

Management's Favorite Dance Move

We all know that managers like to dance to the beat of their own drum, and they hardly pay any attention to how the work is actually done. They love to look at their numbers and create metrics in relation to how fast we should be completing our work. They also like to reprimand us for not following their standard times when patients fall outside their metrics. Management is constantly trying to make us do their reshuffle dance, when they don't even know the moves.

We work here, we should have the say on what the beats sounds like, and how our dance is going to look.

We've Always Worked on the Frontlines

The pandemic may have made the term “frontline worker” popular, but we were working on the frontlines before COVID even existed.

However, the crisis we confront every day at work isn't just a virus, it's all the problems of this society. Hospitals (especially “public” ones) are often where people end up when they have nowhere else to go – whether that be because they're homeless, struggling with addiction, the victim of violence, or so pushed down by this world, that they view suicide as the only way out.

So we treat sick people, but we also treat people who have become victims of the sickness of this society; a society that guarantees you nothing, offers little support if you're struggling, and leaves healthcare workers on the hook for trying to clean up the mess.

But in this day and age, the world has more than enough resources for everyone to live a safe and comfortable life – it doesn't have to be this way!

Understaffing is a Pain in the A\$\$ (Literally)

Once again workers at Highland are suffering the consequences of understaffing and extreme workloads. In some departments, the work of two to three people is falling on the shoulders of a single person.

It is no surprise then that workplace injuries are becoming an everyday reality – but this is not okay! Over and over again healthcare workers are told they should be heroes and put their health below everyone else. But it makes no sense that those who make the hospital run should sacrifice their well-being because of work conditions that could have been avoided.

Mourning Shift

We've seen this before – when a shift becomes vacant, we often never see or hear of it again. If we lose someone who is full-time, management replaces them with part-time, if they were part-time, management will hire someone on-call, if at all.

When one of our coworkers transfers to a different department or another facility, we often get together and celebrate their new position, but management just celebrates another way to cut staffing even more. While management is planning the funeral for the position, we are mourning the shift itself.

Working Under the Productivity Police

Productivity is seen as the marker of success in the system that we live in today. This is accelerated in the healthcare system, because we are monitored extremely closely due to the nature of our work. Charting and documentation requirements were put in place for the safety of patients, but are now actively being used to measure our productivity levels.

As healthcare workers, we are judged on the number of patients we are able to handle in a day, regardless of how that pressure affects the quality of care. Due to understaffing, most of us are often exhausted and at the brink of burnout. This creates an environment of competition and toxicity amongst our coworkers, instead of creating a supportive one. These type of working conditions definitely do not center workers and patients, but rather measure human beings as merely products.

