



THE INFORMER

January 2016
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
by Pat Mills, RN

I hope everyone had a very merry Holiday Season and that we all enjoy a healthy and happy 2016.

Elections

Just as our country is preparing for next November; the HHNA must prepare for elections in May when the term of office for the current Board of Directors expires.

As we have done in past election years, I would like to establish a nominating committee at the January quarterly meetings that will be responsible for taking nominations at the April quarterly meetings and for overseeing an election that involves a one day commitment for voting.

If there are any members interested in running for a position on the Board, please contact me or any Board member to find out what the job description is for each of the positions.

Legal Service Plan

During the past year many members have inquired and signed-up for the Legal Service Plan. This is a low cost plan (\$10.00 a month) that entitles you and your immediate family members to discounted fees for many legal services, for example:

Services provided without legal fees include:

- Initial Consultations
- Legal Advice, Letters & Telephone Calls
- Last Will and Testaments
- Workers' Compensation Consultations
- Document Review
- Criminal Matters (up to and including arraignment)
- Adoptions of Step Children

Services provided for reduced legal fees include:

- Real Estate Closings
- Matrimonial and Family Matters
- Office of Professional Discipline
- Criminal Matters (after arraignment through trial)

(continued on the next page)

- Civil Litigation
- Estate Proceedings
- Employment Agreements
- Incorporations
- Bankruptcies
- Name Changes
- Personal Injury (reduced contingency)
- Social Security Disability (reduced contingency)

We'll answer your questions regarding this plan and will have copies of the plan document and sign-up forms available at the quarterly meetings.

Dates to Remember:

*1/12 Quarterly meetings**

*2/4 Council on Nursing Practice - noon**

*3/3 Council on Nursing Practice - noon**

3/10 Unit representative dinner meeting

*4/7 Council on Nursing Practice - noon**

*4/12 Quarterly meetings**

** Breakfast, lunch or dinner will be available and the location of the meetings will be announced.*

Leaves of Absence and The Hartford Insurance Company

by Jo Ann Pirro, RN – Treasurer

We have received complaints from members, who are either currently on leaves of absence or who at some point were on leaves of absence, regarding how they have been treated by Hartford, the company that handles leaves for NS/LIJ (Northwell Health). From what we hear, Hartford's treatment of our members is neither professional nor kind, to say the least.

We want to hear from everyone who has had any difficulty in the pursuit of a LOA. We need to hear your story so we can compile members' experiences to take to Human Resources so this problem can be resolved. If preferred, we will protect your anonymity.

You can drop a note by email at hhnanurses.org, mail to HHNA, PO Box 937, Huntington, NY or give your information to any Board member. We thank you for your cooperation.

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, that is to have succeeded.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist and poet

Become Familiar with Our New Contract

by Joan Aliperti, RN - Secretary

Perhaps the most important aspect of union membership is the ability to negotiate a contract, which is a written guarantee backed by federal law involving every aspect of your work life including practice issues, pay, insurance benefits, vacation and leave policies, hours of work and much more.

Your contract is a legally binding commitment that provides predictability, consistency and equity and takes the place of any arbitrary process management might attempt to implement. To ensure that you receive all of the rights and benefits provided by your union contract it is your responsibility to know and understand your contract. Keep a copy of it handy and refer to it any time you have a question about any aspect of your work life. Copies of our new contract will be distributed as soon as they are available. Our previous contract can be found online at www.HHNANurses.Org. Board members are frequently called with questions that can be answered by simply reading the contract.

Most important of all, don't assume your supervisor or any member of management has an appropriate understanding or knowledge of your contractual rights. If you are confused about how to interpret any aspect of your contract, seek out a member of your union for guidance. If at any time you feel that your contractual rights are being violated or that management is not following the contract, speak with a member of your negotiating committee who will assist you in filing a grievance, which is the official process for enforcing your contract rights.

Medical Insurance Choices

by Jane Hubert, RN - Second VP

As part of our new contract with Huntington Hospital we negotiated to have the right to retain our current health insurance plan: United Health Care HH Union plan. The hospital and the system tried to have HHNA members switch to the NSLIJ Value plan or the NSLIJ Buy Up plan. We, as members of HHNA, now have the ability to choose between the three plans. The Value plan is designed for those who utilize in-system providers and NSLIJ facilities. The Buy Up plan is designed for those who do not utilize in-system providers. Each of the three plans has different premiums and co-pays. There are also differences among out-of-network costs and out-of-pocket costs. The NSLIJ Value and Buy Up plans have CIGNA dental, whereas the current United Health Care plan has Delta Dental.

At negotiations it was agreed upon that if the total number of HHNA members

participating in the NSLIJ Value and Buy Up plans equals or exceeds a participation rate of ninety percent (90%) of all members who elect health benefits during 2015 or thereafter, the Employer may, at its option, eliminate the current United Health Care HH Union plan and only offer HHNA members the NSLIJ Value and Buy Up plans.

Open enrollment for the year covering 2016 has just ended. There are Life Qualifying Events that enable you to enroll outside of the open enrollment period, these include: termination, loss of spousal benefits, divorce or separation, cessation of dependent status, Medicare entitlement and disability. You must inform Human Resources of such events by contacting benefits@nshs.edu or 516-734-7000.

For further information or questions call the Human Resources Service Center at 516-734-7000 or e-mail hrrservicecenter@nshs.edu.

FYI

by Pat Mills, RN – President

License renewal

Please remember it is your responsibility to present your original signed renewed license to the Nursing Office at least 30 days before it expires.

New Hires

Several new hires inquired about malpractice insurance coverage. Although the hospital has a policy to cover all of the staff we recommend that you carry your own coverage. You can do all your research on the internet. Many of our members are insured through NSO (800-247-1500).

Patient Assignment

As you know we are in the midst of preparing for our fourth Magnet designation and part of the evaluation process by the ANCC is the scrutiny of the hospital's nurse/patient ratio. Therefore, in the event you are given an assignment that you perceive substantially deviates from the norm, please notify the Nurse Manager, Assistant Nurse Manager or the Charge person who should assess the situation. If after consultation, you still feel this is not the norm then have the NM, ANM or charge person notify the ADN or nursing Supervisor. The ADN or Supervisor should discuss the situation within 30 minutes by phone barring any emergency. If the situation remains unresolved, the ADN or Supervisor should respond in person to the unit in a reasonable amount of time, but no longer than an hour, barring any emergencies. If the Nurse continues to perceive that the assignment deviates substantially from the norm the nurse should present a written account to the VP of Nursing, the Union and to the Council on Nursing Practice for review at its next meeting.

Child Care

The Council on Nursing Practice will have this item on its agenda at the February meeting. Anyone interested in attending will be welcome; let us know if you plan to participate. Council on Nursing Practice meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at noon; lunch is available. If you have any ideas concerning this topic, but cannot attend the meeting, please call the union phone, 631-757-5206, or email us @HHNANurses.org.

You know you're a nurse if

you believe in the underwear theory of charting: keep your behind covered.

you think it is as BAD as it seems and the patients ARE out to get you.

you never trust a crash cart, drug box or airway bag to be fully stocked.

you use a plastic 30cc medicine cup for a shot glass.

you've experienced that the idiots who cause car crashes are the first ones to complain about the bumpy ambulance ride.

you believe when dealing with patients, supervisors or visitors, if it felt good saying it, it was the wrong thing to say.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

by Lisa Quintero, RN – First VP

As some of you may remember, in the winter of 2010 we had a significant snow storm that resulted in a few nurses not arriving for their shifts. Administration said they would be given an absent day and would not be able to use their benefit time which had been the practice of the hospital in the past. As a result the union filed a grievance.

The Huntington Hospital Nurses' Association and the hospital came to an agreement to solve the grievance and also set up a policy for any similar issues in the future. Those nurses involved in the 2010 snow storm were given the option to use their benefit time to cover the absence.

Going forward the hospital now has an agreed upon policy entitled "Staffing Policy During Inclement Weather":

1. Any nurse scheduled to work at the hospital during a weather emergency and who does not report to work isn't eligible to use benefit time (including personal days) to cover the absence. The unworked shift will remain unpaid.

2. If a nurse is sick and unable to report to work in a weather emergency, the nurse is required to submit an attestation form stating that he/she was sick and the hospital will utilize the nurse's sick time to cover the absence.

3. a. The parties further agree that in the event a nurse makes a good faith effort to report to work on time during a weather emergency and begins working within two hours of the scheduled start time of his/her shift, the hospital will pay the nurse as if he/she began working on time. However, if the nurse begins working more than two hours after the scheduled start time of his/her shift, the hospital will pay the nurse for the first two hours of the shift and then utilize the nurse's benefit time to cover any unworked time beyond the first two hours of the shift.

b. For example, if a nurse is scheduled to begin work at 8am during a weather emergency and he/she makes a good faith effort to report to work on time, but arrives at 9:20am, the nurse will be paid as if he/she began working at 8:00am. If, however, after making a good faith effort, the nurse arrives at 11:20am, the nurse will be paid from 8am to 10am, will use benefit time to cover the 10am to 11:20am period and then receive his/her regular pay for the balance of the day. It is the sole discretion of the hospital to determine whether the nurse has made a good faith effort to report to work on time during a weather emergency.

MEDICAL DICTIONARY FOR HEALTH CARE

ARTERY.....	the study of paintings
CAESAREAN SECTION.....	a neighborhood in Rome
D & C.....	where Washington is
G.I. SERIES.....	a soldier's ballgame
LABOR PAIN.....	getting hurt at work
NITRATES.....	cheaper than day rates
POST-OPERATIVE.....	letter carrier

COUNSEL'S REPORT

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INVESTIGATORY INTERVIEWS, DISCIPLINE AND THE NY OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE – KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

If you are required to answer questions during an investigatory interview conducted by the Hospital – YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE A HHNA REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT.

You can request HHNA representation before or at any time during the interview. And the Hospital can:

- Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives;
- Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
- Give you the choice of:
 - (a) having the interview without representation; or
 - (b) ending the interview.

If the Hospital refuses your request for HHNA representation and continues the meeting you can refuse to answer the questions.

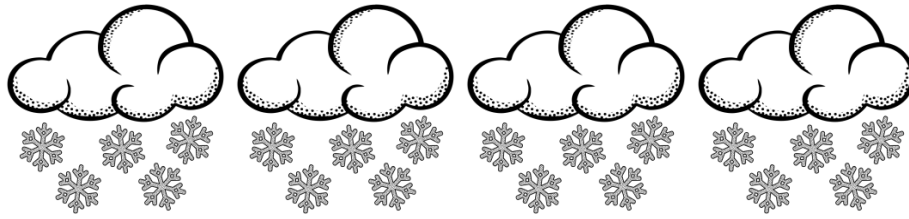
But remember these rights are **YOURS** and **YOU** must request representation in order to have your HHNA representative present. And these rights are only applicable for investigatory interviews that you reasonably believe could lead to discipline. Therefore, if the Hospital calls you in to notify you of a suspension or gives you a Progressive Discipline Written Reprimand or a Disciplinary Warning Notice you are not entitled to a HHNA representative under the law.

If you are given Progressive Discipline Written Reprimand or a Disciplinary Warning Notice and are asked to sign them, make sure you clearly write that you are only signing to acknowledge receipt of the reprimand or notice and are not admitting to the allegations contained therein. Also, once you sign this document ask for a copy and give a copy to your HHNA representative so they may review the matter with you and help you determine whether a disciplinary grievance should be filed.

As you all know, nurses need to be concerned with how a disciplinary action may affect their license. The New York State Office of Professional Discipline (OPD) is charged with investigating complaints of misconduct against nurses. If they receive a complaint against you from the Hospital one of their investigators will contact you to conduct an interview. Any oral or written statements you make at this interview could be used against you at any subsequent OPD hearing.

Be sure to contact me for a free consultation if you have been contacted by OPD regarding a complaint and contact your HHNA representative if you are called in for an investigatory interview by the Hospital.

Christopher S. Rothemich, Esq.
(631) 543-2900



HHNA Quarterly Meetings Tuesday, January 12, 2016

Meetings will be held at the following times:

7:30 am - Gillies 2

12 noon - Gillies 1 and 2

1:00 pm - Gillies 1 and 2

7:30 pm - Sammis Board Room

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner will be available

Please remember: in order to be a member in good standing, FT/PT employees must attend 2 quarterly meetings a year. Per Diems must attend 1 quarterly meeting a year.



Visit the HHNA website at HHNANurses.org