



## ADDRESSING STAFFING SHORTAGES IN THE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE THROUGH ORGANIZING

**WHEREAS:** Nursing staff includes an entire care team comprising multiple disciplines and ancillary staff; and

**WHEREAS:** Advanced practice nurses and non-nurse disciplines, including, but not limited to, physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, surgical assistants, radiation technologists and all other providers of direct patient care are crucial to delivery of high-quality care; and

**WHEREAS:** Patient care associates, patient transporters, and other healthcare titles are crucial to ensuring safe, high-quality care for patients; and unprecedented vacancies in these positions have been created due to safety concerns, inequitable compensation, and other poor working conditions, which are felt at the bedside; and

**WHEREAS:** Working conditions in clinical settings have deteriorated to the point where experienced professionals are leaving the bedside, new professionals are taking jobs outside of healthcare, and vacancies in ancillary jobs are critically unfilled; and

**WHEREAS:** Excessive overtime, misuse of on-call for staffing, overreliance on travel and contract staff, and unmanageable patient care assignments have become normalized; and

**WHEREAS:** Being expected to work more hours with fewer resources – putting their own health, the health of their patients and the health of their families at risk – have resulted in an adverse work environment wrought with ethical challenges that have left healthcare professionals feeling completely unsupported and morally injured; and

**WHEREAS:** Unfair and inadequate pay practices exist, such as the refusal to increase wages for experienced healthcare workers, low starting wages for hard-to-fill positions, and failure to pay ancillary staff a living wage; these are contributing factors to both new and experienced health professionals leaving their jobs: a dynamic that is exacerbating shortages; and

**WHEREAS:** Employers and industry stakeholder groups are actively working to maximize profits – by cheapening care delivery through efforts to deskill our professions and seeking out cheaper labor forces – which complicates delivery of care, erodes scope of practice for a multitude of health disciplines, and threatens our jobs; and

**WHEREAS:** With unions, the power is with workers – having a seat at the table to advocate for better working conditions, benefits, and pay strengthens our workforce – when workers are empowered to advocate for their best interests and those of their co-workers, their power grows and the union way expands; and

**WHEREAS:** In today's health care environment being part of a union is about more than wages and benefits – it is about patient advocacy, protecting nursing practice, safe staffing levels and ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for registered nurses and health care professionals; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Ohio State University Nurses Organization (OSUNO) will refocus on internal union density, continuing to organize those members who have never signed up or opted out, and adapting, where possible, to best represent our membership as a whole.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** OSUNO recognizes and embraces the power of union density, not only in nursing, but in the entire healthcare workforce. This power enables healthcare employees to reallocate money from executive pockets to instead invest in safe and healthy work environments, safe staffing, and competitive wages for those who are performing the essential daily work necessary to safely care for our patients.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** OSUNO will build coalitions with existing labor organizations in Central Ohio to increase our collective power and influence both at the bargaining table and as issues arise on the medical campus.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** OSUNO will promote prolabor candidates in all levels of government who will actively promote and introduce legislation that protects patients, professional practice and benefits working people.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** OSUNO will actively seek organizing leads for unorganized workers at OSU who express an interest in collective activity, whether that be through ONA or another labor organization.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** OSUNO will actively support current and future ONA organizing efforts on campus and in the area, including the OSU respiratory therapists and bone marrow transplant coordinators.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: OSUNO will actively support the organizing efforts of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) to organize PCAs at OSU, building on the national partnership between the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and IAM.**

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:** OSUNO will bring bylaws changes to the 2023 ONA House of Delegates, working with locals across Ohio, to ensure that all healthcare professionals can benefit from being ONA collective bargaining members in the future.

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