

Article 20 – Staffing

High quality patient care and service excellence is the shared goal of UVMMC and VFNHP. UVMMC and VFNHP agree that staffing UVMMC with the appropriate number of skilled, reliable employees is an essential element for the provision of quality patient care and service excellence. Additionally, the healthcare professionals and the administration working in the only academic health center in Vermont recognize their societal obligation to provide safe, high quality care to patients who seek care at UVMMC.

UVMMC and the VFNHP agree that patient care should be patient centered, always according the patient the highest respect and acknowledging the individual as an informed, discriminating consumer. Care is competent, effective and collaborative. It respects the patient's values, preferences and needs. UVMMC and the VFNHP also agree that department staffing must consider the importance of ensuring that the quality of the employee's work life is appropriate, based on findings where it has been shown that the quality of work life has an impact on the quality of care delivered.

To that end, the Staffing Committee established by the July 10, 2003 Collective Bargaining Agreement with nurses shall be enlarged to include two (2) representative from this bargaining unit and two (2) administrators of employees in this bargaining unit.

In addition, if UVMMC and the VFNHP agree that it would be beneficial for a department to have a council or committee, UVMMC and the VFNHP will meet to set up the parameters for such a council or committee.

UVMMC shall continue to work with the VFNHP to ensure that written policies, procedures and protocols affecting staffing are reviewed with the VFNHP and are readily available to bargaining unit employees.

In the event that any bargaining unit employee believes in their professional opinion she/he has been given an assignment that is unsafe, or that in their opinion endangers patient care, jeopardizes compliance or compromises professional standards they will immediately notify their supervisor or designee. The supervisor or designee will review the assignment at that time. If the bargaining unit employee disagrees with the review of the assignment, she or he will work as directed and may do so under protest. She/he may fill out a "Concern Form" which will be provided by the VFNHP. It will reflect the bargaining unit employee's name, shift, department, supervisor she/he submitted the form to, the date and description of the incident, and the supervisor's response. Nothing in this paragraph shall limit the rights of bargaining unit employees under the Healthcare Whistleblower's Protection Act, 21 V.S.A. § 507.