



COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA



LOCAL 1168, AFL-CIO



DATE: March 4, 2010

TO: All CWA Local 1168 Employees at
Buffalo General Hospital

FROM: John E. Klein, President
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RE: **Now that we have your attention.....**

While we understand that some of you did not appreciate our last update, we have not been able to get your attention in any other way. Things are spiraling out of control at BGH. We have said it in STAT, in updates and on our web page but the message has not been heard by the membership. We have tried to deal with BGH administration/management in all known legal, contractual and professional ways, and we have been ignored. You, the member is suffering for it.

So now that we have your attention here are the facts...

If you are a long term employee especially at BGH you are at risk. It's not because of the upcoming merger with Millard, it's not because of the state budget cuts, it's not because of the various reasons given by the BGH site administration and management. Larry has stated that "YOU cost more than other sites because of your grandfathered health insurance". Management considers BGH employees to be the most expensive in the system between wages and benefits. And beyond all this, BGH is losing money.

It is simple. They have launched an all out attack on the union employees, lead by Larry Zielinski. He does not like the union or its rules (your contract). He refuses to meet with us to discuss any issues. We have standing meetings with the site presidents at all the other Kaleida sites, but not at BGH.

It has become crystal clear that, in Larry's view, "you, the union employee" is their problem.

- Larry states, "BGH doctors have left because staff have bad attitudes and the union rules (your contract) are not flexible enough for the doctors.

Also the "rules" (your contract) on seniority do not allow Kaleida to hand pick who they want when it comes to job bidding or layoffs. We have called this to your attention in previous updates and rest assured, they DO try to hand pick people for positions. They have also been known to delete positions if they did not like the top senior bidder.

If you doubt this.... look at some of these recent events....

Larry has approved the elimination of the phlebotomy team, cardiac rehab nurses and is working on "getting out" of the outpatient Hemodialysis business.

We are not sure what this means to our members because Larry refuses to talk to us as your representative. What he does allow is rumors to run rampant in the hemo department.

This administration is allowing managers to blatantly violate the contract especially around PTO approval, downsizing and shift rotation. Debbie Brownsey has been rotating her staff to the

10- 11 shift although that shift does not exist on her floor. When questioned about this, her response was, "I can do this, if you don't like it, you can grieve it". We DO grieve these things and file unfair labor practices with the Labor Board. Grievances and labor charges all take time to get through the process. We always try to resolve obvious contract violations by having a simple conversation with the manager. They are less and less willing to resolve even the simplest problems with us. There is obvious direction coming from their bosses.

Recently, some of our members found that Larry's administrative secretary was given a "secret" contract to work after hours doing our bargaining unit work. The manager refused to pay overtime to the union members to do their work. This has been confirmed by Kaleida administration! We stumbled upon this issue purely by accident!

You, the members are becoming unknowing participants in his anti-union game. We have seen an increase in staff on staff confrontations. Management would like the rules to apply to some, (the chosen few) but not to all.

Staff have openly bad mouthed co workers to management, and this led directly to discipline, up to and including termination of some long term employees. Staff members file Stars reports on each other that end up leading to discipline. What's reported on Stars may not be true, but done as revenge, or just because you do not like someone. We have seen all of the above.

So anyone, anytime, can be a victim of this Stars Reporting and the person reporting does not even have to give their name. Now Larry has added a "reward" for this action. Again, without any proof that the allegations are true.

The staff on staff issue is a clear example of Administration's efforts to "divide and conquer"

Our grievance procedure calls for the step 1 meeting to be held with the manager and step 2 grievances are heard by the Human Resources dept. They are the management side of contract administration and the most familiar with contract interpretation.

It is clear Larry and Mary Beth Campo (CNO for BGH) are running the show. HR is not allowed to settle any issues/ grievances with us if not approved by them first.

BGH Human Resources AGAIN, is going through a "restructuring" WHY???.....Because HR tried to work with us.

Another problem we are enduring is Administration/management saying "I would love to..... (Fill in the blank) but, the union contract won't let me." Frequently this causes further animosity between co-workers who are already working in an extremely stressful environment.

I could go on, but, I think you get the point. I will leave you with this. Being a member of your UPC committee, a "super user" for initiatives such as of Bridges, EMR, Surginet, NAC, does not make you exempt from needing your union to stand behind you to protect your contractual rights.

We represent you; the hospital represents the bottom line.

We will be at the bargaining table in a year from now. What message do you want management to have? Will it be, "I believe in my Union and all that it stands for, or, "I believe that management has my best interest at heart".

If it is the later... reread this update!

Our steward, chief stewards, AVPs and Officers work hard every day to protect your contractual rights and uphold the contract...a contract that management agreed to. Have every confidence that we will continue to work relentlessly as we always have in the past. Do not hesitate to contact us with your concerns surrounding the above information. We look forward to having that discussion.