



RIH-UNAP Report

RI Hospital United Nurses & Allied Professionals, Local 5098

March 15, 2006

Message from the President:



Linda McDonald, RN
President

RI Hospital staffing plans are now public information

Last year, the UNAP led the way in passing the Hospital Staffing Disclosure bill in Rhode Island. Now, for the first time, all hospitals must report their nursing staffing plans for every patient care area and shift to the RI Department of Health. To date, RI Hospital has *not* yet fully complied with the law because it has only provided staffing data regarding in-patient units.

The Union will take all necessary steps to insure that all hospitals comply with the new law. We also intend to evaluate the Hospital's plans to ensure that they are adequate (on paper), and that they are complied with in reality.

To obtain a copy of RI Hospital's staffing plans , go to www.unap.org/rihospital/staffingplans or call the Union.

UNAP negotiates health insurance refund

RI Hospital has reached an agreement with the UNAP to refund overpayments made by employees for health insurance between February, 2003 and September, 2005. All eligible employees will receive the refund in a separate check in the first pay period in April.

The refund is based on a surplus that resulted from changes in the health plan benefit design (e.g., the three-tier prescription plan and mail-order), as well as savings from the Lifespan Health Plan becoming self-insured.

Of the total surplus, 90% is being paid out this year, and the remaining 10% will be paid out in 2007 -- either as a cash rebate or as a "credit" against future premium increases. We are very pleased that the efforts of our joint labor-management health plan team has successfully controlled costs for our members, while protecting our benefit package.

The rebate will be paid to employees who were covered by the health plan as of September 30, 2005 and who were still employed as of March 15, 2006, as follows:

Coverage as of 9/30/05	Approximate refund *
Individual	\$175
Dual	\$350
Family	\$420

* Actual amounts may be slightly higher

Speak out for safe patient care at the State House on Wednesday, March 22

All UNAP members are urged to continue the fight to protect patients and caregivers on:

Wednesday, March 22
3:00 - 6:00 PM (come any time)
State House

3:00 - 5:00 PM Safe Patient Handling Equipment Fair
Equipment vendors will be present so that legislators can see how the use of proper equipment can protect caregivers and patients from injuries caused by manually lifting, transferring, and repositioning patients.

3:00 - 6:00 PM Senate and House Hearings
Mandatory Overtime (H-6918 and S-2102)

This bill will put a stop to the dangerous practice of mandatory overtime, except in true emergencies.

3:00 - Senate hearing (Room 212) *
4:30 - House hearing (Room 135)

Safe Patient Handling (H-7386 and S-2760)
This bill will require all health care facilities to establish Safe Patient Handling programs.

4:30 - Senate hearing (Room 212)
4:30 - House hearing (Room 212)

* location subject to change



In other news...

Overtime scheduling -- a clarification

The Union has resolved a long-standing source of confusion regarding the scheduling of overtime. In accordance with our contract, extra hours may be assigned by straight time before overtime, **but there is no requirement to assign time and ½ before double time.**

Per diem positions

An agreement has been signed by the Union and the Hospital to increase the per diem experience requirement to two years for Registered Nurses. In addition, the number of per diem positions for each unit/department should be communicated to employees in the applicable area. There is no longer a general hiring freeze for per diems.

Don't scrap your scrubs! (donate them to those in need)

From March 15 - April 15, the Union will be collecting your new or used scrubs to donate to The Clothing Collaborative at Dorcas Place, which provides work clothes for low income Rhode Islanders who are training to enter the health care workforce. Look for our collection boxes in the cafeteria and in locations throughout the Hospital.

The Susan McGuire-Pizzo Memorial Scholarship

Each year, our Union honors the memory of RI Hospital RN and Union leader Sue McGuire-Pizzo by awarding a scholarship to a RI Hospital employee who aspires to overcome personal hardship and adversity by pursuing an educational path leading to a career as a health professional. To apply, or for more information, go to www.unap.org/scholarships or call the Union.

Continuing Education programs from the UNAP / RI Hospital Health Care Education Trust

Avian Flu: A guide to planning and pandemics
Wednesday, March 29 • 6:00-7:30 PM
UNAP office • 375 Branch Avenue, Providence
Free

Speakers:

Leonard Mermel, DO, Infection Control, RI Hospital
Candie Cook, RN, MS Emergency Preparedness, RIDH
Jim Celenza, MS, Director RICOSH

* Approval pending from RISNA/ANCC for 1.8 contact hours.

HIPAA: What you don't know *can* hurt you!
Thursday, April 13 • 12:30-2:30 AND 4:00-6:00
RI Hospital George Auditorium
Free (\$25 will be charged to conference reimbursement bank)

Speakers:

William Kirkpatrick, Director, Clinical Social Work, RIH
Robert Sayers, Sr. Compliance/Privacy Auditor, Lifespan
Reid Coleman, MD, Medical Director, Lifespan I.S.

* Approval pending from RISNA/ANCC for 2.4 contact hours.

