



HPAE LOCAL 5030 Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS
OF HPAE LOCAL 5030 AT
HACKENSACK UMC AT PALISADES

PALISADES PAPARAZZI

October 2020

In this struggle against the CoVid-19 pandemic, we have lost friends and colleagues, Nancy, and Alfredo, who were very close to all of us and fought every day to make their local union strong. We have all grieved and continue to grieve in our own ways during these difficult days. Many of our members are suffering from the physical and emotional stress and we want you to know that there is help all you have to do is reach out and ask and we will make sure you are provided with the help you need to overcome this. This is a time for all of us to support one another, remember those we have lost and continue to provide safe care for our patients. No one could have predicted what we have went through during this pandemic and it seemed that our members were at the epicenter of this pandemic when it hit. Our members stepped up when we collected money to help the families of those that we lost and each of you did your part and we cannot thank you enough. We fought HMH every step of the way to make sure our members had the PPE they needed to be safe and we filed the OSHA complaints when they did not. OSHA has found that Palisades had serious violations and they are now facing the penalties of those complaints that were filed on your behalf. We must continue to be vigilant, God forbid we see another upswing this Fall in CoVid, so that our members our protected along with our patients. As CNA's, RN's, LPN's, Techs, PCT's, housekeepers, dietary workers, maintenance workers, lab workers, mental health workers, we have all put our lives on the line during this pandemic because that is what we do, we do it for our patients and we will continue to do that or more to protect and serve you, the members. Each of you have a voice in this local union because you are the union. We will be stronger if we stand together to support one another. Thank you for all you have done and will continue to do.

Mickie Miquiabas – President
Bruce DeMercurio – Vice-President
Ryan Hannagan – Treasurer
Cora Matos – Secretary
Vivian InFante – Co-Grievance Chair RN/Pro
Ruth Agosto – Co-Grievance Chair LPN/Tech & Service and Maintenance

LAB TO BE SUBCONTRACTED TO QUEST

The local union was notified on July 23rd that the lab work was going to be subcontracted to quest under Article 21 of the collective bargaining agreement. This is to affect all lab work across all HMH facilities. We have a contract in place at Palisades that has a successorship clause which states that a new employer must recognize the union and bargain with them. We are lucky that we have a union in place so that we can bargain over the conditions of employment with Quest and effect bargaining with HMH prior to this happening unlike the non-union hospitals. Your local union on July 23rd presented a letter to HMH/ Palisades and demanded to bargain over the effects of the proposed outsourcing. We meet with HMH on October 2nd and are scheduled to meet again on October 9th. The subjects of the bargaining have included but is not limited to, severance pay, payment of accrued PTO and other benefits and similar issues. We have also meet with Quest 3 times and are scheduled to meet again with them on October 7th to continue to bargain with them to protect our members as they transition to this new employer. Quest and recognized HPAE as the union to represent these members and we will continue to do so. We have been discussing with Quest the non-economic issues for a new contract and Quest has stated that they agree with 95% of what we have in our current contract for lab members. It is the unions position that are members will maintain their current wages or better along with current or better health insurance as we move to Quest. Step 1 of this process was to take place on September 30 but has been pushed back until November 13th as we continue to bargain with both HMH and Quest. The effective date of this transition is January 1, 2021. We represent the Histologists, Medical Techs, Lab Techs and Phlebotomists in the lab and have been communicating with those members via zoom as these bargaining proceeds and will continue to do so. Please show support for your sisters and brothers in the lab as we bargain over the details of this transition.

OSHA COMPLAINTS FILED BY YOUR UNION AGAINST HACKENSACK MERIDIAN HEALTH DURING CoVID – 19 PANDEMIC TO PROTECT OUR MEMBERS AND YOUR PATIENTS

As most of you are aware and received the following e mail from Bob Garrett below, we wanted you to hear HP AE's side of the story and what our members faced as you went through during this pandemic. Your union filed several OSHA complaints against Hackensack Meridian Health for their failure to provide proper PPE for our members and to provide fit testing to our members. Your union has been fighting since day one of this pandemic to make sure that you were protected while Hackensack Meridian Health made excuses and would not listen to what the union was saying. Instead of creating a partnership between both HP AE and HMH during this pandemic HMH chose to ignore the union. The union had to fight to make sure not only was our members provided with the proper PPE but that they also receive CoVid 19 testing, which HMH did not provide at first. We will continue to hold HMH accountable and to make sure our members are protected as this pandemic continues.

Bob Garretts e mail to our members.

"During this unprecedented pandemic, Hackensack Meridian Health has led the way in innovation, resourcefulness and ensuring the protection of our patients and all of you. Our front-line teams innovated on the spot to enhance safety, including making hundreds of face shields daily from 3D printers to protect our heroes fighting this global menace.

Our network was the first in the state to require universal masking in hospitals and the first in the state to implement universal testing of team members who worked in long-term care facilities before New Jersey mandated such protections.

Our teams sourced the globe for vital Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and through our network command center, which operated 24/7, we effectively marshalled gowns, N-95 masks, gloves and more throughout the network as needed. Our clinical leaders also updated front-line teams in real time on rapidly changing protocols from the CDC regarding proper use of PPE.

Despite this extraordinary response, the HP AE union filed complaints with OSHA alleging we failed to adequately

protect you, our front-line team members, who are the backbone of our organization.

Let me be clear: we are 100 percent committed to protecting our heroes at the front lines. We are taking multiple steps to ensure adequate supply of PPE. At this point, we have more than 90 days of supplies including gowns, gloves, N-95 masks, surgical masks, face shields and other essential protection. We are working toward the goal of having a 6-month supply of all PPE and are sourcing the globe to do so.

Please note that we are aggressively fighting these accusations. We stand by our proven record of protecting all of you, especially during the most challenging health crisis our nation has faced in a century.

As many of you know, we have received citations regarding team member protections at The Harborage and Palisades Medical Center. We anticipate more as the union has filed complaints at other hospitals and nursing homes in the network"

Here are the facts and the SERIOUS VIOLATIONS that OSHA found in doing their investigation against HMH after the union filed complaints against HMH in the work-related deaths of our members.

Alfredo Pabatao – Transporter

"The employer required Transport Aides to wear N-95 respirators when transporting and positioning patients including those under investigation and/or confirmed as CoVid-19 positive. However, the employer did not provide employees with a medical evaluation to ensure that they were capable of safely wearing such respirators."

- **No initial fit test was done**
- **No annual fit test prior to March 2020**

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

Other than Serious violations that OSHA found HMH violated:

- A transport aide died of SAR CoV2 coronavirus disease on March 26, 2020, and HMH failed to report this fatality to OSHA
- HMH did not record each work-related fatality, injury or illness case that resulted in the general recording criteria on the OSHA 300 form

Nancy Martell – CNA/PCT in ED

“The employer required CNA to wear N-95 respirators when caring for patients including those under investigation and/or confirmed as CoVid-19 positive. However, the employer did not provide employees with a medical evaluation to ensure that they were capable of safely wearing such respirators.”

- **No initial fit test was done**

Hackensack Meridian Health Palisades was issued substantial penalties from OSHA for these violations but Mr. Garrett has reassured the employees that he will fight these violations and that is comforting to know that he is going to fight this instead of admitting wrong. It is the unions hope that instead HMH will accept that they failed to provide the proper fit testing to their employees and that he will work with HPAE to make sure this never happens again. The union still has outstanding complaints against Palisades that OSHA has not yet finished investigating and we will keep you informed once that is complete.

ZOOM UNIT MEETINGS

As we continue to maneuver through this pandemic, we have not been able to hold in-person membership meetings and will not do so until we are past it. We have been holding Zoom meetings for units that requested them and so far, have held them with the Lab, Radiology and Housekeeping. If the members wish to hold a Zoom meeting with the local leadership and our Rep. Richie Halfacre please let us know and we will get it set up. Those we have held so far have been productive and if helps to keep the line of communications going.



The General Election takes place on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020

Visit the HPAE Election Center 2020 at www.hpae.org/campaigns/election-center-2020

GRIEVANCES & ARBITRATIONS

Ruth Agosto and Vivian Infante Co-Grievance Chairs

If you have an issue or a contract violation it is of the utmost importance that you contact us so that we can investigate and file a grievance if one is warranted.

We have settled several grievances during the pandemic, and we continued to meet with management during this time to make sure all grievances and issues were addressed in a timely manner.

Arbitrations – the arbitration on 1.5x after 40 hours when working a holiday was supposed to take place on September 22nd and as always management ask for an extension and was granted it by the arbitrator. The arbitrator has submitted a new date of November 4 which the union accepted, and we are waiting on managements reply.

Health Insurance arbitration Article 26 (changes made last year were not reasonably comparable) was set for Thursday, October 1st. Management said they needed an extension to prepare, even though they have had over a year, and a conference call was held with the arbitrator who was hesitant to grant the extension, due to our argument that it is harmful to our members financially, but offered new dates of November 6th or 12th for management to accept. If management fails to accept the union is prepared to file an injunction to stop any changes to the 2021 health insurance plan. We have also put in an information request for the health insurance summary description for 2021 to management.

Article 17 arbitration new hires hiring in at a higher rate – we held the open statements back on February 19th the second day of hearing was to happen in March then the pandemic hit but the 2nd day of hearings are scheduled for October 29th.

Retiree Medical Trust

Please contact the Retiree Medical Trust with any questions

TARA FISHER
Zenith American Solutions
140 Sylvan Avenue, Ste. 303
Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
P 201-947-8000 / F 201-947-9192
qcarter@zenith-american.com

PTO Carryover for 2020 due to CoVid-19

Team members will be allowed to carry over all accrued PTO time on their anniversary this year on an exception basis. Here is the info:

Any team member with an anniversary date of April 1 – December 31, 2020 will automatically have all unused hours carried over to the next anniversary year and do not need to complete a request for an exception.

An audit was also done since PeopleSoft went into effect on March 24, 2019, and the union filed a grievance on our members behalf that were affected by a loss of PTO. The PTO 3rd step grievance with HMH corporate was held on Monday the 28th and we are waiting on managements answer. So, if you know of anyone that has had PTO issues with their hours, we need their names ASAP.

WORKER'S COMP CLAIMS DURING CoVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Governor signed the Workers Comp bill that will give added protection and benefit to our members

1. Please notify us if you were denied WC as related to contacting COVID-19.
2. Please notify us if you were made to use personal benefit time they used as related to contacting COVID-19.

Incentive Rewards and CoVid-19 Hero's Pay increase

During these troubling times we continued to make proposal to Hackensack Meridian Health to compensate our members for the extraordinary work you have done during this pandemic to make sure patients get the care they need all along while putting your life on the line.

- Surge pay from April to May for those that picked up extra shifts
- A 1.5% pay increase to your base rate
Incentive rewards that was paid on September 18th - \$1,000 for FT, \$350 for PT and \$150 for PD

The local union will continue to fight for more HERO's pay for our members

NEW LOCAL 5030 EMAIL

THE LOCAL UNION HAS STARTED A NEW E MAIL ADDRESS SO THAT IF YOU HAVE ISSUES OR PROBLEMS YOU CAN E MAIL US SO THAT WE CAN FOLLOW UP RIGHT AWAY. YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT US BY PHONE OR IN PERSON AS ALWAYS BUT WE FELT BY CREATING THIS NEW E MAIL IT WOULD HELP WITH COMMUNICATIONS. THE NEW E MAIL IS: 5030_LEB@hpae.org