



# THE INFORMER

October 2014

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Pat Mills, RN

During the past few months there have been many occasions when HHNA members were questioned by management without the presence of union representation. The union was notified, after the fact, by administration and/or a member.

These occurrences are not acceptable because as a union member you are entitled to "Weingarten rights." These rights entitle all union members to representation during investigatory interviews and were ruled upon by the United States Supreme Court in 1975. However, you have to TELL management you want representation; it will not be given to you unless you ask. Managers and administrators may advise you representation is not necessary, but, if management is investigating a matter and wants to question you, be wary. You can ask, "Can this interview lead to disciplinary action?" If the answer is, "We're not sure; we're just in the information gathering phase," or "Maybe, we're not sure," exercise your right to union representation. No matter who tells you representation isn't necessary, remember it is probably not your best interest they are thinking about. You must do what is right for you. You can't be punished for requesting representation.

Our contract states you have until 10am the next morning, excluding weekends, to obtain a representative of **your** choice. If you're unable to contact a Board member immediately, leave a message on the union phone (631-757-5206) or leave an email on our website (HHNANurses.org) and a Board member will get back to you. We will schedule a meeting for the next day. Also, the secretary in the Nursing Office has private contact numbers for all Board members and while she won't give you the numbers, she will leave a message for us to call as soon as possible.

### ***Dates to Remember:***

**10/14 Quarterly Meetings –1 Southwest**

**12/4 Council on Nursing Practice noon/lunch\***

**11/6 Council on Nursing Practice noon/lunch\***

**12/8 Council on Nursing Practice noon/lunch\***

**12/3 Unit representative dinner\***

**1/13 Quarterly meetings\***

***\*Due to long-term construction the location of these meetings will be announced when room availability is known.***

## **FYI**

by Joan Aliperti, RN – Secretary

### Significant Dates in October and December

October 23rd – A salary increase, which is approximately \$70 per pay period, and retroactive pay from October 1st will be in this paycheck.

October 31st – Benefit banks should be down to 450 hours or any hours over that number will be forfeited.

December 4th –Your uniform allowance will be in this paycheck.

### License Renewal

As you all know, we are required to renew our nursing license every three years with the New York State Education Department. It has come to the Board's attention that Nursing Administration has been telling members they can be charged with professional misconduct if they fail to provide proof of their current license to the hospital.

Upon speaking with an investigator from the Office of Professional Discipline we discovered this is not entirely true. It is each nurse's responsibility to keep track of his/her own license renewal. If the hospital does not have a copy of your current license, you will not be able to work. However, according to an investigator from the O.P.D., in order to be charged with professional misconduct it must be proven that it was your willful intent NOT to

renew your license and provide it to the hospital. Forgetting to renew your license is not considered willful intent. Being asked to bring in a copy and then refusing to do so, can be considered willful intent.

Just remember, your license expires the last day of the month BEFORE your birthday. For example, if your birthday is in June, your license will expire on May 31<sup>st</sup>. You need to be responsible for maintaining your license. So please be aware of your expiration year to avoid any problems with Nursing Administration.

*In addition, the union and management have agreed that members will submit documentation of license renewal 30 days prior to the date of expiration.*

### HOLIDAY OBLIGATIONS

It's difficult to believe summer is gone and we need to discuss holiday requirements. For those who work 10 or 12 hour shifts, the information can be found on pg 25 of the contract, for those who work 7.5 hr shifts it can be found on pgs 30,31 and for per diem employees it can be found on page 12.

#### 7.5 hr Shifts

Full time day shift employees will be required to work either Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

Part time day shift employees will be required to work either Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

Full time evening shift employees will be required to work two (2) of the five (5) holiday or holiday eves from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.

Part time evening shift employees will be required to work two (2) of the five (5) holidays or holiday eves from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.

Full time night shift employees will be required to work three (3) of the six (6) holiday or holiday eves which shall include the Eve or the Day of Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's.

Part time night shift employees will be required to work two (2) out of six (6) holidays or holiday eves which shall include the Eve or the Day of Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's.

(continued on the next page)

## AWSP (10 and 12 hour shifts)

Full time and part time day shift employees will be required to work (2) of the following: Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

Full time night shift employees will be required to work three (3) of the following : Thanksgiving Eve, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day.

Part time night shift employees will be required to work two (2) of the following: Thanksgiving Eve, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day.

## Per Diem Employees

One of the three holidays per diems must be available to work each year is Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's. Per diems are required to volunteer for any one of these holidays, but cannot select a New Year's holiday in consecutive years.

## Education and Certification Differentials

When you complete a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or obtain one or two certifications you must submit the appropriate documentation to the NSLIJ Human Resources Department to receive your salary increase.

The annual financial compensation for a Bachelor's degree is \$1,800, for a Master's degree it is \$2,100. Compensation for these

degrees is **not** cumulative; if you receive the Bachelor's compensation and you acquire a Master's, you will receive \$300 more which represents the difference between a Bachelor's and Master's. Certification differentials **are** cumulative; for each of two compensated certifications you receive \$1,200 annually.

## **The Council on Nursing Practice**

by Jo Ann Pirro, RN – Treasurer

The Council consists of two representatives of the hospital (as selected by the VP of Nursing) and two members of the HHNA (as selected by the Association President) and additional union members who would like to join this council. Its purpose is to review, develop and recommend standards of nursing practice specific to the hospital and consistent with the "Code for Nurses" of the American Nurses' Association and standards of nursing practice of the nursing profession.

We analyze factors that impede the practice of nursing; we review problems related to nursing practice, such as staffing issues; we discuss new nursing issues, such as changes NSLIJ is suggesting and/or implementing that effect us and frequently all nurses in NSLIJ hospitals.

As you know, our new evaluations will have a personal goal component and a personal goal can be to join one or more committees. Present council members would love to see new members sitting at the table. The council meets the first Thursday of the month at 12 noon, excluding July and August. Lunch is served at every meeting and you will be paid for your time. We can no longer meet in the One South wing due to construction; the location of future meetings will be announced.

There is detailed contractual language found on pages 6 – 8 of your collective bargaining agreement that outlines the structure and function of the Council on Nursing Practice.

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolution.  
~ Gibran Khalil Gibran

# Alternate Work Schedule Program Clarification

by Lisa Quintero, RN – First VP

The alternate work schedule program known as AWSP, includes 10 and 12.5 hour shifts. However, our contract describes AWSP shifts as 10 and 12 hour shifts. This disparate language is confusing to many.

AWSP employees work 4 weekend shifts every 4 weeks or 8 weekend shifts every 8 weeks. When scheduling permits, a nurse manager can grant additional weekend shifts off to AWSP employees.

For those nurses who work 10 hour shifts, the normal work period is 4 days each week. Three of the four work days each week consist of 9.5 paid hours. One of the four workdays each week consists of 9 paid hours. Each shift has a 30 minute unpaid meal period. There are also two 20 minute paid rest periods during each work day.

For those nurses who work 12.5 hour shifts, the normal work period is 3 days each week. Each workday will consist of 12 paid hours for a total of 36 hours per week. During one out of every 8 weeks the work week will consist of 4 shifts each being 12 paid hours, for a total of 48 hours in that week. Each 12.5 hour shift will have a 30 minute unpaid meal period. There will also be two 15 minute and one 20 minute paid rest period during each workday.

## Overtime Compensation

by Jane Hubert, RN – Second VP

From time to time it may become necessary for you to work overtime. When it does, notify your Nurse Manager or Supervisor ASAP to inform them of the circumstances which lead to the overtime. You aren't required to leave your unit to document the need for overtime.

Overtime is paid at the rate of one and one-half times the regular compensation rate. End of shift OT begins when an employee has worked at least 15 minutes beyond the end of his/her scheduled shift; OT will **not** be paid for periods of less than 15 minutes. Overtime is paid for members' attendance at mandatory meetings, mandatory in-service education and mandatory continuing education when it occurs during non-working hours. Nurses who miss their unpaid, duty-free meal period will be paid at the overtime rate provided Nursing Administration has been given ample notice of the employee's inability to take the meal time. Eating while you are charting doesn't qualify as a duty-free meal period. Administration has the

right to attempt to cover you for your meal period.

Nurses in Special Procedures, Endoscopy and Electrophysiology who volunteer to stay beyond their completed shifts for procedures that begin within one hour of the completion of their shifts will receive overtime pay for such time, in addition to unit specific pay that does not apply to on-call areas.

Mandatory Overtime is OT that is required by Nursing Administration at the end of the shift, but is not work that is required to complete the shift, such as, charting or rounding. Mandatory OT will only be on the unit to which the nurse was last assigned. Nursing Administration will give the nurse a good-faith estimate as to how long the overtime assignment will be.

Please review overtime language in our contract on pages 12, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 29.

**You know you're a nurse if . . . .**

**you live by the motto, "To be right is only half the battle; to convince the physician is more difficult."**

**you've sworn you're going to have "NO CODE" tattooed on your chest.**

**you point out errors while watching medical shows on TV.**

**your idea of designer clothes are patterned scrubs.**

## **Editorial** by Marion Catanzaro, RN

Articles in this newsletter and previous ones address the problem of management not adhering to contractual language by not paying for overtime and telling members who are interviewed they don't need union representation during an investigatory interview.

Regarding Overtime: It is the Board's experience that members who follow contractual language by notifying management as soon as possible of the need for OT and filing the appropriate paperwork with management are more likely to be paid. Members and management have to abide by contractual language. When members do what they are supposed to do and management doesn't pay for the OT, members should notify a Board member who will speak with management to obtain payment. However, when members don't follow the contract (notification and paperwork) then management doesn't have to follow the contract (payment of overtime).

When a member is denied OT pay at the time of its occurrence it is not unusual for the member to call the union number while still at work to leave a message regarding the incident, but all too often his/her name and the unit from which the call is coming isn't part of the message and, therefore, the issue can't be investigated.

It's an incredible annoyance to take the time to make phone calls when things are happening that will keep you from having your unpaid, duty-free meal period and to fill out overtime slips when you're already late and so tired you can't see straight and all you want to do is leave, but **DO IT!** You deserve to be compensated for your time.

Regarding investigatory interviews: In the early 1970's a unionized employee at Weingarten, Inc. was accused of stealing company property. The employee asked several times for her union representative or shop steward to be in attendance, but was denied. The union filed an unfair labor practice charge against the company and in 1975 the U.S. Supreme Court case of NLRB v. Weingarten was decided in favor of the NLRB. The rules described in the Supreme Court decision are referred to as Weingarten rights:

Rule 1 – The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. The employee cannot be punished for making this request.

Rule 2 – After the employee makes the request the employer must choose from these three options:

- Grant the request and delay questioning until a union representative arrives and has had a chance to speak privately with the employee.
- Deny the request and end the interview immediately.
- Give the employee a clear choice between having the interview without representation or ending the interview.

Rule 3 – If the employer denies the request and continues to ask questions it commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has the right to refuse to answer. The employee cannot be disciplined for such a refusal.

Everyone knows being interviewed by management can be anxiety provoking. To help with not knowing how to express your desire to have union representation you can say the following:

If this discussion could in any way lead to me being disciplined or terminated, or affect me negatively in any way, I respectfully request that a union Board member be present at this meeting. Until my representative arrives, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

In fact, you may want to cut this out and keep it in your wallet to recite if it ever becomes necessary.

# Cardiology Word Search

P	U	I	E	A	C	S	E	A	E	O	T	D	A	P	M	P	E
R	A	T	E	D	O	T	V	T	H	C	T	U	I	E	K	G	Z
O	A	A	X	U	U	N	L	H	Y	A	T	R	N	R	A	E	I
L	I	C	P	H	M	A	A	E	P	R	I	E	S	I	L	C	Y
A	D	H	R	T	A	L	V	R	E	D	A	G	U	C	V	H	P
P	R	Y	E	I	D	U	D	O	R	I	N	U	F	A	E	O	M
S	A	C	S	P	I	G	I	S	T	O	E	R	F	R	N	C	U
E	C	A	S	U	N	A	P	C	E	M	U	G	I	D	T	A	P
V	Y	R	I	L	D	O	S	L	N	Y	R	I	C	I	R	R	N
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I	B	B	E	T	A	B	L	O	C	K	E	R	S	I	D	A	N
M	O	V	T	E	C	G	A	R	R	H	Y	T	H	M	I	A	E

## Find these words:

ANEURYSM

ANGINAPECTORIS

ANTICOAGULANTS

ARRHYTHMIA

ATHEROSCLEROSIS

BALLOONPUMP

BETABLOCKERS

BRADYCARDIA

CARDIOMYOPATHY

COUMADIN

DYSPNEA

ECG

ECHOCARDIOGRAM

EKG

EXPRESSIVITY

HYPERTENSION

INSUFFICIENCY

MITRALVALVE

PERICARDIAL

PROLAPSE

PULMONARY

REGURGITATION

TACHYCARDIA

TRICUSPIDVALVE

VENTRICLE



# HHNA Quarterly Meetings Tuesday, October 14, 2014

Meetings will be held at the following times/ places:

7:30 am	<b>1 Southwest*</b>
12 noon	<b>1 Southwest*</b>
1:00 pm	<b>1 Southwest*</b>
7:30 pm	<b>1 Southwest*</b>

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner will be available

Please remember: in order to be a member in good standing, FT/PT employees must attend 2 quarterly meetings a year. Per Diems must attend 1 quarterly meeting a year.

**\* Please note the meeting room change.**

