

CRONA RESPONSE: Hospital Negotiation Update on 3/20

In a message titled "Update on CRONA Negotiations" sent on Wednesday afternoon, hospital leadership provided nurses with some information about the economic package they presented to CRONA. CRONA will respond to the hospitals' proposals at the bargaining table and continue providing negotiation updates throughout the weekend. But we want to take a moment to respond to the hospitals' message.

Their message underscores some key differences between CRONA's vision for Nurses and the hospitals'.

CRONA believes that Stanford and Packard should be a place where Nurses want to come and want to stay.

The hospitals believe that a wages and benefits package that does not out-compete other Northern California hospitals should be enough to attract experienced and skilled Nurses to come here from other hospitals. Our current staffing crisis suggests that the hospitals are wrong. The hospitals' package seeks to just keep up with other hospitals. But CRONA believes that close enough is not good enough. World-class patient care, and the Nurses who provide it, should have wages and benefits to match.

CRONA believes the hospitals can and should do more to improve retention.

The hospitals appear to believe that their current turnover rates are acceptable and simply part of doing business. We know, and we have heard from you, that the hospitals need to make significant changes if they are serious about recruiting and retaining top-quality Nurses. Turnover and understaffing don't just hurt Nurses. They have negative effects for patient care, and even for the hospitals' bottom line. Turnover and understaffing should not be the goal or even the benchmark. They are solvable problems. The solution is improved wages, benefits and working conditions.

CRONA believes that if leaders care about Nurses who devote their careers to the hospitals, they should offer a retirement package that reflects that commitment.

Our retirees who have devoted their lives to providing quality patient care should have affordable access to medical care when they retire. The hospitals' proposed increase to the "Group D" retiree medical benefit – a lump sum payment – is not nearly enough to close the gap. The proposed increase would only amount to a "catch up" with cost-of-living increases through December 2018, not an improvement. The hospitals tout their proposed benefit as being between \$6,400 and \$39,360. *This is not enough.* If you retire before age 65, just one year of retiree-and-spouse coverage through the hospitals' network, *at today's prices*, costs \$56,220, and one year of retiree-only coverage costs \$25,680.

CRONA believes that a supportive and respectful work environment is key to ensuring that Nurses want to stay and help the hospitals provide world-class patient care.

The hospitals want the right to make precepting mandatory, instead of agreeing to CRONA's proposals for additional incentives and support for Nurses who want to precept. They claim this is necessary, even though they have failed to explain why they can't find willing preceptors. The hospitals also want the ability to make attendance policies stricter, and to **eliminate some key protections for part-time positions.**

CRONA Nurses Know: We deserve better, and we will continue to stand strong.