



JNESO

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the professional health care union

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HEALTHCARE UNION BLASTS LAYOFFS AT POCONO MEDICAL CENTER FOLLOWING PMC \$3.8 MILLION ER MODERNIZATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EAST STROUDSBURG, PA – Today, JNESO District Council 1 Executive Director Doug Placa and PMC Local President Mona Hartle issued the following statements following the December 13th announcement that 61 Registered Nurses [RNs] would be laid off at Pocono Medical Center (PMC). The targeted units for lay-offs are: Emergency Department, Rapid Treatment Center, and a Medical/Surgical unit [3B] that cares for orthopedic patients.

“Pocono Medical Center’s intent to layoff Registered Nurses will have a serious impact on patient care at the hospital,” said Doug Placa, Executive Director for the union. “Removing these nurses takes qualified and experienced professionals away from the bedside, and as studies indicate, increases the potential for bad patient outcomes. According to the American Nurses Association [ANA] “an appropriate nurse staffing is associated with improved patient outcomes. With the increased focus on value-based care, optimal nurse staffing will be essential to delivering high-quality, cost-effective care”. Our JNESO RNs at PMC will continue to provide excellent care, as best they can, despite the hospital’s decision to severely limit their resources to do so.”

[In PMC’s Sept. 29th Press Release](#) Jeff Snyder, President and CEO of PMC stated “Today’s grand re-opening of the Mattioli Emergency Center signifies a re-dedication of what Pocono Medical Center’s emergency care is truly focused on medical and clinical excellence with a positive patient experience”. “PMC’s continued focus on recruiting and retaining the best physicians and nurses provides the community with a clear advantage in quality care”. JNESO contends, the only way to provide quality care and positive patient experiences is to keep RN’s at the bedside.

The union noted that it has brought concerns about the level of nurse-to-patient staffing ratios to the attention of PMC long before the layoff announcement, and that the anticipated reduction in the nursing workforce will only worsen the current staffing situation. “Throughout this last year, JNESO has been engaged in an ongoing dialogue with management at PMC concerning the need to improve nurse-to-patient staffing ratios -especially in the Emergency Department,” said Mona Hartle, President of the PMC Local Chapter of JNESO. “Clearly those conversations have fallen on deaf ears. The decision to layoff highly experienced RNs when we are already experiencing inadequate staffing levels is misguided.”

According JNESO, The Emergency Department RNs have voiced concern that PMC may be targeting them as they have aggressively reported unsafe staffing conditions to the Department of Health, as is required of them to protect the public from harm. [JNESO provided the Department of Health the Staffing Complaint Forms from the Emergency Department for 2016 on October 17, 2016.](#) “It seems suspicious that PMC would cite the reason for this layoff is a reduction in patient volume, but the only category of staff laid off is the bedside RN”, said Union officials. The Union’s request for information supporting the hospital’s claim of reduced patient volume and revenue has been declined and cited as irrelevant.

“We’re calling on PMC to reverse this ill-advised strategy of eliminating nurses from the bedside and instead employ measures that responsibly seek cost-savings without jeopardizing patient care,” said Placa. “We will fight these layoffs every step of the way.” The union steadfastly opposes any measure that compromises safe quality patient care.

The initial notice of this intended layoff was given to JNESO on December 13, 2016. To date, after 3 meetings, PMC has not provided the Union with an exact number of nurses to be laid off. In addition to the lay-offs, PMC is planning on changing shift patterns for an unknown number of nurses which may cause additional lay-offs.

JNESO District Council 1 is a healthcare union representing more than 5,000 nurses and other healthcare workers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. For more information, visit www.JNESO.org.

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