



UNION NURSE



NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE-TEXAS • NATIONAL NURSES UNITED

JUNE 2013

NNOC-TEXAS STATE MEETING DECIDES TO ISSUE: STAFFING REPORT CARD

Later this fall NNOC-Texas intends to release a report on collective bargaining and hospital staffing based on our experiences at all NNOC-Texas organized hospitals. Union contracts at both Tenet and HCA-affiliated hospitals provide for Professional Practice Committees with specified powers, and Staffing Committees that can implement adjustments in staff levels. Additionally, at all NNOC facilities, nurses use the power of collective ADOs to expose situations that are unsafe for patients.

As we know, the Texas legislature and the Texas Hospital Association have so far vehemently opposed

mandated RN-to-patient staffing ratios. Sooner or later Texas, the second largest state, will catch up to California, the largest state, on this issue. But until then, conscientious nurses rely on collective bargaining and collective patient advocacy to address patient care staffing concerns.

Patients will of course be interested in learning the results of nurses' organized efforts to maintain and improve quality care. A number of state senators, representatives and agencies have expressed interest in using our report to inform legislation and regulation.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AT ALL THREE NNOC-TENET HOSPITALS

Bargaining to renew the union contract at Cypress Fairbanks Medical Center in Houston opened in May while first contract negotiations will continue this month at both Sierra Medical Center and Providence Memorial Hospital in El Paso. The NNOC committees are coordinating their bargaining by frequent conference calls and joint meetings.



TOP RIGHT: *Joint Providence-Sierra FBC meeting.*

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Sierra nurses present signatures of the majority of nurses in support of NNOC bargaining goal to the management bargaining team.*



HEALTHCARE CEO PAY ONCE AGAIN HIGHEST OF ALL CEOS—PROVIDENCE RN PAY, NOT SO MUCH

The negotiating committee at Providence Memorial recently analyzed the wage data supplied by the company. They found the company paying 216 different wage rates to their 440 RNs. The pay rates have no obvious correlations to years of experience or the value of nursing, and of course are low, ranging from \$23.42 to \$45.19 an hour. Meanwhile in the front offices, median healthcare CEO pay topped all other industries—even financial—at \$11.1 million a year.

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ROUND UP OF RN ACTION



RNs testify in Austin for passage of ratios and the right to advocate. **FROM LEFT:** RNs Kelly Miller, Luis Velez, State Rep. Coleman (D-Houston), and Kelly Green.



Nurse Rep Cheryl Gonzales (Del Sol MC, Wound Care Unit) (**LEFT**) has been a leader in protesting company-proposed cuts in Short Term Disability, evidenced by the many Wound Care nurses (**RIGHT**) wearing band aid stickers (from left: RNs Gina Beverly, Elizabeth Montelongo, Angela Tercero, and Diana Gutierrez).



El Paso RNs at State Rep. Beto Cook's town hall meeting.

SOME U.S. HISTORY TO KNOW:

Mary Harris (Mother) Jones was a fearless fighter for workers' rights and women's independence. In the early 1900s she led strikes and organizing drives, advising women to organize independently of men and to "shorten their skirts and march." When she was mocked in the U.S. Senate as the "grandmother of all agitators" she responded that she would someday like to be known as the "great-grandmother of all agitators." As she is. She taught us that movements are theaters of battle, that strategy matters, and that unions can be vehicles for workers' power, not just for a contract. **Learn more:** visit the website motherjonesmuseum.org or read "The Autobiography of Mother Jones" (\$6.95 at akpress.org).

RN Elected Texas Governor—Or Maybe Not (Yet)



ABOVE: RN Luis Velez (Providence Memorial Hospital) taking a break in the statehouse after testifying on behalf of NNOC's ratio legislation.

