

# News for MNA Members in the Steward Network

December 11, 2012

## Elected officers at a glance

### Carney Hospital

Elaine Graves, Chairperson  
Mary Carbone, Vice-Chairperson  
Susan Erickson, Secretary/Treasurer

### Good Samaritan Medical Center

Eileen Flynn, Co-Chairperson  
Karen Gavigan, Co-Chairperson  
Maureen Healy, Secretary/Treasurer

### Holy Family Hospital

Jeffrey Janco, Co-Chairperson  
Gayle Burke, Co-Chairperson

### Merrimack Valley Hospital

Kathy Renzi, Co-Chairperson  
Claire Walsh, Co-Chairperson  
Karen Arnone, Treasurer  
Donna Pouliot, Secretary

### Morton Hospital

Joyce Wilkins, Chairperson  
Jacqueline Fitts, Co-Vice-Chairperson  
Vacant, Co-Vice-Chairperson  
Louise Nunley, Secretary

### Norwood Hospital

Kathy Reardon, Co-Chairperson  
Joan Ballantyne, Co-Chairperson  
Madeline McCarthy-Griffen, Treasurer  
Linda Barton, Secretary

### Quincy Medical Center

Paula Ryan, Chairperson  
Joanne Hart, Co-Vice-Chairperson  
Stacey McEachern, Co-Vice Chairperson  
Kathy Linnell, Treasurer

### St. Elizabeth's Medical Center

Betsy Prescott, Co-Chairperson  
Vacant, Co-Chairperson  
Katie Magni, Secretary  
Kathy Rudolph-Belbin, Treasurer

## *RNs at Holy Family Celebrate Success of Candlelight Vigil*

RNs from Steward Holy Family Hospital, as well as many local advocates and supporters, braved the cold and damp in Methuen on Monday night, Dec. 10 to participate in the bargaining unit's first-ever candlelight vigil.

The vigil drew public attention to the RNs' ongoing struggle to secure safe patient care standards in their first contract, as well as provided an opportunity to educate the community about how safe patient care standards benefit more than just the individual patient: they benefit families and the greater Methuen community overall.

"Caring for too many patients at one time is dangerous, and it is wrong," said Gayle Burke, RN and co-chairperson of the Holy Family bargaining unit. "As a result, we're here tonight to inform the public of where things stand in our efforts to keep them safe and healthy."

The Holy Family RNs joined the MNA in July of 2011 and have been in contract negotiations with management since December of that year.



Over for other important updates 

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## *Pension Update*

### **Pension Update:**

Monday, Dec. 10 Steward senior management met with our committee chairs from all steward hospitals and Julie Pinkham, executive director of the MNA, over the disputed pension that was negotiated in the Limited Master agreement in 2010.

Management made a serious proposal for a framework to settle the dispute. We mutually committed to begin meeting weekly with the employer's and the union's pension experts, lawyers and RN representatives to explore the many technical details.

There will be many detailed issues to resolve as the working group begins to meet. Both parties are committed to working to move the issue to conclusion as quickly as possible.

### **Health Insurance Update:**

On Dec. 4, members of our committees from all MNA/ Steward hospitals met with management to bargain over changes to the Steward DPO and EPO plans. Here is a summary of the union's positions:

- The 2013 monthly premiums must reflect the actual costs of the plan  $\frac{3}{4}$  not a higher number. These are self-insured plans, in which the employer is essentially the insurance company, and so the employer cannot simply announce what the premiums are going to be. We need to come to an agreement on the "working rate" based on the actual costs to the plans.
- We seek changes to the plan design. There are problems of access to care that have to be solved, including:
  - ⇒ Too frequent changes to the list of covered physicians
  - ⇒ Inappropriate denials of authorization for medical services that patients need and/or charging for services as the high "tier 2" or "tier 3" rates when the care isn't available inside the Steward system
  - ⇒ Need for a more fair and transparent appeals process
  - ⇒ The need for a third "outside" option such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, Harvard Pilgrim, etc.
- Other issues will also be negotiated at local bargaining tables (example: Morton members have commercial, non-Steward health plans and are proposing to keep them).

### **Next steps:**

- Management agreed to provide us with detailed financial information about the health plan and information on the plan designs.
- Management will propose dates for follow up system-wide MNA Committee / Steward management meetings; both sides are committed to move the negotiations forward.
- The health plan rates and design remain frozen at the 2012 terms until we complete negotiations.