

SNA NEWS

Fax: 575-8138

November
2009

Special points of interest:

- Election for SNA Officers 2010
- Lead Nurses w/ Patient Care Assignments
- Acuity/GRASP
- A Reminder Concerning Discipline
- Assignment Under Protest
- Ambulatory Surgery Center
- Performance Evaluations
- Health Insurance 2010
- Care Documentation

Seasons Greetings

The SNA Board extends our best wishes to you and your family for a happy, healthy holiday season.

ELECTION FOR SNA OFFICERS 2010

Included in this Newsletter is a ballot for SNA officers 2010. Please complete the ballot and mail it to the SNA office:

401A College Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Return by December 20th

We appreciate you taking the time to vote during this busy Season.

LEAD NURSES WITH PATIENT CARE ASSIGNMENTS

Here we go again!

The SNA Board is aware of the increasing number of shifts when Lead Nurses are required to take a patient care assignment for all or part of a shift due to short staffing.

This is a violation of the contract.

Since our data may not be complete, Lead Nurses, please notify us of the date/shifts over the last few months, and going forward, when you have been required to take a patient care assignment while being Lead for the shift (no one, including a Manager, has stepped into the Lead position).



LEAD NURSES WITH PATIENT CARE ASSIGNMENTS CONT.....

SNA has already processed an association grievance on this issue. It was “heard” by an arbitrator in 2008. **The arbitrator upheld the contract** and ruled that depts./shifts (unless excepted by contract) are to be **staffed with a Lead Nurse in addition to the Nurses required to meet ratio requirements, except in an unanticipated, incidental and explainable basis!**

Given the number of shifts that violate the contract, the occurrences exceed the arbitrator’s exceptions. We are in the process of consulting with legal counsel regarding next steps. These may include returning to the arbitrator for an additional ruling.

ACUITY/GRASP

The Acuity Committee has completed the yearly review of the workload tool used by Staff Nurses to score patient acuity.

In early December, we plan to conduct a 7-day test of the updated tool in order to re-verify the reliability and validity of the tool. As in the past, every Staff Nurse must score every patient, every shift and Lead Nurses must complete the Staffing Questionnaire every shift.

If the test data indicate that patient acuity scores add up to a staffing level that is close to what Lead Nurses indicate is needed for adequate staffing, then the tool is reliable and valid.

We are aware that currently the Hospital is not providing adequate staff to meet the GRASP staffing criteria. Failure to staff to acuity is a violation of the contract.

The SNA Board has made it clear to Hospital Administration that once the work load tool has been re-validated, we will be documenting the shifts that are not staffed according to acuity criteria.

We will be calling on you to help us collect data. After presenting the data to Hospital Administration, we will be determining next steps based on their response.

A REMINDER CONCERNING DISCIPLINE

You are entitled to SNA representation for investigatory/fact finding meetings that may lead to discipline and for the meeting when discipline is administered.

A REMINDER CONCERNING DISCIPLINE CONT.....

Your Manager is required to inform you of the purpose of the meeting that she/he is requesting. They are not required to inform you of your right to SNA representation.

They are also required to give you 72hrs (business days) notice so that you have time to arrange representation. The established standard is to offer 2-3 meeting time alternatives.

If you are in need of SNA representation, please leave a message on the SNA message line 575-8853 as soon as you are notified by your Manager. Please do not agree to a meeting time without first consulting with SNA to avoid having the SNA rep double booked.

ASSIGNMENT UNDER PROTEST

A Reminder that AUP's can be filed by Staff Nurses when a work situation in unsafe.

Before filing an AUP, you must first contact your Manager/shift administrator to discuss the unsafe circumstances (e.g. staffing) and provide an opportunity for the Hospital to correct the situation.

If the situation remains unsafe, file the AUP. AUP forms can be obtained from the SNA website: www.snanews.com

You can complete the form at the end of your shift if necessary. Make sure to have the form signed by your Manager/Shift Administrator, even if it's the Shift Administrator for the next shift.

The AUP protects a Nurse's license because it provides evidence that the Nurse has met the duty of their license to inform the Hospital of an unsafe situation.

A meeting to discuss the AUP and the situation leading to the AUP would include the Dept Manager, Director, Staff Nurses and SNA rep. AUP meetings are not mandatory but may be very helpful in problem solving.

Please be certain that SNA receives a copy of the AUP via mail or fax.

AMBULATORY SURGERY CENTER

Members of the SNA Board have met with Administration to discuss the variables that could influence future staffing needs at ASC.

We are aware the Staff Nurses in the ASC have accrued many, many MROH hours (as have other specialty depts.)

Since it is not yet known to what extent the new physician owned surgery center on 4th street will affect patient volumes at ASC, or, whether some other physicians will form a joint venture with SRMH, Administration is not able to project staffing needs for the future.

We continue to monitor the situation at ASC and will be prepared to apply contract stipulations as necessary.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

On November 11, 2009, the SNA Board received the reply that was promised by Debra Miller by October 23, 2009 on the issues raised by the SNA Board regarding Hospital Administration's decision to change all Staff Nurse evaluations to May/June.

The Hospital Administration indicates that they have the right to make this change based on Art. III, Management Rights of the SNA Contract.

However, the remainder of the SNA Contract contains stipulations that limit Management Rights. For example, Art. XIV Performance Evaluations and Appendix D Employment Dates Side Letter. Both contain specifics about evaluation dates.

We cannot understand how Administration can reconcile changing all evaluation dates to May/June given these contract stipulations.

In consultation with SNA's Attorney, **we have filed an Association Grievance** against the Hospital on this issue.

HEALTH INSURANCE 2010- PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

As you review the Health Insurance part of the Benefit Enrollment Guide, be reminded that Staff Nurses are not required to pay the difference between the cost of a brand name & generic drug in addition to the brand name drug co-pay

HEALTH INSURANCE 2010- PRESCRIPTION DRUGS CONT.....

Victoria Ashley, HR verified that Staff Nurses are set up under a separate account in Express Scripts.

CARE DOCUMENTATION

Please continue to report when you are not able to complete patient care during a shift. The Care Documentation Form is on SNA's website.

We are still collecting and collating this data. We will update the Summary Report given to Administration on 9/20/09 and use this data to continue problem solving with Administration.

Kathy Hardin indicates that she has met with Nursing Directors to discuss the information in the report and will continue to do so.

So far, they have taken the following actions:

- Concentrating on staffing to matrix
- Managers to review schedules to be certain that schedules are balanced with an even number of Nurses each day
- Approved and posted 2 care partner positions. FT days & FT Noc's

The SAN Board will continue to discuss the Hospital's response to the report with Administration at least monthly. We are concerned that these measures will not be adequate to alleviate Staff Nurses inability to give appropriate patient care and we have indicated that concern.

Continued documentation of incomplete care will assist us to prove whether Administrations efforts are successful or not.

SNA OFFICER ELECTION 2010

Vice President

Stacy Lewis

Treasurer

Cathleen Lukrich

Michael Broussard

Secretary

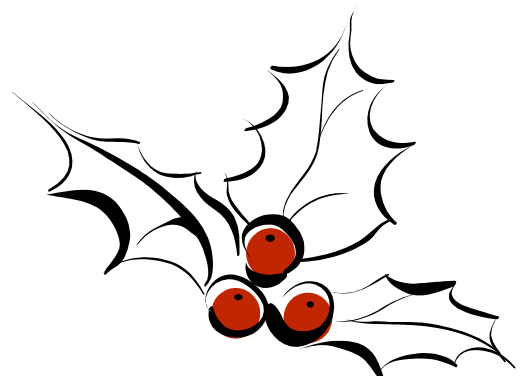
Kery Poteracke

(President is a 2 yr term
for 2009-2010)

Sue Gadbois elected in 2008

Board Member (Appointed)

Charlotte Schatz



**STAFF NURSES'
ASSOCIATION**

401A COLLEGE AVE. SANTA
ROSA, CA 95401

Phone: 575-8853

Fax: 575-8138

E-mail: snanews@sonic.net

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