

Speak Out Now in Healthcare

A workplace newsletter for Highland and Kaiser workers

October 16th, 2024

Mental Health is a Struggle at Kaiser

Receiving mental health services at Kaiser can be a significant struggle. Due to chronic short staffing, wait times for patient appointments can stretch to three months! Ironically, even Kaiser employees face these long waits. Kaiser has increasingly encouraged group therapy while patients await their one-on-one appointments, or they outsource patients to other providers when they need consistent therapy. These may seem like helpful options, but they often feel more like a workaround for inadequate staffing rather than a true solution. Unfortunately, because of this, many who need immediate mental support ultimately give up waiting and turn to costly outside therapy options.

But things don't have to be this way! In Southern California, over 2,400 Kaiser Permanente behavioral health workers are fighting back and may potentially go on strike starting October 21st. They are advocating for better staffing, more break time, improved wages, and pensions. Their demands are similar to those of mental health workers in Northern California, who struck last year—even though Kaiser has still fallen short on fulfilling its part of the agreement.

Patients deserve health care options centered on their needs, not on Kaiser's profits, and Kaiser mental health workers are showing the way!

IVF Fluid Shortage: Profit Over Patients

Because of the storms on the East Coast, we've been facing a huge shortage of IV fluids. These are only the most basic essentials for any hospital - IV fluids help resuscitate patients and provide hydration for patients who can't consume enough water. They're also essential for many procedures.

We live on the other side of the country from the areas affected by the hurricanes, yet we're still being forced to operate our hospitals in crisis-like conditions. This is because one facility in North Carolina produces 60% of the nations supply of IV fluids. Have we learned nothing from the baby formula shortage?!

And why are there only four main producers of these essential fluids? Why couldn't other factories have immediately shifted production to fill this need? Why does our healthcare system run on what is profitable instead of what is rational?

This shortage is just one more example of the capitalist system showing us its true colors - our healthcare system is vulnerable when profit matters more than human lives.

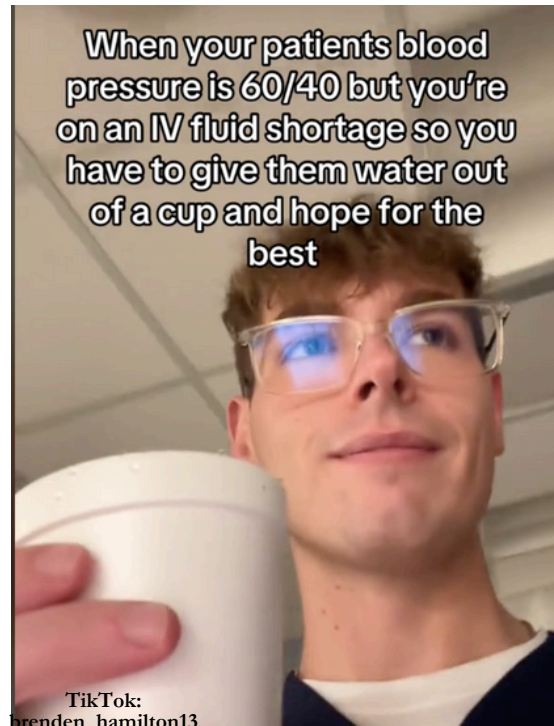
Sign the Petition: AHS Must Divest!

On October 8th, dozens of healthcare workers and community members gathered for a rally outside Highland Hospital to recognize the one year anniversary of the assault on Gaza, and the ongoing genocide in the region. Speakers included Highland physicians, nurse midwives, therapists, and nurses.

Hospital workers circulated a petition demanding that Alameda Health System develop an ethical procurement policy and stop investing our retirement funds in companies that profit off of mass killing and violence.

The divestment petition currently has over 100 employee signatures. If you agree that Alameda Health System should stop investing in this war, sign the petition here:

Money for care, not war!



**Public Meeting This Weekend!
Stop the US/Israeli War on the Middle East**

Sunday, October 20th @ 4pm
Niebyl-Proctor Library in Oakland



 speakoutsocialists.org

IG: @sonsocialists

