nurses will have to wait months for the assistance that they need. In order to avoid this devastating occurrence, we are asking that you assist us by making a contribution to the Needy Nurses fund. Please make your contribution payable to the DC Nurses Foundation, c/o DCNA, 5100 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016-4130.

In this profession, we are acutely aware of how lives can change in the blink of an eye. Please support the Needy Nurses fund so that we can be here for our colleagues when hard times occur. You can be assured that **100%** of your funds will be spent directly to pay basic necessary living expenses and medical expenses for nurses in need.

Your contribution could be a life saver!

Upcoming Events:

Labor Relations Seminar, DCNA, 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016, May 19th, 10:00 am – 2:30 pm. If you are interested in becoming a representative for your local unit or desire additional training as an existing representative or official, please contact Walakewon Blegay, Esq. at wblegay@dcna.org to register.

Broccoli City Festival, Earth Day Celebration, Saturday, April 25th, Gateway DC Pavillion, 1100 Alabama Avenue, SE, DC. The festival organizer is seeking 6 DC registered nurses to volunteer at the First Aid tent from 12pm-3pm, 3pm-6pm and 6pm-9pm (at least 2 per shift). There will be an ambulance on site and the nurses will help with minor injuries. Once nurses are finished with their shifts or before their shifts, they are invited to enjoy in the Festivities. Please contact Ms. Vickie Spence, vspence@dcna.org, to volunteer or for further details.

NNU Training, Time to Care: RN Patient Advocacy in the Age of Technological Healthcare Restructuring, May 28, 2015. The course provides 6 contact hours and is located at the Double Tree, Hilton Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD. Contact Ms. Vickie Spence, vspence@dcna.org, for registration details.



Please visit DCNA on our website at www.dcna.org or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation.

For Assignment Despite Objection and Grievance forms, visit www.dcna.org.

DCNA is located at 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016. Telephone – (202) 244-2705

LaKisha Little, President, DCNA Agnes Addington, Treasurer, DCNA

Ms. Little and Ms. Addington hard at work in the DCNA offices.