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Subject: A Message From Jennifer Eslinger: Important Update About Planned Union Activity

January 26, 2023

To: RGH Medical and Dental Staff

From: Jennifer Eslinger, President, Health Care Operations and Chief Operating Officer
Interim President, Rochester General Hospital

Subject: A Message From Jennifer Eslinger: Important Update About Planned Union Activity

Over the last three months, RGH has been negotiating in good faith with RUNAP, the union representing over 900 nurses at the Hospital.

Today, representatives from RUNAP will be holding a press conference/rally in front of RGH. We recognize RUNAP's right to hold this press conference.

Please be assured that the safety of our patients, employees and visitors is our highest priority. We have security plans in place to help ensure nothing impacts our daily business or our patients' access to care.

Our focus throughout our negotiations with RUNAP has been to reach a collective bargaining agreement that ensures patients receive the best possible care and that nurses are treated fairly and can do their best work. As these negotiations progress, we wanted to share some important facts:

- RGH and RUNAP have been in active negotiations for only 106 days (including breaks for the various holidays that have unfolded since mid-October). On average, first collective bargaining

agreements take 465 days from the beginning of negotiations to ratification. So, while the union may be frustrated they don't already have a contract, the negotiations are, by no means, proceeding more slowly than is typical.

- Collective bargaining normally involves both sides presenting proposals and reaching agreements on certain topics over a series of meetings. By the second bargaining meeting we had with RUNAP, the union indicated they had presented substantially all of their proposals. While we have already responded to some of those proposals, we are working diligently to review and assess the remaining proposals to understand how those might impact our operations. This process is also informing the development of the proposals and counterproposals that we will present to RUNAP at future bargaining sessions. So far, RUNAP has not responded to many of our proposals and counterproposals.
- Unfortunately, it's also likely that the union will present individual stories and claim patient care is suffering due to RGH's actions or inaction. This is truly regrettable since it undermines the public's confidence in RGH and the amazing work that all of you do each and every day. We will be working to make sure the media knows our very strong approach to and track record when it comes to quality.
- Specifically, thanks to your efforts, we have been named one of "America's 50 Best Hospitals" (top 1% of hospitals in the country) by Healthgrades for the past four years, been designated a Magnet hospital from the American Nurses Credentialing Center for four years in a row, the highest honor available for nursing excellence, were ranked as the number one hospital in Rochester by U.S. News & World Report and have received several specialty certifications by national medical accreditors.
- Staffing is a challenge for many hospitals across the country, including at RGH. While we recognize that more work needs to be done to recruit and retain nurses and are committed to doing that work, we have recruited 204 nurses in 2022 and have accepted offers from 131 in 2023. In addition, through a combination of RGH-employed and agency nurses, our average RN vacancy across all units is on-par with other New York State hospitals. Ours is 20%, while the average for other New York State hospitals averages 18.3%.
- Throughout this process, RGH remains committed to bargaining in good faith and to working through the issues as quickly and thoroughly as possible to reach an agreement.

Employees are permitted to attend the conference or conduct other personal business during their break times and non-work time, as you normally would. However, any unapproved absence during working time, regardless of the reason, will be treated in accordance with the Hospital's policy.

If you have any questions or concerns about the negotiations or the press conference, please contact your manager. You may also visit www.RGHNursesMatter.org for more information on the negotiations.

We are proud of the care our team provides to the community and appreciate your support of Rochester Regional Health.

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Jennifer

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