



COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA  
LOCAL 1168, AFL-CIO



DATE: November 23, 2010  
 TO: All BGH CWA Local 1168 Members  
 FROM: Linda Sheehan, BGH RN Area Vice President  
 Mary Janice Keller, BGH RN Area Vice President  
 RE: **DETERIORATING STAFFING AT BGH**

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Over the past several months, the staffing conditions in the nursing care areas (Med Surg & Critical Care) have continued to deteriorate. The nursing staff in these areas have communicated their concerns for patient safety to their nurse manager **with little to no changes**.

CWA Leadership met with nursing leadership, Mary Beth Campo (Vice President BGH Site Nursing Officer) and all Kaleida Health Chief Nursing Officers (CNO's) regarding the above concerns on September 27<sup>th</sup> at our corporate staffing quarterly meeting. We suggested that they hire more nurses into the float pool so there are nurses **scheduled to work** to account for:

- Holes in schedules
- Call in's, Disabilities, Worker's Comp
- Acuity changes

After the Corporate Staffing Meeting on 9/27/10, Mary Beth Campo, Vice President of Nursing, said she would look into increasing the float pool and get back with us, before our next meeting in December.

**As of this update we have not heard back from anyone regarding this staffing crisis.**

CWA Leadership also met with BGH Leadership, Larry Zielinski, BGH site President, Mary Beth Campo, Vice President of Nursing, CNO, Toni Booker, Vice President of Kaleida Health Human Resources, Sue Passmore, BGH Human Resources Manager on Thursday, November 4, 2010 to express the serious staffing conditions and unsafe patient care at BGH. Mary Beth stated **There is not a staffing problem, units are staffed to grid!**

Staff feels "NO ONE is listening and they want to know" "What else can we do?" As one RN said, Kaleida is more focused on Press Releases that make them look good, verses really being good.

On Wednesday, November 10, 2010, we had our monthly BGH site staffing committee meeting, with CWA leadership and BGH leadership Chris Harawus, Med/Surg Director, Michelle Unger, Cardiac Director, Kathy Kitzmiller, Director of Finance, Melissa Feider, Sr. HR Specialist, and Sandy Bomeberg, BGH Nurse Recruiter. **With knowing the agenda. Mary Beth Campo, VP/CNO Nursing was a no show for this meeting.**

Staff RN's from several nursing units attended this staffing meeting to express to the "powers to be" just how serious the staffing problem and quality of safe patient care issues are. Here are a few quotes from staff RN's who attended:

- "I'm embarrassed about the care our patients receive."
- "I routinely apologize to my patients for not getting to them sooner."

- “Grids are a piece of paper with no meaning. We are never staffed to grid.”
- “When you do the best you can, and that isn’t good enough, something has to give.”
- “Management on the floors does nothing to help us when we have staffing issues they don’t respond to staff issues brought to them now.”
- There is no accounting for acuity; it’s all about the grid.”
- “What does magnet really mean with working conditions like this?”
- “It’s the exception not the rule I get a break during my 12 hour shift.”
- “I’ve worked at many hospitals across the county, staffing on days was 1:4, evening 1:5, nights 1:6. This is the worst I’ve ever seen.”

We commend the RN’s who attended this meeting and spoke a heartfelt plea for **quality patient care**. Our recommendation to nursing leadership were:

- 1. Communicate the contents of this meeting to Mary Beth Campo (who did not attend this meeting) the importance of the staff’s message.**
- 2. Increase the number of float pool RN’s scheduled to have staff to cover daily holes in the schedules.**
- 3. Increase the number of qualified, competent ancillary staff.**
- 4. Provide evidence-based staffing to truly provide positive patient outcomes and decrease mortality rates.**
- 5. Need an acuity measurement system.**
- 6. Charge RN on days and evening should never have a patient assignment.**

We will have to wait and see how the nursing leadership responds to these issues brought before them. We will continue to communicate to you the response from nursing leadership. In the meantime, if you are experiencing an unsafe staffing situation:

- Sign the Union’s petition to state your opposition to unsafe staffing.
- Notify your manager/supervisor/administrator on call to rectify.
- Fill out a Staffing Committee form.
- Fill out a Protest of Assignment form.
- Call the Union office – speak to a steward if you need further assistance.

In the meantime, continue to let your nurse manager know your concerns for Safe Patient Care. Ask them to help you.

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