Swedish Offers One-Month Contract Extension

*The extension proposal is intended to ease the time pressure to reach agreement,*
*while Swedish awaits the union’s full proposal*

The bargaining team for Swedish Medical Center and Swedish Edmonds held a fifth “main table” bargaining session with SEIU 1199NW yesterday, which concluded with the Swedish team proposing a one-month extension of the current contracts covering RNs and Technical and Service caregivers at SMC, as well as RNs and Professional, Service and Technical caregivers at Swedish Edmonds. The contracts are currently scheduled to expire on June 30. The proposal to extend contracts for covered caregivers until July 31 is intended to allow the bargaining teams additional time before contract expiration to continue to engage in meaningful and productive discussion of the issues of importance to the parties.

Throughout the process, Swedish has been committed to working constructively with the union, and we have been encouraged by the union’s willingness to engage in productive discussions around important topics. After holding five “main table” (full-team) bargaining sessions and five “side tables,” we are still waiting to receive all of the union’s proposals, including many of the key components. Dates are scheduled for several side table discussions and a sixth main table bargaining session before the end of June (June 25). Once we receive all of the union’s proposals, we are committed to responding in a timely and constructive manner. We recognize that a thoughtful negotiating process takes time, and there are many issues to work through. Our intention is to foster and support continued progress toward an agreement that best serves our caregivers, our patients, and our organization.

Swedish also reiterated its commitment to the principle that caregivers have a right to engage in the bargaining process and to express their views during negotiations without fear of retaliation. That has been a longstanding commitment, which we continue to uphold.
Productive Discussions Continue in Side Table Discussions

When negotiations began, we reached agreement with the union on a bargaining approach that includes both main table bargaining sessions as well as smaller, issue-specific conversations around certain complex topics. So far, we have found this process helpful in fostering greater understanding and more productive dialogue.

The two most recent side tables focused on Low Census and Mandatory Education (May 28) and Outpatient/Inpatient Staffing and Floating, SMC (May 30). During those meetings, the union presented proposals that would:

- Modify the number of hours in the Mandatory Low Census Fund
- Change the guidelines for Voluntary Low Census
- Remove our ability to hold caregivers accountable for failing to timely complete mandatory training and education

In response, we presented two proposals at yesterday’s bargaining session that are related to Low Census and Staff Development. Our Low Census proposal would provide greater clarity to caregivers electing voluntary low census. Our staff development proposal would encourage dialogue in the ABC Committee around facilitating access to resources and tools to aid in completing mandatory education.

During the side tables, the union also presented proposals for float at SMC and Edmonds, which we are reviewing. During yesterday’s bargaining session, the union presented a health benefits proposal and a wage proposal that we are also reviewing.

Bargaining Teams Update Meeting Schedule for June

The teams agreed on an updated schedule for “main table” bargaining sessions and “side table” discussions through the end of June. The confirmed schedule going forward is:

- June 6 – Side Table, Social Workers
- June 12 – Side Table, RN Advancement
- June 14 – Side Table, Sick Leave and Retirement
- June 18 – Side Table, Medical Benefits
• June 20 – Side Table, Edmonds
• June 25 – Main Table
• June 26 – Side Table, Training Fund
• June 27 – Side Table, Stand-by and Call

Keeping You Informed
We are here to answer your questions and discuss the issues you care about. We welcome your questions by email at communications@swedish.org. Please also look to Labor Negotiation News for the latest updates after each bargaining session.

Additionally, we will be distributing this newsletter via email as well as linking it in We Swedish. Please feel free to share this newsletter widely within your teams and with your providers.

2019 Contract Negotiations Bargaining Team
Below is a list of members of the Swedish bargaining team, with each member identified by the contract s/he represents:

• Jean Doerge, Chief Nursing Officer – Edmonds RN and Pro/Tech
• Jan Flom, Director Nursing Services – Edmonds RN and Pro/Tech
• Julie Norman, Senior Manager Guest Services Cafeteria – Edmonds Pro/Tech
• Rhose Hipolito, Nurse Manager Surgical Telemetry Cherry Hill – SMC RN and Service
• Wendy Connors, Manager Emergency Department Ballard – SMC RN and Service
• Brian Trickel, Chief Nursing Officer Issaquah/Redmond – SMC RN, Service and Tech
• Marci Mann, Director Nursing Services Acute Care First Hill – SMC RN and Service
• Erika Watkinson, Nurse Manager Gyn Surgical First Hill – SMC RN and Service
• Sheri Love, Director Periop Services First Hill – SMC RN, Tech and Service
• Denise Dollar, Manager Respiratory Care Pulmonary Function – SMC Tech and Edmonds Pro/Tech
• Candi Johnson, Director Systems Nutrition Services – SMC Service
• Larisa Cummings, Director Patient Access Services – SMC Service
• Doug Green, Interim Director Systems Environmental Services – SMC Service
John Weir, Senior Manager Environmental Services Multi-Site – SMC Service
Rose Van Wyk Coesens, Manager of the Breast Imaging Center Edmonds – Edmonds Pro/Tech
Gwyn Anglin, Manager Medical Imaging Ballard – SMC Tech and Service
Kristi Hester, Regional Senior Manager of Starbucks – SMC Service and EDM Pro/Tech
Shelley Livingston, Labor Relations Director
Melissa Norwood, HR Director
Dan Mueller, VP Senior Labor/Employment Counsel
John Hauge, VP Senior Labor/Employment Counsel

If you have feedback for the team on contract changes you would like to see, please reach out to your bargaining team representative.