

### UWHCA RNs' Message to the Board of Directors

As professional nurses at University of Wisconsin Hospital & Clinics Authority, we work hard every day to provide the best care to our community.

We are very proud of the unique nursing culture at UWHCA and of the tradition of outstanding direct patient care we have provided to the people of Wisconsin for decades.

Our culture is rooted in a long-standing tradition of mutual respect among our hospital system's administration, board of directors, and organized registered nurses. The reputation for outstanding patient care upon which the UW Health system is built was achieved through positive and productive collaboration with empowered, organized nurses over decades.

This collaboration produced a health care institution that was truly the best place to work and to receive care.

It was the best place to work because we nurses knew it was a core value of the institution that we would have the staffing, resources, and support to deliver the best patient care possible. We knew that in our culture we could boldly advocate for our patients and that our voice would be respected -- and protected.

In recent years we have become increasingly concerned about a shift that we have experienced at UWHCA, a shift away from a core value of fully supporting top quality nursing care, and towards a value of prioritizing maximum corporate profits. Unacceptable changes to staffing levels, nurse/patient ratios and the dissolution of key nursing departments have left thousands of professional nurses without the tools they need to provide the level of care we are capable of providing, and that our patients expect and deserve.

It is these changes that have caused nurses to feel disrespected and betrayed, and concerned for the well-being of our colleagues and our community. It is these changes that have caused many good nurses to leave the organization, exacerbating the current staffing crisis at UWHC.

We stand before you today unified in our urgency in seeking a solution. We believe that operational efficiency at UWHC can be improved without jeopardizing patients or staff, but this requires that the administration respect and collaborate with professional nurses, rather than ignoring us.

We want to make it very clear, as we present our demands, that we represent the voice of a majority of the Registered Nurses at the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority.

We have formed a union, and have chosen SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin to be our representative, as shown by the authorization cards we are delivering to you today.

We respectfully demand the following today from this governing board:

1. **Voluntarily recognize our union.** We demand a return to the decades-long tradition of productive and positive collaboration with organized labor that made UWHC the kind of remarkable hospital system Wisconsin citizens deserve. This Board has the authority to voluntarily recognize and enter into a meet-and-confer process with our union, SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin, with the goal of reaching an agreement regarding terms and conditions of employment.
2. **Meet and confer with us regarding staffing and scheduling concerns,** with the highest priority being placed on setting safe and appropriate nurse/patient ratios for every nursing unit.
3. **Restore the just-cause standard and Weingarten rights for all.** These long-standing, fundamental workplace rights at UWHC were eliminated by the current hospital leadership. These rights are essential to re-establish an environment in which nurses are able to function as fearless patient advocates and trusted leaders of the health care delivery team.

We respect the leadership of this Board, and we truly believe that you all want what's best for our patients and our community.

We believe that with a strong spirit of collaboration between our union of nurses, this Board, and the hospital administration, we can continue the tradition of UWHCA being the best place to work and receive care.

We look forward to hearing back from you in the New Year. In the meantime, we'll be reaching out to each of you to schedule time to meet so you can hear from us and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.