



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The time has come for me to step down as President of our local. It has been a true journey, both learning everything I needed to know about the president's role and being able to serve all of you. My last official day is August 14th.

It is time for me to spend quality time with my family and my grandchildren. Time to take it easy and enjoy life. Just want you all to know I am not retiring. Our Executive Board has voted and appointed one of our VPs to become the next President of our Local. We have been working with her to get her ready to take over the reins. Not only did we elect this person, but she also wants to step into this role.

That person is Tiffany Powell. Tiffany works on P8. She is young, motivated, tech savvy, and comes with great ideas on how to move our Local forward. I will always be around to help when needed. It is a new and great contract, and it is time for fresh faces with innovative ideas. So, look for your next robo call to be from Tiffany.

I will miss doing the work for our Union both at the State level and our local level. Before I end, I would like to remind everyone about the 50th Anniversary of HPAE and the convention we will be having in Atlantic City. I encourage you all to come. You will leave the convention with a broader perspective of what our Union is about and what it means to be a Union member. Please go to [www.hpae.org](http://www.hpae.org) for more details. CE's will be offered.

Hope to see there!

In Solidarity,

**Doris Bell, RN**

President Local 5118

## WELCOME TO THE LOCAL EXECUTIVE BOARD, CAROLYN

Hello! My name is Carolyn Ali. I decided to rejoin the LEB. I previously served on our LEB as a VP between 2017 and 2019 and helped negotiate three of our Union contracts, including our most recent 2024 contract. I have also been a union rep for the past ten years. I will eventually be taking over as treasurer for our local.

I work day shift on Pavilion 5. I have been at Cooper for over twenty years. I am truly excited to again be a member of our Local Executive Board. I will be covering the following areas, Pav 5, MDA Camden and Voorhees, Radiology/Oncology in Camden, and Voorhees and PICC.

Coming off a strong contract campaign, we have endless opportunities to move our Local forward in a commanding way. The momentum was amazing during negotiations, we need to keep it going!! We must show the hospital how strong we are and how strong we will continue to be!

We have eight incredible nurses on our LEB from different areas of the hospital. We would love to have additional nurses become union reps, sit on one of our several committees and help by being a work area leader on your unit. If you are interested, please reach out to an officer on the LEB for more information.

I am grateful for this opportunity to continue to fight for our rights as Union nurses. Feel free to reach out to me or any of the officers anytime with questions or concerns.

In solidarity,

**Carolyn Ali BSN RN**

## WELCOME TO THE LEB, LISA

Hi. My name is Lisa Calabrese. I came to Cooper in 2018 and started on night shift in the ICU. From there I ventured to day shift in the PACU and most recently transferred to the OR holding area. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family, vacationing, cooking and anything PHILLIES!

I was a member of our most recent negotiating committee which enlightened me about what it means to be in an Union. Because of that experience I decided to become an Officer on our Local Executive Board. I have a much clearer understanding of why it is so important to continue to strengthen our local union. Without your support and active participation, we would not have been as successful as we were during our negotiations.

I accept the challenges ahead of us and look forward to working with all of you.

In Solidarity, **Lisa**

## WELCOME TO THE LEB, TIFFANY

To the Members of OUR Local:

My name is Tiffany Powell, I'm a surgical intermediate nurse on P8. I have been employed at Cooper for the last year and half, but my journey in healthcare started fourteen years ago. Advocating for the rights of nurses, my fellow co-workers have become second nature to me for a long time so stepping up to be on our LEB was a no brainer.

Becoming an Officer on the LEB feels like I have found my place in life. To be included in such a great strong local that continues to make powerful moves for a better future for all of us, there is no other place I would rather be.

I am eager to learn. And I am eager to share my ideas and put my skills to work for the benefit of our membership. I will be diligent in my role to ensure solidarity and a sense of community between our leadership and our members.

I can assure you that our voices will be heard. We must continue to fight the fight!

I look forward to working with all of you in my new role.

In solidarity – *Tiffany*

## WELCOME TO THE LEB, ALEX

My name is Alexandria Boffo, Alex for short, and I am a surgical intermediate nurse on Pavilion 8. Although the floor I work on can be extremely stressful and demanding, most days I wouldn't trade it for anything. I get to work with some of the most amazing nurses and surgeons and the teamwork that we have is unrivaled. In fact, I wouldn't be writing this right now if it wasn't for one of the most incredible nurses, co-worker, and best friend, Tiffany Powell. Her passion to stand up for those who feel like they don't have a voice has led us where we are today, the newest members of the LEB.

Watching the contract negotiations, week after week, it opened my eyes to how much time, effort, and fight our LEB Officers put in to ensuring that bargaining unit nurses have safe staffing ratios, competitive pay, protection against violence, and so much more. Their hard work is inspiring, and I am proud to be a part of this LEB.

I look forward to future progress and spearheading our new Member Mobilization Team. I hope to inspire many of you to be more involved in our union and what happens beyond our Local.

Thank you to all the board members who were so welcoming, and I look forward to working with each one of them.

In Solidarity, *Alex*



**HPAE 2024 Convention:** We, as healthcare workers, have stood the test of time and now we look forward to setting our agenda for the future at the **2024 HP AE Convention**, "Fifty Years of Victories for Patients and Workers." Our union has much to celebrate, and it is the victories of our past that will lift us into the next fifty years strengthening and building our union as we move forward.

**October 17, 2024 - October 18, 2024**  
**Tropicana Atlantic City, 2831 Boardwalk, Atlantic City**

Copy the link to register- [bit.ly/hpae50yrs](https://bit.ly/hpae50yrs)

## GRIEVANCE CORNER

Since the ratification of our contract, we have filed several grievances under Article 33 33.2 staffing guidelines for Medical Surgical/ Telemetry and Oncology - average ratios 1:4- 5. Several units had RNs at 1:6 and therefore violated our new language. The ADO (Assignment Despite Objection) form was filled out by the nurses and the grievances were filed.

The ADO forms need to be filled out when we are over the stated ratios and/or our patient workload is too heavy or unsafe. After you complete the ADO, place the completed form in one of the union mailboxes. They are reviewed and, if appropriate, a grievance is filed, or it is brought to the staffing committee to review with the hospital. These forms can be found on your units and/ or @ hpae.org.

If you feel that Cooper violated our Union contract, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss the situation. We have ten business days from the day of the incident to file a grievance. Do not wait until the last minute or we may be out of the timeline to submit the grievance.

Our goal is to have a Union Rep in every unit/department which includes the outpatient areas. Work areas have their own specific issues and concerns. The best way to address them is to have a Union Rep in the unit/ department who can articulate the issue.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Rep, please contact me for more information at [annmcc@comcast.net](mailto:annmcc@comcast.net) or at 609-876-9721.

**Ann McCausland, RN**  
Grievance Chair

## GET TO KNOW OUR NEW CONTRACT LANGUAGE

We completed the review of our new contract language with Cooper. And we are gathering the necessary signatures. The document will then be formatted, reviewed one more time then sent to the printer. As soon as it is formatted, we will post it on our web page. We will let you know when it is posted.

In addition to our new wages, the new staffing language, the inception of the RN Workplace Safety and Violence Prevention language, and health benefit language below is a summary of other new contract language:

- ❖ Baylor definition now includes Friday/Saturday day shifts for the OR and PACU.
- ❖ Baylor is now eligible for holiday pay.
- ❖ Retiree pool is defined as fifteen total years as a Bargaining Unit nurse.
- ❖ The Float Nurse 1 and Float Nurse 2 positions are clearly defined, as well as the holiday tracks.
- ❖ When a holiday falls on your required weekend, it counts as your required weekend and holiday.
- ❖ Units with set weekends. For a pre-approved vacation, try and find weekend coverage. If you cannot, vacation time will be approved by the leadership, and they will assign a make-up weekend shift.
- ❖ On holidays, you will not be floated off your unit to give another nurse LCPTO.
- ❖ Language for New to Practice Nurses remains the same, you cannot be floated for ninety days. If you sign up for overtime or extra time outside of your unit, you can be floated within your float districts. The New to Practice two-year requirement to stay on your unit ended on May 31. The residency Program will continue.
- ❖ We must sign up for overtime and extra time hours through the staffing office.
- ❖ If we leave the bargaining unit, we have ninety days to return to the bargaining unit without any loss of seniority.

If you have any questions about any of the new language in the contract, please feel free to contact a Union Officer or Union Rep.

## NEW STAFFING LANGUAGE

We have new staffing ratios in our Union contract for specific areas. Med surg/tele/oncology is at 1:4/5 average and adult Crit Care is 1:2. The 1:2 is for all critical patients, no matter where they are in the hospital. We know the hospital has budgeted 1:4 for the medical surgical, telemetry and oncology areas. We also know they have not figured out how to retain nurses to meet the stated ratios. **This is their responsibility. If you are given a patient assignment higher than 1:5, please contact our grievance chair, Ann McCausland or any Officer to discuss the situation. And complete the ADO form.**

Medical Surgical: The ratio 1:4/5 average came about, because not all floors have an even amount of patient beds to be divided by four, and there would always be a few nurses at 1:5. This is where the word "average" comes into play. Again, we should not be at a 1:6 ratio. When you complete the ADO form, include a copy of the assignment sheet, indicate who are Cooper nurses and who are agency/traveler, and a note if a CNM is present. This information is important for us to determine if a violation occurred. We discuss very ADO at our Staffing Committee meetings.

Critical Care: All admitted adult critical care patients should be at a 1:2, no matter where the patients are physically in the hospital. We knew this was an established practice, but wanted it written in our contract. We proposed this ratio for pediatric patients. The hospital repeatedly rejected the proposal. Again, if a Cooper nurse is above this ratio in a critical care setting, please make a copy of the assignment sheet noting which nurses are Cooper nurses and let a union officer know.

**We fought hard for this language. We must hold Nursing Administration Accountable.**

*Brittany Cucunato, RN, VP*  
Co-Chair Staffing Committee



## UPDATES AND REMINDERS

- ❖ New Contract and Unit Binders will be Royal Blue in Color!! \*\* The binders will include our new union contract, Union Rep contact information, blank ADO forms, a chart of the work areas that each LEB Officer covers, LEB contact information and some other Union information.

When the unit binders are complete, the LEB will be coming around to place them on the units and in the outpatient areas.

- ❖ When you cancel an extra or OT shift make sure to give proper notice. It is twenty-four hours for weekday shifts and forty-eight hours for weekend shifts (Friday 7P-Sunday 7P)

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A Newsletter for the members of  
HPAE Local 5118 at Cooper Hospital

110 Kinderkamack Road  
Emerson, NJ 07630  
Phone: 201-262-5005  
www.hpae.org



## UPDATES AND REMINDERS *(continued from page 3)*

- ❖ Make sure if you work Labor Day that the hospital does not float you to give a nurse working in another unit off. This is a change to the new contract.
- ❖ Cooper competencies and CLNs that are required. Please complete and turn in any documents to your management team by the given deadline. Many have end of summer/September deadlines. Not completing it by the deadline could result in discipline.
- ❖ We're looking for nurses to participate in the RN Safety and Violence Prevention Committee. Please reach out to a LEB Officer if you are interested in knowing more about this committee. This is a new committee separate from the hospital violence committee.  
Pat Kivlen, RN who works in the ED is chair of this committee.  
Dates/Times for rest of 2024 - All meetings start at 8:30am & will be held in the Conference Center Room 105. September 17th, October 15th, November 19th and December 17th.
- ❖ Any issues with agency nurses - please escalate with your unit management team and/or CODS.
- ❖ We still have many Nurses Week Gifts to give out - The HP AE cooler lunch bag and metal multi-tool. We are working on locations/times to give out to those who have not received it yet. We cannot give the gift out within the hospital due to the multi-tool per Cooper. Please look out for more information to come as arrangements are made.
- ❖ Cooper's merger with Cape Regional does not change anything for our Local.  
Cape Regional is already unionized with another union.
- ❖ New Pay Scale is in effect! Please review your pay stub and pay rate in iCooper. Make sure your rate is correct.
- ❖ Our Negotiating Committee thanks the Membership for all your support during our negotiations!!

### Staffing Committee Updates from April-June:

- ❖ Use of Agency hours & agency overtime hours worked has increased each month since January.

- ❖ Staff overtime hours worked has decreased each month since January.
- ❖ Opened unfilled RN positions decreased slightly - still high vacancy number. Continues to be high in all med-surg floors and ED.
- ❖ Cooper continues to bring in more agency throughout the summer months. They anticipate holes in staffing with summer vacations and call outs. There is agency in almost every unit currently.
- ❖ Make sure you are scheduling yourself for your required weekends and holidays.
- ❖ Continue to fill out the ADO forms for any 1:6 assignments.
- ❖ Inappropriate hallway patients. We have seen an increase - escalate immediately to your charge RN, unit leadership and CODs. Any issues with agency nurses should be escalated as well.
- ❖ Please let us know if there are not enough techs on your floor to help.

### Recent ADOs April - June Issues Discussed with hospital:

- Inappropriate critical care assignments
- Inappropriate ratios in CC and med/surg
- Inappropriate skill mixes on floors - too much agency and unsafe situations
- Inappropriate floating - not based on seniority. Mandation to stay.

HPAE 2024 Conference - Thursday Oct 17th and Friday Oct 18th at Tropicana in Atlantic City

Meet other nurses from different HP AE locals. Many workshops and CEU opportunities!

Register through the HP AE website!