

THE UNION TALKS

UNION SHOP STEWARDS' COUNCIL ELECTS NEW CHIEF STEWARD

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This is an MGH employee-produced monthly newsletter. It will report union activities and issues from MGH employees represented by SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West.



Letters and suggestions are welcome- send to dillwood@sbcglobal.net
Ellen Dillinger, Editor

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An online copy of this newsletter as well as information and photographs of Sacramento union events can be seen at

<http://dillingertoons.net>

Bula! (Hello!) you all:

It's my honor to serve you all. I'm Raj Dayal, receiving clerk (CSPD Dept.) at MGH, and I've recently been elected by the Shop Stewards' Council of our union as Representative Chair/ Chief Shop Steward. I took this job for one reason: to see that we all, employees and management, work together as a team, based on our contract agreement, to achieve the best possible patient care in town.

Let's be like five fingers: Put together, they become a fist, full of force. In the same way, we all can be one force. I'm appealing to you all, management and employees: Let's do it! Let's provide the best healthcare in town!

Raj Dayal
(CSPD)



Raj Dayal brings a great attitude and years of experience as an active shop steward to this new adventure as Representative Chair. Welcome, Raj!



SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West members celebrating UFW Union leader Cesar Chavez' birthday with a march from Southside Park to Cesar Chavez Plaza. 3-26-05.

PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Lorenza Clausen (MRI tech, Imaging Services) served as Union spokesperson for the PCC from its creation under the 2002 contract to March 2005.

The PCC ended the 2004 year with a three day arbitration meeting at the end of November. The discussion involved proposed staffing changes that CHW wished to make on several of the hospital units. The committee spent a year discussing these changes and other issues without reaching resolution in committee. Earlier in the year, the PCC finally agreed on several units that had increased staffing based on the AB 394 changes that went into effect in January 2004.

The PCC was unable to agree on several other units, and so a Joint Practice Committee meeting was scheduled to discuss 2 East, 4 East, 2 South, MICU, CCC, and Rehab. The committee, made up of two management representatives, a union representative, and an employee committee member, failed to reach a resolution on five of the six units still outstanding. CCC had a tentative agreement,

which when brought back to the employees of the unit, failed to pass that agreement. All six units were sent to arbitration status in April of 2004. After several months of waiting, a date was finally set in mid November.

The arbitration was held over three days. Two units, CCC and 4 East, were discussed at the beginning of the session, as CHW felt they had not been formally moved to arbitration. Their stand was that the CCC agreement was not a tentative agreement, although the nature of the agreement was clearly stated and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. After referring to those minutes, it was noted as indeed a tentative agreement, and that the employees had every right to vote on its implementation. After some discussion, CHW removed its proposal for CCC and offered to return the staffing grid to the original staffing used prior to this process. That was agreed upon and the next unit, 4 East was then discussed. CHW's position was that 4 East had not been discussed and moved to arbitration, though we remembered it being discussed at our meeting in April, where we had reached consensus on the other units. 4 East was moved to arbitration per the minutes of that meeting. We unfortunately could not argue this point well enough, to include 4 East into this arbitration. At the arbitrator's suggestion, we moved it back to Joint Practice Committee status, and would include this unit in the JPC meeting with the outstanding unit PCU. PCU had just been moved to Joint Practice prior

to the arbitration, but could not be included into the current arbitration meeting.

The meeting progressed with the four remaining units: 2 East, 4 East, Rehab, and MICU. Witnesses from both sides of the PCC were interviewed and cross-examined under oath. The minutes were recorded by a court reporter. Our feeling is that we gave the arbitrator as clear a picture as we could of the effects the proposed staffing would have on our patients and staff at MGH. We are hoping that his decision will improve what we feel are unsafe staffing proposals based on the acuity of our patients.

AB 394 regulations are not enough to staff the hospital with the standards that are necessary to provide safe care to our patients. As stated in Title 22 of the State of California, the acuity of the patients is the number one criteria when deciding on the staffing of the hospital. Our patients and staff deserve this level of staffing so that our patients get all of the care that is needed and that staff can practice safely under their licensure and credentials.

We are currently still waiting for the decision from the arbitrator. We will inform our shop stewards as soon as we hear of his decision. Hopefully, his ruling will give us a basis for resolving the other outstanding staffing proposals yet to be resolved.

Lorenza Clausen
MRI/Imaging
Patient Care Committee, MGH

POLITICAL ACTION CORNER***



Sharon Martinez is the Shop Steward Council COPE Chairperson and the representative to the Union's political action committee.

First, we want to congratulate the nurses for their victory over the Governor in keeping nurse/patient staffing ratios. We are there with you fighting all the way!

In May, at our General Membership meeting, we will be conducting a COPE (Committee On Political Education) drive.

We need everyone's support to fight Governor Schwarzenegger. He plans to cut back benefits to hospitals and doctors from Medi-Cal funding, putting more of our patients in the ER and without insurance. Also, he wants to put Homecare workers on Welfare by cutting their pay back to minimum wage and cut their health benefits. He plans to convert public employees pensions to 401K plans only and eliminate

DEATH benefits for police and firefighters. (*Ah come on!*) He has his operatives already passing petitions that target union workers. (Don't sign any anti-worker petitions). He is proposing to silence the voice of Public Employees in the political process.

Remember, an injury to one is an injury to all; don't think he won't try to do the same to us. His big corporate donors don't want working people to have the resources to defend themselves. So, it is up to all of us to make sure we have those resources to fight back!

What do we do when we are under attack?!

Stand-up! Fight Back!

Next month watch for more about this and how you can help!

--Sharon Martinez, Shop Steward

CHANGES IN BEREAVEMENT POLICY.....

Bereavement leave: Who's covered?

The bereavement policy at MGH has changed several times as a result of contract bargaining and a grievance Settlement Agreement.

Our 2002 union contract provided benefited employees with a paid leave of absence of up to 40 hours to be taken within seven consecutive calendar days of the death of an immediate family member. The defined "immediate family" included most family members, but excluded brothers and sisters-in-law. This caused a problem, as did the requirement that the leave be taken immediately following the death.

A grievance Settlement Agreement in January of 2004 returned bereavement leave to the former sta-

tus quo, under the "Standards Preserved" clause of our contract, allowing leave to be taken for brothers and sisters-in-law.

Our 2004 state-wide union contract kept the bereavement language that applied at each facility, but modified it so that the leave could be taken within the seven calendar days of the death or seven consecutive days before, during or after the scheduled funeral or memorial service.

Note: When filling out time cards, be sure to state relationship of deceased and date of death.

--Thanks to Raj Dayal for article info and Settlement Agreement

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MGH Steward Chairs

Chief Steward
Raj Dayal
 Home: 729-8187
 Work: 453-4084

COPE Chair (alt.Chief)
Sharon Martinez
 Home: 372-2145
 Work: 453-4440

Mobilizer Chair
Brenda Emmons-Doddrill
 Home: 723-1224
 Work: 453-4567

Secretary Chair/Editor
 Ellen Dillinger
 Home: 441-3468
 Work: 453-4138

SEIU UHW-West Field Representative:

Josie Summers: 275-6342

See list of Shop Stewards on Main Union bulletin Board near Cafeteria.

STEWARD MEETINGS

Every third Wednesday,
 Time: 1 p.m.- 5 p.m.

LOCATION VARIES

Apr.20:East/West Auditorium

May 18: Conference Rm #2

June 15:Conference Rm#2

July 20: Conference Rm #1

August 17: Conference Rm2

Sept 21: Conference Rm 2

Oct. 19: Conference Rm 2

Nov.16:East/West Auditor.

Dec.21: Conference Rm 2

It is the responsibility of the shop steward to inform their dept.manager in a timely manner of release time required for shop stewards' meeting.

Healthcartoons

..... E.Dillinger



2005 HOSPITAL DIVISION STEWARD COUNCIL MEETINGS

Hospital Division Steward Council Meetings are held at the Oakland Union office. Transportation, lunch, and child care will be provided. Meeting dates are:

May 7, 2005
 July 30, 2005
 October 22, 2005

If you have any questions, please call Field Rep. Josie Summers at (916) 275-6342.

to all.