



**Berkshire
Medical Center, Inc.**
BERKSHIRE HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.

725 North Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 447-2000

May 3, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

We are pleased to report that the April 25th negotiating session between the hospital and the MNA was respectful and cordial. Unfortunately, however, there was little to no progress made toward settlement. The MNA bargaining committee listed their objections to our time limited offer from February 22nd, all of which pertained to staffing, wages and insurance.

The committee stated that the hospital's proposed adjustment to the premium contribution for individual coverage will impact nurses at varying degrees dependent on their hourly commitment, even if the full-time equivalent cost is about \$20 per week. The committee also continued to move forward on their CTL/charge nurse proposal, a proposal that the hospital has declined several times. Although our objective is to ensure that CTLs/charge nurses and staff nurses working in those roles do not have patient assignments whenever it is reasonable for them to be free of such an assignment, the Medical Center cannot agree to any proposal that would strictly limit CTLs and nurses from taking such assignments. The MNA demanded and we promptly provided detailed assignment information demonstrating that, over the 6 month period the union requested, we were able to meet our patient-free goal about 95% of the time. Nevertheless, all nurses' first priority, regardless of their primary role, is to ensure patients are cared for at the bedside.

As you may remember, on February 22nd, the hospital put forth a time-limited proposal that added a fourth year to the new contract so that it would run until the end of September 2020 and added the following enhancements:

- 14% increases over 4 years, with 1% retroactive from October 1, 2017.
- Base rate increases ranging from \$9,500 to \$13,000 per year over the 4 years of the proposed contract.
- Top of scale 2% lump sum in years 2 and 3 and an additional step at top of scale in year 4 that would be the equivalent of a 2% increase.
- On-call pay at \$4.00 on top of applicable regular pay rate (\$4.50 for holidays).
- Evening differential increases to \$2.10 (from the current \$1.25), replacing the bonus system for evening commitments and extending the enhanced differential to all nurses working the evening shift.
- Night differential increases to \$3.50 (from the current \$2.00), replacing the bonus system for night commitments and extending the enhanced differential to all nurses working the night shift.

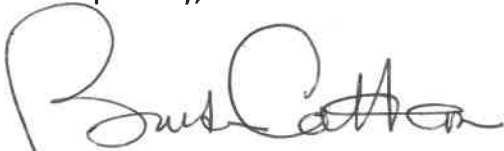
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- Advancement differential for nurses achieving BSN/MSN increases to \$2.00 (from the current \$1.00) constituting a \$2,080 increase per year, beginning in year 4 of the proposed contract.
- Commitment by management to hold the current RN staffing grids through September 30, 2020 (assuming a four-year contract).
- Continued commitment by management to avoid assignments when reasonably possible for charge nurses and clinical team leaders.

Our next bargaining date is May 25, 2018. We are hopeful that we will reach agreement by the end of that session. We have made it clear that our current, time-limited offer will otherwise be withdrawn at that time, as it will be if we receive a strike notice.

Thank you for the continued clinical focus, dedication and compassion that you bring to the care of our patients.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda Cadorette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "C".

Brenda Cadorette MSN, RN, NEA-BC