Focus Turns to Change Teams, Diversity

The bargaining team for Swedish Medical Center and Swedish Edmonds held a fourth bargaining session with SEIU 1199NW yesterday, during which the Swedish team presented its proposal on reorganization and the Change Team Process and the union team presented testimonials and a proposal concerning diversity, equity and inclusion.

Reorganization and the Change Team Process

Prior to yesterday’s bargaining session, smaller groups from the two teams held a “side-table” meeting on May 16 that focused on reorganization and the Change Team Process. In a very productive discussion, both teams expressed similar views that the current Change Team Process is working well, for the most part, but that language in the contract is confusing and should be clarified.

During the May 16 meeting, the union team presented a proposal that focused on clarifying the language related to reorganization and Change Teams in all five contracts. The Swedish team reviewed the union’s proposal and developed its own proposal in response, which was presented yesterday.

Both teams’ proposals reflect a shared interest in retaining key aspects of the current Change Team Process, including the 84-day timeline. That timeline consists of an informal two-week period after announcement of a potential reorganization, followed by a formal Change Team Process that includes 30 days for the planning phase and a subsequent 40-day implementation period.

Swedish’s proposal includes some substantive changes. One proposed change is to modify the criteria for determining whether to proceed with a formal Change Team Process at the end of
the two-week informal phase. Currently, the criteria for not continuing to a formal process are: 1) the change does not meet the definition of a reorganization; or 2) the change does meet the definition of a reorganization, but there is “a consensus within the department of 100%” on a resolution that can be implemented without going through a Change Team Process. The Swedish team’s proposal would modify the second criterion, from consensus of 100% to agreement of two-thirds for resolution.

An additional proposed change would eliminate language about running the Low Seniority Roster during the implementation period. Currently, if a reorganization is announced, HR provides an updated seniority roster and a list of any vacant positions, with a copy provided to the union. This process would not change under the proposal. But the proposal would eliminate additional language about running the Low Seniority Roster at the request of the Change Team. The Low Seniority Roster is a feature of our nursing contracts that in some limited circumstances allows for senior nurses from other departments to bump newly hired nurses even when vacant roles exist within Swedish. Swedish has not activated this language in over a decade and has found it to be a source of confusion during recent changes.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

During yesterday’s bargaining session, several members of the union team presented personal testimonials and concerns related to diversity, equity and inclusion at Swedish. They shared experiences with patients and colleagues at all levels of the organization. After sharing the testimonials, the team presented a detailed proposal. The Swedish team is reviewing the proposal and will respond at a later date. We share many of the interests expressed by our caregivers through the union’s proposal, and the management team looks forward to continued dialogue in this area.

**Teams Continue to Review Each Other’s Earlier Proposals**

Both teams are continuing to review each other’s proposals from previous bargaining sessions. To recap, the Swedish team has presented both “housekeeping” proposals as well as substantive proposals on the following topics: MLK Day holiday, per diem staffing flexibility, a probationary period for per diems moving to FTE positions, and grievance procedures.
SEIU 1199NW has also made several proposals that cover the following topics: staffing, callback pay and standby compensation, code triage during inclement weather and natural disaster requirements, new employee orientation, expanding pay for labor management committees, and reducing the time that disciplinary action stays in an employee file. The Swedish team will respond to these proposals at a later date.

**EVS Staffing Discussions Continue**

During the two weeks between the May 7 and May 21 bargaining sessions, the two teams also held a second “side table” meeting focused on staffing in Environmental Services. The first meeting was held May 1, and the second on May 9. These have been very productive discussions. Core leaders and caregivers with a specific interest in EVS were able to connect with each other and discuss issues of substance.

**Bargaining Teams Revise Meeting Schedule Through 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:

- May 28 – Side Table, Low Census and Mandatory Education
- May 30 – Side Table, Outpatient/Inpatient Staffing and Floating, SMC
- June 4 – Main Table
- June 6 – Side Table, Social Workers
- June 20 – Side Table, Edmonds
- June 25 – Main Table
- June 26 – Side Table, Training Fund
- June 27 – Side Table, Standby and Call

We have identified several other topics, such as Medical Benefits, 401k, the Case Management Social Workers and the ARS Counselors group. We are confirming dates for those meetings and will provide an update as soon as they are confirmed.
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.