

# Speak Out Now in Healthcare

A workplace newsletter for Highland and Kaiser workers

December 18th, 2024

## AHS Workers Support Divestment

Over 700 AHS workers have signed a petition calling for an ethical investment policy, representing nearly 15% of AHS employees. These workers are standing up to demand that their retirement funds no longer support weapons manufacturers or companies profiting from war. It's time for AHS to align its investments with its stated values, and stop funding industries that contribute to violence - whether in our communities or abroad.

This fight at AHS is part of a larger movement for ethical investment policies. Just last week, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to adopt an ethical investment policy of its own. The county's commitment will redirect funds away from companies profiting from Israel's military occupation of Palestine. This significant victory was made possible by the tireless organizing efforts of activists who pushed for change and mobilized support leading up to the vote.

AHS workers can take inspiration from this win. The county where we work has shown that an ethical investment policy is achievable when people organize and fight for it. With this example in front of us, we have even more reason to believe that we can win an ethical investment policy at AHS, too.

Sign the petition:



## Cancel and Lie? It's the Same Story

In 2022, when Northern California Kaiser mental health workers went on strike for 10 weeks, Kaiser publicly claimed they were finding alternative providers. They did this because even during a strike, Kaiser is required by California law to find appointments with alternative providers in a timely manner and of a similar clinical standard.

Yet the state's Department of Managed Health Care, the agency that regulates managed health care plans, discovered that Kaiser lied and broke the law. Kaiser had canceled over 100,000 appointments without offering timely, comparable care for many patients—and was forced to pay a \$200 million settlement.

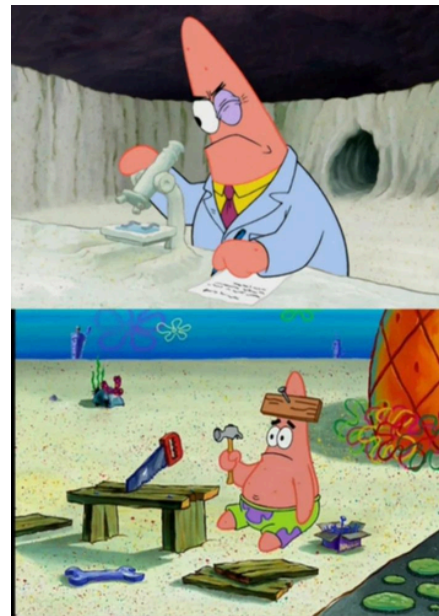
Fast forward to the ongoing southern California Kaiser mental health workers strike, which started on October 21st, and Kaiser is doing the same thing! Despite public assurances, there are reports of widespread cancellations, affecting everything from teen therapy to eating disorder treatments. Is Kaiser breaking the law once more? Would we be surprised if it's the same story?

## What's the Deal With the Double Standard?

When hospital staff come to work, we expect every department to do their part to take care of patients and keep the hospital running. We know we can trust the nurses to provide care, the food service workers to provide the meals, security to keep us safe and environmental services to keep the facility clean. But we all know who routinely fails to uphold their end of the bargain. Management can't seem to manage the simple tasks assigned to them, whether it be hiring enough staff, ordering necessary equipment, completing our schedules on time, or even replying to our emails.

Ironically, those same managers are the ones calling the rest of us into their offices to be disciplined if any of our own tasks aren't completed to the highest standard. While understaffed and overworked, we do our best to prioritize patients over paperwork, then get disciplined if our charting isn't done perfectly in real time. Management comes and goes from their offices as they please, but they'll be quick to ask you to explain yourself if you clock in a minute late.

It is simply unfair that management is held to a lower standard for their performance than workers, especially when we're the ones doing the work, and for less pay!



companies when they hire normal employees

companies when they hire managers

We are taking a break for the holidays.

The Speak Out Now healthcare newsletter will return the week of January 13th.



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