



JNESO
DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUOE / AFL-CIO
the professional health care union

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Letter-to-the-Editor: Submitted by Douglas Placa, Executive Director, JNESO

Virtua Is Turning Nurses' Lives Upside Down

Virtua Health Systems decided to change the way they deliver healthcare. Not only did they purchase Lourdes, but they want to change the way their two largest facilities in Marlton and Voorhees are staffed. They are eliminating positions, changing shifts and reassigning workplace locations for dozens of nurses.

This is called a LAYOFF.

Virtua is not only wreaking havoc with nurses' lives, they are not following the mutually agreed upon collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The CBA outlines the process for staffing changes and layoffs for the 1,600 Virtua nurses represented by JNESO, District Council 1, the professional healthcare union.

This may not seem like a big deal, but look at it from the nurses' perspective. Nursing is a lifestyle, much like that of a police officer or a firefighter. They work long shifts, holidays, and overnights. They work in units with an established team that has its own rhythm to provide the best care. They choose shifts allowing them to care for children, elderly parents or other commitments. Many have followed this routine for years.

Then, one day, without any prior notice your employer says: We don't need you at this facility, if you want to keep your job you need to work at the other facility. Oh, and by the way, your hours are being changed too.

Our nurses deserve better. Virtua management claims the new staffing plan will improve patient care. The reality: this plan is extremely disruptive to our nurses' lives, may cause some to leave after years of service, and may impact the continuity of care for patients.

Virtua may be the largest employer in South Jersey, but they don't have the right to disregard the CBA and disrespect our nurses. Shame on you!

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