

Speak Out Now in Healthcare

A workplace newsletter for Highland and Kaiser workers

December 4th, 2024

AHS Workers Gifted a Hiring Freeze for the Holidays

AHS sent out an email last week that most new hiring will be deferred until after the New Year. They gave a confusing explanation regarding AHS's line of credit via Alameda County called the Net Negative Balance, which helps fund operations, being nearly maxed out. Apparently there has also been a delay in some expected payments. So now, as if the belt wasn't tight enough, the administration is asking us to tighten it even more.

How can it be, that in one of the biggest counties, in one of the wealthiest states, in the wealthiest country, that there aren't enough funds to provide for the health needs of the highest risk population? How is healthcare not a basic priority, that is funded adequately, at all times? It's almost like this system isn't working for us...

Spending Thanksgiving on Strike

The Southern California Kaiser mental health workers' strike continues, now over 40 days in length. Meanwhile, Kaiser has still failed to present a proposal that includes better pay and improved staffing levels.

The long struggle on the picket lines has also led their union, NUHW, to file several complaints and put out press releases regarding Kaiser's practices. One complaint alleges a violation of Medicare regulations due to deliberate understaffing over the years, which has led to an ongoing investigation by the California Department of Public Health.

Another complaint involves a violation of protocol concerning patient appointments during the strike. Kaiser has failed to provide risk assessments for patients during the strike, as well as failing to comply with a mandate to schedule follow-up appointments for patients on the waitlist within two weeks.

These press releases and the ongoing investigation may help the strike by showing the ongoing neglect towards staff and patients, and increase the pressure on the Kaiser administration to meet the workers' demands.

But as of now, as the impasse continues, mental health workers in Southern California remain resolute in their commitment to fight for better working conditions.

Management's Threats Make us Sick

Cold and flu season is upon us! Many of us are waking up with sniffles and sore throats, wondering if we should head into work or call in sick. Management is quick to threaten us about our sick calls, pleading that they are woefully understaffed, and claiming that we can be disciplined for calling out. These threats are not only inhumane but illegal. If you have PTO days available, you have the legal right to call in sick.

Management's most basic responsibility is to hire enough staff, which includes planning for inevitable sick calls. Your responsibility is to take care of yourself and your patients. Many of our patients are immunocompromised, and all of them are vulnerable to complications from additional illness. Put yourself and your patients before management's poor planning. Do us all a favor and call in sick when you are sick!



Upcoming Event: Speak Out Now Holiday Party

Join us for good food, presentations,
literature, and a good time

For location information, ask
the person that handed you this
newsletter or reach out to us on
Instagram @sonsocialists



Saturday, December 7th @ 6 pm



 speakoutsocialists.org

IG: @sonsocialists

