Seaside Nurses Speak Out for Safety

Providence Seaside Hospital (PSH) nurses have raised the issue of emergency room (ER) security in the past, but the problem still exists, and seems to be spreading throughout the facility. So far this fall we’ve had five significant events that raise serious doubt about the PSH’s commitment to a safe environment for nurses and patients. (recent security events are detailed on page three.)

PSH/ONA nurses recently began circulating a petition asking Providence North Coast Chief Executive Debbie Glass to place at least one full-time dedicated security officer armed with pepper foam and handcuffs in the hospital on every shift. Please contact Mary Romanaggi in the emergency department (ED) if you have not had a chance to sign the petition.

Text of Our Petition

“We the caregivers and staff at Providence Seaside Hospital do not feel safe at work. Due to the increase in violence and assaults of our colleagues we are formally requesting full-time trained security officers at our hospital. We need security officers that are able to physically restrain aggressive patients.

PSH Membership Meeting and Mixer

PSH/ONA nurses will meet January 12 from 6-8 p.m. to discuss recent issues of concern and future bargaining proposals for PSH, to nominate nurses to the negotiating committee for our next contract, and to vote on an Association proposal for a $2 per month bargaining unit treasury assessment. An informal mixer will follow at 8 p.m. Family members and friends are encouraged to attend the event.

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They must be able to direct and perform “takedowns” safely. Our current security/facilities staff are not allowed to lay hands on patients who are aggressive.

We are expected to take care of violent patients who are out of control. Our nurses are trained and able to administer medications to treat these patients. Often we are not able to do this safely unless the patient is first restrained.

Safety is a priority on our Hospital. Our aggressive patients pose a risk not only to our staff, but to our patients as well. We ask you to help us provide safe and effective care to our patients by providing us with security officers that are trained to restrain violent patients. We hope that this serious issue is resolved before any more employees are assaulted or injured.

October 12, ONA Labor Representative Sam Gieryn contacted Human Resources Partner Theresa Osburne and Chief Nursing Officer Janiece Zauner requesting a meeting to discuss what could be done to improve safety for nurses and patients. The issue was placed on the Nursing Task Force (NTF) agenda for November 12. (More to come.)

The NTF meeting was attended by Gieryn, Zauner and Osburne, and PSH/ONA Vice President Brenda West. West, who has filed three recent workplace violence reports, asked what steps were being taken to reduce the number of unsafe and violent situations that occur at PSH. Osburne and Zauner discussed recent steps taken to ensure safety throughout the facility, including:

- Revisiting their Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Clatsop Behavioral Health, which provides mental health services at PSH.
- Reviewing performance expectations with current PSH maintenance/security staff.
- Exploring the possibility of a priority lane to psychiatric beds at Providence St. Vincent’s, Portland Medical Center and Willamette Falls.
- Meeting with Seaside Police Department to discuss performance expectations.
- Establish expectation for nurses to use “911” whenever security is threatened in the nurse’s judgment. Not to wait for actual violence to occur and don’t use the Seaside Police’s non-emergency number.

Zauner says she wants to change the culture of nurses accepting a higher level of abuse than other professionals. Zauner also noted that a “crisis respite

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Our current contract expires at the end of next year, and while that may seem a ways out, early preparation includes electing a team, training them, surveying the bargaining unit, creating and prioritizing proposals and then negotiating with management, all in time for the Dec. 31, expiration date. We’ll open nominations at the membership meeting and continue to accept them for 30 days thereafter. We’ll also hear your ideas for improving our contract.

PSH nurses have been very concerned about the safety of our nurses throughout the hospital, and especially in the Emergency Department, where a series of significant safety related events this fall brought into question PSH’s policy of training maintenance personnel to serve double duty as a security force at PSH. What’s being done? Please see the article on the top of page 1.

Our plan to make our Association a stronger voice for nurses and patients includes a $2.00 per month dues assessment to ease the financial burden on active members, defray expenses of membership activities and help strengthen our ties with the Seaside community.

But first we need you to say, “Yes, I want to help build a stronger professional nursing association at PSH.”

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center” was due to open with 17 beds that could allow an earlier discharge or possible bypass of the Seaside ER altogether.

Osborne showed a comparison of security forces at various Providence hospitals. While Providence Willamette Falls (PWF) and Providence Milwaukie (PMH) both have uniformed security 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. Providence Hood River (PHR), Newberg (PN) and Seaside (PSH) all have security provided by “engineers” which we know as our maintenance/security force. All of them receive 14 hours of Oregon Department of Public Safety Unarmed Security Training.

Seaside maintenance/security staff also receive Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behavior (PMAB) training and Helicopter Safety Training. PWF and PMH security staff are equipped with pepper foam and hand cuffs, while PHR, PN, and PSH have no security equipment. West asked why the extra capability at these similar sized hospitals and the response was that those hospitals had a more extensive record of security events.

Responding to reports that maintenance/security staff did not believe they were allowed to physically intervene, we requested the training materials and protocols for use of physical force by PSH maintenance/security staff. To date we have not received these from PSH. But we are aware that several of the maintenance/security staff are still uncomfortable in a security role that was thrust upon them. No security experience is required for this position.

Security Events

Sept. 20 a violent psych patient in the ER assaulted a CNA and a doctor. A maintenance/security staff member was thrown to the floor and injured.

Oct. 20 a combative mentally ill patient was left in the ED by police, leaving only a PSH security/maintenance employee watching the patient. The security/maintenance person was unprepared and ineffective when the patient attacked ED nurse Stacie Reynolds, who fortunately had previous experience as a corrections officer. Stacie used her PMAB skills and pinned the patient against the wall while someone called for more internal support, which never arrived. Luckily a Cannon Beach officer happened to bring a patient to the ED just then and was able to provide support.

Oct. 25 a psychiatric patient was admitted for an overdose and was moved to the Med-Surg unit. The patient had a history of violence against staff at

ONA 2016 Convention — Lead by Example: Ethical Nursing Practice

Mark your calendars, the ONA 2016 Convention and House of Delegates, titled "Lead by Example: Ethical Nursing Practice," will be held April 11-13, 2016 at the Seaside Civic & Convention Center in Seaside, OR.

The first day, Monday, April 11, will be a half-day staffing workshop. This workshop will feature presentations and information to help nurses better understand the updated Oregon hospital nurse staffing law and improve staffing in their workplace.

The second day, Tuesday, April 12, is a full day of continuing education (CE) sessions with topics ranging from the use of social media, nurse advocacy, collective bargaining tools and skills, effective communication, ethics in nursing, nurse leadership and more.

The third day, Wednesday, April 13, will be the ONA House of Delegates. More details will be posted on ONA’s home page as they are confirmed.

To attend as a PHHH/ONA Delegate to the ONA House of Delegates, use the form on the back page (page 6) of this newsletter.
$2.00 for a Stronger Professional Nursing Association

PSH/ONA Nursing Association members will vote on a proposal brought forward by the Association executive team to add a $2.00 per month surcharge to the regular ONA dues.

Please join us in supporting this important step to strengthen our professional nursing organization at PSH.

The vast majority of ONA bargaining units at Providence facilities currently levy a similar $2.00 surcharge. Members will vote on the proposal at our membership meeting and mixer, January 12, beginning at 8 p.m. at the American Legion Post 99, 1315 Broadway Street.

The main purposes of the surcharge are:

- To provide more access to training opportunities for Association leaders. Every professional association needs leaders who know how to run a volunteer organization, negotiate with management, provide representation to members, and organize events. ONA and its affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Oregon AFL-CIO, offer many training opportunities, but often there are costs involved, such as travel, that limit access for PSH nurses.
- To eliminate the financial burden of missed work and other expenses on bargaining team members.
- To provide more access to training opportunities for Association leaders. Every professional association needs leaders who know how to run a volunteer organization, negotiate with management, provide representation to members, and organize events. ONA and its affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Oregon AFL-CIO, offer many training opportunities, but often there are costs involved, such as travel, that limit access for PSH nurses.
- To eliminate the financial burden of missed work and other expenses on bargaining team members.

First let us say, “Thank you”, to the many nurses who have stepped up over the years and opted to speak up for all our nurses at the bargaining table, even though it cost them lost time at work, additional trips to and from the hospital, child care, copying costs, etc.

We need more nurses to take their turn serving on the bargaining team. But doing so shouldn’t come at a cost.

- To provide amenities such as food and beverages at membership events. It’s very important that we offer opportunities for our members to network and socialize off of the hospital campus. Our personal and professional relationships are what bind us to this cause. We would like to be able to provide a nice venue for our members to meet.
- To allow us to build stronger relationships with the local community by providing financial and other forms of support, such as the school back pack program, sponsoring a family at Christmas, providing cab vouchers.
- To reduce other incidental costs of participation in committee work. Much of what we can accomplish involves nurse participation in a variety of committees at PSH, including the Nurse Staffing Committee, Nursing Task Force, and others. We encourage nurses to participate in these committees as advocates for nurses and patients. We want to make sure that participation does not come with unexpected costs for the nurse.

The PSH local treasury will be managed in accordance with our bylaws, Section 6.1.4.3.9, which provides that the secretary/treasurer of the Association shall keep itemized records, showing the source of all monies received and spent, and keep records, vouchers, work sheets, books and accounts and all resolutions to verify such report.

Please join us in supporting this important step or our Association.
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PSH, and was making comments about how many men it would take to pin him down. There were only two nurses on the unit and no other staff. When one nurse was seeing her patient down the hall, there was only one staff person all alone in the vicinity of the psych patient.

“Especially in light of recent violent patient wonder why we are taking these risks with nurses and patients.”

- RN Rebekah Mayfield in a letter to Chief Nursing Officer Janiece Zauner

October 31 ER nurses called the police after a patient refused to leave and was verbally abusive and threatening. Nurses were told by the Seaside Police that the police would not respond unless the patient was actually assaulting someone or the hospital was charging the patient with criminal trespass.

November 7 a patient with a history of violence was being watched by one of our maintenance/security staff. The maintenance/security staffer was very concerned that he needed to get maintenance work done and specifically the boiler checks. He had to leave the ER to get this work done leaving nurses with a known dangerous patient and another psych\suicidal patient putting nurses and the other patient at risk.

Join Us! ONA Unit Representative Training

ONA Unit Representatives are nurses who help other nurses navigate employment at PSH. ONA Unit Representatives help new nurses get acclimated to life on the job, answer questions about employment and contract issues, organize unit nurses around issues of concern, disseminate information about ONA activities, and assist nurses with grievances and disciplinary issues.

ONA Unit Representatives help our units function more efficiently by helping to solve problems and resolve issues in an orderly and professional manner.

Our contracts recognize the value of all nurses’ right to come to each other’s mutual aid and assistance. You can turn to your Unit Representative for assistance in a wide variety of situations concerning your career, your unit or nursing in general. No one knows what you’re going through like the nurse who works on your unit!

We’d like to have more Unit Representatives to support the needs of our membership. We’d like to have a unit representative available on each unit and every shift! If you see the need on your unit and want to help, please reply today.

ONA will provide a four hour Unit Representative training program for Providence nurses January 16 and 23 at its offices in Tualatin.

The training takes place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Morning refreshments and a lunch are provided.

If you are interested in attending one of the training sessions, please contact ONA Labor Relations Representative Sam Gieryn, gieryn@OregonRN.org.

ONA offices are located at 18765 SW Boones Ferry Road Suite 200, Tualatin, OR 97062
Serve as a PSH/ONA Delegate to the ONA 2016 Convention

The Oregon Nurses Association Annual Convention is an opportunity for ONA members, ONA leadership, nursing students, and others in the nursing field throughout the state to come together and discuss the issues facing Oregon nurses.

The House of Delegates also sets the agenda and policies for ONA’s upcoming year. Your PSH/ONA bargaining unit can send a representative number of nurse delegates to ONA’s convention to inform ONA decision making at the House of Delegates. In addition, our nurses have the benefit of the educational and networking opportunities available at the convention.

This year’s convention will be held April 11-13, in Seaside, OR. ONA Constituent Association funds will most likely be available to defray most travel-related expenses for PSH nurses as they have in the past. ONA will make the final decision, based on available funds sometime in December.

Educational Leave Hours (Article 17.4) Up to 16 education leave hours may be requested (prorated for part time nurses, eight hours for per diem nurses) if you need to take time off for the educational portion of the ONA convention.

Educational Funds (Article 17.3) Conference registration, materials, fees, and travel expenses may be reimbursed by PSH.

If you are interested in attending the ONA convention as PSH/ONA Nurses Association delegate, please fill out the form below.

CONSENT TO SERVE AS AN ONA CONVENTION DELEGATE

You must be an ONA member to serve.
Return form to Sam Gieryn, (fax) 503-293-0013 or gieryn@oregonrn.org

☐ If nominated, I consent to serve as a delegate for the 2016 ONA House of Delegates. I understand that if I am not attending as a delegate, I am still welcome to attend as a non-voting member.

Printed Name ___________________________ Signature ___________________________ Date ________________

ONA member number: ___________________________ Facility: ___________________________

Home email: ___________________________ Mobile phone: ___________________________

Best time to reach me: ___________________________ Best way to reach me: ___________________________