

## Contract bargaining update #2

Dear Members:

As the hospital cites financial woes and the patient beds remain full, the hospital cannot give us a plan to address the approaching summer staffing shortage. Last night, management spoke of the need to reduce the number of travelers without a plan to fill those positions or an update on Incentive Pay, which expires on May 1.

VFNHP's proposal to increase the minimum wage for all hospital employees to \$20 was flatly rejected by the hospital, citing these employees are not part of the bargaining unit. VFNHP maintains this wage point is essential for the provision of high-quality safe patient care.

The hospital had 3 weeks to review the 34 proposals and responded to just eight. Our proposals are focused on retaining the talent we have, recruiting nurses and providing a work-life balance to keep our nurses in Vermont. We need a response to these important ideas, including:

- Increased differentials for shifts, PD, float, resource, new differential for units w/ high percentage of travelers, new Charge/Preceptor differential (\$5.00/each). *Management proposed Charge differential at \$3.00 and Preceptor differential at \$2.50.*
- Additional proposal for ED safety w/ \$12/hr differential, until strenuous safety measures in place.
- 10% increase or \$20/hour (whichever is higher) for ancillary and technical professional staff.
- Increased CTO and retirement accruals and "top step" bonus distribution across the 26 pay periods, to avoid bonus tax and better reflect a pay increase.
- Decreased healthcare premiums. Increased educational funds/ reimbursements and loan forgiveness, in addition to free tuition at UVM.

Additionally, VFNHP proposed significant improvements for nurse educators including a nurse educator career ladder, additional conference time, certification and educational funding, premium compensation for flexing to patient facing role and a central nurse educator position to onboard and mentor new nurse educators.

We need our members to fight with us to improve patient safety through these important recruitment & retention ideas. Bargaining resumes Wednesday May 4 at 17:00.

In solidarity,

Jess Kilpatrick, RN