



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

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For Immediate Release

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JNESO Nurses and Techs Ratify New Three-Year Contract with St. Mary's

North Brunswick, N.J. (Dec.18, 2020) – After months of tenuous negotiations, agreements have been reached between the nurses and technical employees represented by JNESO District Council 1, the professional health care union, and the management of St. Mary's General Hospital in Passaic.

In addition to wages and healthcare, the new agreements include several items related to COVID-19 including testing and increased accessibility to PPE to protect the health and safety of the 300 RN's and 130 techs represented by JNESO. The 3-year contracts take effect retroactively from August 15, 2020 and extend through August 14, 2023.

“Both the nurses and the techs made safety and staffing a priority, especially in light of the challenging climate we are living in,” explained Douglas Placa, Executive Director of JNESO. “One of the biggest issues has been the ability to get the PPE they need in a timely manner, without having to jump through hoops or go to various departments around the hospital to obtain the equipment, which is a step in the right direction. Another reinforces the need to conduct regular testing for COVID-19, which has been spotty in the past, and other infectious diseases according to CDC protocol and guidelines.”

JNESO has also been fighting for staffing ratios both legislatively and at the bargaining table. “The language agreed to in the RN contract points us in that direction, by reinforcing the need to follow state-mandated staffing ratios for critical care units (ICU, NICU, etc.), as well as safer staffing in the Technical unit,” stated Placa.

Due to the importance of safe staffing, the contract also calls for further discussion with hospital administrators to discuss and set new staffing ratios for non-critical care units such as med-surg and telemetry.

Wage increases between 2-3% have been included under the new agreement and will be retroactive to August 2020. Full and part-time RN's will see an average annual increase of between 2 ¾ - 3% which includes step increases on their anniversary date of hire. Per diem RNs will receive a flat \$2 increase for the span of the contract. Full and part-time Tech's will receive a 2% across the board increase over the life of the contract and have the potential for higher increases based on differential pay.

“This has been a very long and difficult negotiation and I would like to acknowledge my negotiating team as well as the entire RN membership for their unwavering support during this process,” said Pam Tavarone, President of the RN bargaining team. “We are grateful to have our



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JNESO contract completed and happy to get back to what we do best: caring for the patients at St Mary's. But, make no mistake we **will** be holding management accountable for safe working conditions as both outlined by the law and our contract."

"The technical unit and its various diagnostic professionals strive to perform the very best patient care to the patients of St. Mary's Hospital," remarked Kevin Turek, President of the Technical unit bargaining team. "Although we've completed contract negotiations, there is still work to be done particularly around staffing and working conditions. The language agreed to gets us closer on those fronts, and we will continue to challenge management should they not provide what they agreed to and under the law."

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

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