



# THE INFORMER

## October 2020 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jo Ann Pirro, RN

Usually, in the October newsletter I'm telling you about looking at your time to make sure you don't go over 450 hours by October 21<sup>st</sup>.

This year the union has signed an agreement with Northwell so that no one will have to forfeit any time this year. Huntington Hospital will temporarily lift any cap on accrued, but unused vacation time. Union represented employees can carry over and use all of their accrued unused 2020 vacation time, in addition to their vacation time accrued in 2021, through and including December 31, 2021. As a result, members will not forfeit any accrued, but unused vacation time before January 1, 2022.

This vacation time cap will be applied upon separation from employment or January 1, 2022, whichever comes first. Additionally, 2020 carryover vacation time is not subject to any vacation buyback provision in the labor contract.

Unfortunately covid is still around and continues to cause problems with scheduling meetings. We are at a 50% of room capacity regulation at this time. Because of this it is very difficult to secure the room necessary to hold quarterly meetings. As we did in July, we'll be in the rooms we usually use at the usual times for the October meetings; please refer to the last page of this newsletter or your union bulletin board for this information. Please come with any issues you would like to discuss with us and, remember, we still have to social distance.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

### Dates to Remember:

**10/14 Memorial honoring Pat Mills,  
John Abruzzo and Marion Ranali**

**10/13 Quarterly meetings**

**11/5 Council on Nursing Practice**

**11/10 HHNA Board/Administration  
meeting**

**12/3 Council on Nursing Practice**

**1/12 Quarterly Meetings**

*The times and locations of these meetings will be announced.*

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# **Nurse Burnout is REAL**

by Heather Hemingway, RN, BSN – Second VP

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The most common signs of nurse burnout are:

- lack of personal accomplishment
- emotional exhaustion
- depersonalization

I can't imagine how nurses could say they do not suffer from some form of lack of personal accomplishment if they have worked and continue to work during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have all encountered trauma, death and arguably futile care in some form during this pandemic. This lack of personal accomplishment causes mental, physical and emotional exhaustion which leads to depersonalization. We "depersonalize" as a form of protection from the numbness we feel from these exhausting emotions.

Things to focus on to prevent burnout:

- Positivity - Focus on the positive impact you can have on your patients and co-workers lives, no matter how big or small your action may be, it can be life changing to another.
- Self Care - We can't care for others if we don't care for ourselves. Exercise, eat healthy, go outdoors, develop good sleep habits, keep a sense of humor, focus on balancing work and life, attend to your spiritual needs, take time off, spread kindness and choose happiness.
- Take Action - Recognize when you are feeling overwhelmed and frustrated and take action to relieve yourself of those feelings. Talk with someone, ask for help and utilize the resources available to you. To connect with Team Lavender call the hospital operator (631-351-2590) who will contact the on-call support person. EAP, the Employee Assistance Program, through Northwell can be reached at EAP4YOU (877-327-4968).

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# **KRONOS**

by Lisa Quintero, RN – First VP

At one time or another, we have all walked onto our units and missed swiping in on Kronos. It certainly happens just as missing swiping out at the end of our shift happens. We come to work with our customary thoughts and start thinking of the shift we are about to begin; at the end of the shift we're thinking about what happened at work and what needs to be done when we get home. So, it's easy to understand how an occasional missed swipe can occur.

If this does happen to you, please follow the procedure for "missed swipe" and complete the appropriate form. Return the form to your NM or ANM. Nursing administration is able to see and does track those people who chronically do not swipe in and/or out. Each of us is required to be on our unit at the start of the scheduled shift and stay until the scheduled completion time. The hospital has many ways to determine if we are in the building and one of the easiest is when we come into the building, go through the temp scanner and swipe our badge through the security gates.

Please don't put yourself in a situation that may set you up for disciplinary action. Don't risk your job for an infraction so easily avoided.

# Open Enrollment for Healthcare Coverage

by Jane Hubert, RN – Treasurer

Each year members are able to select from various plans for their healthcare coverage during the Open Enrollment period. The open enrollment period for 2021 health care is November 2<sup>nd</sup> through November 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 which is a little earlier than usual this year.

There are choices between the various health insurance plans offered. There is the United Healthcare Point of Service (POS) and the UHC Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO). These two options are only available to members of the HHNA. There are also the United Healthcare Northwell Buy Up and Northwell Value Plans. These plans differ from the EPO and the POS offered to HHNA members in their dental, vision, and some other coverages. For more information please refer to your contract or call Benefits Planning at 631-991-6050. You can also view benefit options on the Intranet under myHR or at [Northwell.edu/mybenefits](http://Northwell.edu/mybenefits).

This is also the time when you can select to sign up for a Flexible Spending Account or the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account. These are both pre-tax accounts which can save you money on the purchase of various healthcare and dependent care needs not covered by your healthcare plan. In addition, there are other insurances that are available, such as several Aflac insurances, pet insurance, additional life insurance, etc. that can be purchased during the Open Enrollment period.

If no change is made by members during the Open Enrollment period, their benefits will remain the same as the previous year, except for the two Flexible Spending Accounts that require a sign-up every year whether the account is changed or not. The only other time you may make changes to your insurance coverage is if you experience a Life Qualifying Event that affects your healthcare coverage, such as, no longer being covered under someone else's insurance due to age, divorce or a change in a partner's healthcare plan.

## MEDICAL DICTIONARY FOR HEALTH CARE

|            |                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| ACUTE      | the opposite of ugly               |
| CAPSULE    | a space ship                       |
| FRACTURE   | a number less than one             |
| HAIR       | a rodent with long ears            |
| JOINT      | a location or a place              |
| LEPER      | a wild cat                         |
| MIDWIFE    | the second wife of three marriages |
| ORGANIC    | musical                            |
| ULTRASOUND | a loud noise                       |



Department of Clinical Laboratories & Pathology  
September 30, 2020

To all Caregivers:

Effective Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup> 2020, the Huntington Hospital laboratory will no longer draw specimens for outpatients. We will continue to service Huntington Hospital employees for blood draws, however the process will be modified. Employees will be registered in the Admitting Office and then have their blood drawn in the PST swabbing area on Thursdays only from 10am – 4pm. For all other weekdays, employees will have their blood drawn on their respective units during the same hours. Please call the lab in advance to coordinate a draw time.

Please note, we will not offer blood drawing services on weekends or holidays. Additionally, glucose tolerance tests will no longer be offered. These tests should be performed at any Northwell Lab Patient Service Center. A list of service centers has been provided with this communication for your convenience.

If you have any questions, please call 631-351-2291.

Best Regards,  
Gary Stone, MD  
Medical Director, Huntington Hospital Laboratories

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**You know you're a nurse if . . . . .**

**you've been on a medical LOA and all you can think about is returning to nursing.**

**you store your stethoscope over your car's rear view mirror.**

**you count your spouse's pulse while sleeping and worry because you hear wheezing on expiration.**

**you get all excited because you see blood when starting an IV; it's like finding oil in your backyard.**

**you are moved to tears and inspired by a patient's resilience and insight.**

**you don't believe 90% of what you're told and 75% of what you see.**

**you listen a lot more than you speak, but your words can change the direction of someone else's life.**

**someone's handwriting reminds you of ventricular fibrillation.**

# Contractual Language Regarding Work Schedules

by Joan Aliperti, RN - Secretary

Your Nurse Manager should post work schedules ten days in advance of the beginning of the work schedule which is Thursday of the third week of the work schedule. If this is not the case on your unit, please inform the Union.

Work schedules should be prepared as follows: full-time members first, part-time members second and then per diem members, exclusive of holidays. Some members have reported that this is not the case on their units and that their schedules work around the availability of per diems.

The schedule can only be changed by management for good and sufficient cause with, at least, twenty-four hours' personal notice. Members whose shifts are changed without such notice will receive time and one-half for each shift worked without such notice. If your Manager provides less than three hours' notice of cancellation of a per diem's scheduled shift, then the per diem will receive two hours' pay at straight time. Notice for a per diem will be deemed sufficient if a NM calls the telephone number designated by the per diem as his/her contact number and, if possible, leaves a message.

In circumstances where a member has been granted benefit time, the member's scheduled benefit time may not be unilaterally changed by the employer.

An exchange of assignment is defined as one member assuming the assignment of another

member for a given shift. Members have the right to exchange assignments with other nurses of requisite qualifications provided: they make a good faith attempt to find full-time or part-time members before using per diems to exchange assignments, no overtime results from the exchange of assignments, the office of Vice President for Nursing receives at least twenty-four hours' notice.

Members can ask a part-time or per diem member with the requisite skills and qualifications to cover a scheduled shift so that the member can use benefit time and, if agreed to by the part-timer/per diem, the request may be granted in the discretion of the manager. The per diem coverage doesn't alleviate the per diem member from meeting his/her weekend work obligation.

Nurse Managers can request that members volunteer to start a regularly scheduled shift up to two hours early without twenty-four hours' notice provided the member will have at least ten hours off before the new starting time.

Nurse Managers are not allowed to set guidelines for contractual items. When a Nurse Manager told the nurses on her unit they had to work the Friday and Monday around their weekend off, the nurses made the union aware; the union took action and that rule was not followed because that language is not in our contract. It's important to know your contract and notify the union when you become aware of any contractual violations.

## Nurstoons

by Carl Elbing



www.nurstoons.com

## **Editorial** by Marion Catanzaro, RN

Since the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic some hospitals have risen to the occasion to support their healthcare staff by supplying them with the necessary PPE and giving them monetary bonuses and/or additional vacation time. In addition to providing adequate PPE, The Northwell Health System has generously given its healthcare staff a \$2,500 bonus and extra vacation time.

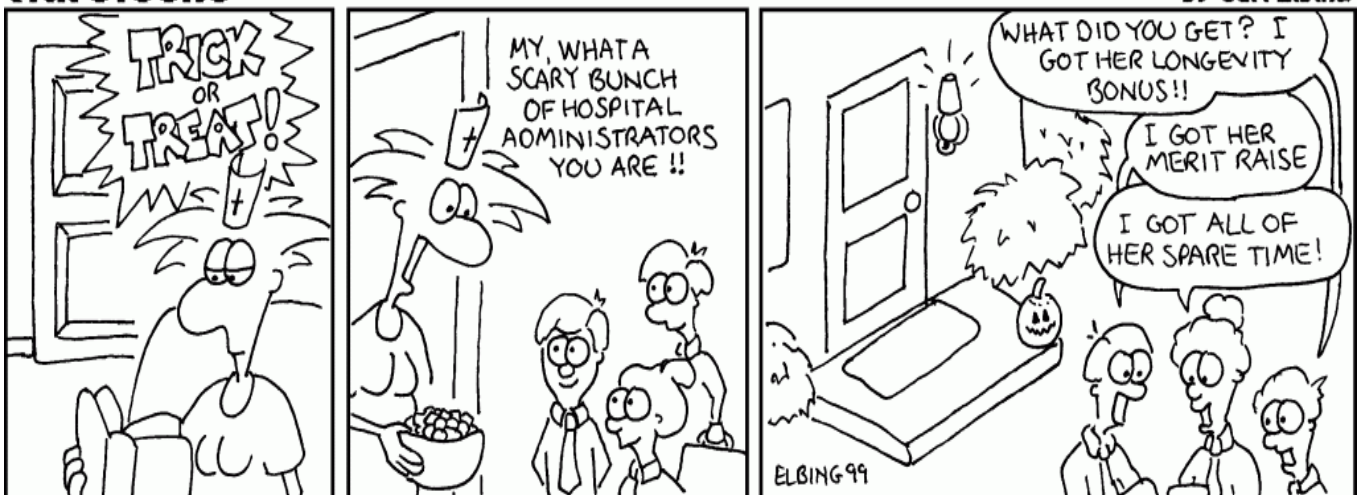
In July, nurses at St. Mary's and St. Joseph's hospitals in Tucson signed a three year contract that is the first nursing union contract in Arizona. University of Illinois Health and the Illinois Nurses' Association have a tentative agreement on a four year contract. Both of these contracts were negotiated in the midst of the pandemic and would not have happened without the cooperation of the administrations of both hospital systems.

Some hospitals didn't rise to the occasion. I've read that hospital systems in North Carolina, Illinois and Michigan are under investigation because of accusations that they used some of their federal pandemic relief money for the purpose of union busting. One hospital used the declaration of a national emergency to thwart the efforts of their nurses to unionize. Seventy percent of the nurses at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC had signed and submitted authorization cards to join the National Nurses United union in late February and the final vote was to be held a few weeks later. However, the hospital appealed to the National Labor Relations Board to postpone the election due to the coronavirus. Hospital administration stepped up its efforts to discourage nurses from joining a union by having anti-union consultants meet with nurses individually, as well as, having them lead mandatory group meetings during which nurses said they were given misleading and false information. All of this was happening as the health crisis was worsening. There is a happy ending, though. A few weeks ago 1,800 nurses were successful in voting to join the union despite administration's intimidating tactics.

**MEMO** It seems the only thing political parties can agree upon is the importance of every registered voter to participate in the Presidential election on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and from what I'm hearing most of us have very strong feelings about the matter. This election is being described as a pivotal election in its importance to our country. We've all received information in the mail regarding how to register to vote, how to obtain absentee mail-in ballots which can be used in this election if you prefer not to vote in person because of the pandemic, where and when early in-person voting will be available and the time and place we can vote in our communities on Election Day. It's never been easier so there's no excuse for not voting. Whether we agree with the outcome of the election or not it's important that we participate. Although we'll feel better if our candidate wins, we'll feel we did all we could if our candidate loses.

## **Nurstoons**

by Carl Elbing



[www.nurstoons.com](http://www.nurstoons.com)

# October 13<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Meeting Update

Due to Covid 19 we will be unable to hold our regular meetings. The meeting agenda is posted on the website:

[WWW.HHNAurses.org](http://WWW.HHNAurses.org)

Please take a moment to review it.  
Union Board members will be available  
to answer questions and address your concerns.

Gillies 1 & 2 at 7AM – 8AM, 12-2PM  
and 7-8PM

A limited number of members will be allowed in the  
conference rooms. Please plan accordingly.