

Speak Out Now in Healthcare

A workplace newsletter for Highland and Kaiser workers

July 29th, 2024

What Do Managers Even Do?

Every day in the hospital, we see hundreds of workers caring for patients, cooking their meals, cleaning their rooms, and keeping us all safe. We work together, every day and night of the year, using our knowledge and experience to make sure the patients have what they need. Yet tucked away in their offices are people who patients never see, and whose roles are a mystery to most of us. These managers sit at their desks, never putting on gloves or emptying a trash bin. They make more money than us, and enjoy all their nights, weekends, and holidays at home.

But what exactly do they do? Between the assistant managers, managers, and directors, there sure are plenty of them sitting in their chairs. They don't answer our emails, hire enough staff, or even know all our names. Some departments don't trust them to generate our work schedules, leaving that to senior staff instead.

If a manager does talk to you, it's likely to deliver a harsh word of criticism after you've worked hard to do your best in the worst of conditions. We go above and beyond while short-staffed and overworked, and are met only with disapproval from managers who would never be able to handle our jobs. We can't help but ask, what do managers even do?



Update: We will start handing out the newsletters at Kaiser on Wednesdays instead of Tuesdays starting on **Wednesday, Aug. 7**

"On Call" Doesn't Mean at Management's Beck and Call

Kaiser expects a lot from its on call workers - but the obligation seems to only go one way. The most recent SEIU-UHW contract, for example, allows managers to require on calls give up to 10 days per month of availability (including a whopping 4 weekend days). However, on calls are given no guarantees that they will work a single shift in any given month.

While not technically a requirement, many managers have chosen to crack down on on call availability, citing short staffing as the reason for their strictness. However, because of the unreliability and variability of on call work, many of these workers have multiple jobs and can have a hard time giving consistent availability when they can't expect consistent work in return.

Because of this, many on call workers at Kaiser have been forced to resign, only making the short staffing problem worse. Except we must be clear, management and their unrealistic expectations are what's to blame.

CrowdStrike Chaos

On July 19, cybersecurity company CrowdStrike released buggy software that caused many computers internationally that run on the Microsoft Windows operating system to crash. The outage impacted millions of computers across the world and had varying effects on hospitals and health systems across the country, including the Bay Area's Alameda Health System (AHS) and Kaiser Permanente.

The outage had both AHS and Kaiser Permanente management scrambling in the middle of the night to evaluate the impact on operations. Emails were sent out to Highland and Kaiser employees to reboot computers, with an added reminder that hospital staff needed to report to work the following day.

In the end, in the midst of this chaos, it wasn't managers who kept things going. It was healthcare workers in hospitals across the country that kept hospitals running, as well as IT workers who figured out what was going on and resolved the issue.

Join us at our next event...

Our Society in Crisis: We Don't Have to Accept This!

Friday, August 16th @ 7:00pm PST

2727 California St. Berkeley, CA



 speakoutsocialists.org

IG: @sonsocialists

