

# St. Joseph RNs: Are You Ready for a Pay Cut?



Providence management made their wage proposals to our Union Bargaining Team on August 31, and it is not pretty. In fact, it's downright ugly. If their wage proposal, in combination with how management wants to change Clinical Ladder, becomes reality, **only those who are due anniversary increases and do not currently participate in Clinical Ladder will receive raises.** Many RNs will receive a **pay cut.**

Under management's plan, those RNs whose base hourly rate is below their appropriate step rate would be moved up to the step rate defined by their current years of experience in October of each year of the three-year contract. **Management would NOT provide any cost-of-living raises, even though the cost of living goes up about 2 percent a year.**

Management also wants to completely

change the Clinical Ladder that we spent the past seven years researching, planning and implementing. Forty percent of St. Joseph RNs participate in Clinical Ladder.

If management has their way, about 60 percent of current Clinical Ladder participants will either not be eligible for CL or will be moved down to a lower level. In order to get back on the Clinical Ladder, you'll have to pay between \$20,000 and \$40,000 to get one or more college degrees, depending on where you are on the Clinical Ladder.

Not only will many RNs be knocked off the Clinical Ladder, but the 3 to 6 percent pay increases will be converted to "bonuses" of \$2,500 per year for Level III, \$5,000 per year for Level IV and \$10,000 per year for Level V. Per diem RNs would not be eligible for Clinical Ladder at all. This amount of compensation won't be worth the effort for most.

## Following are the criteria that management wants for Clinical Ladder:

**Level I:** Graduation from an approved school of nursing and passed CA NCLEX. No additional pay.

**Level II:** At least 1,872 career practice hours with a BSN or MSN, or at least 3,744 career hours with an ADN or diploma in the same clinical area. No additional pay.

**Level III:** At least 1,872 practice hours with a BSN or MSN in the same clinical area. \$2,500 bonus per year. Areas of activity and point values: 40 percent must be clinical, 35 percent must be educational and 25 percent can be in any category, but must include research/evidence based practice promotion and shared governance.

**Level IV:** At least 3,744 practice hours with an MSN in the same clinical area. \$5,000 bonus per year. Same areas of activity and point values as Level III.

**Level V:** At least 5,616 practice hours and a Master's Degree in clinical specialty and CA license as an APN. \$10,000 bonus per year.

Areas for activity and point values: 70 percent must be a combination of clinical and/or educational, 10 percent must be research/evidence-based practice promotion and 20 percent can be in any category, but must include certification and shared governance.

"We have nurses who have given the hospital 30 years and who would get a pay cut because they only have an RN diploma and won't be eligible for Clinical Ladder. They're not going back to school. They'll just migrate to another hospital. Good nurses won't have a hard time finding another job."

- **Shelley Vickrey**, Bargaining Team

"St. Joseph wants to be a magnet-status hospital but their proposed Clinical Ladder will make it nearly impossible for anyone to progress. How do they expect to be a magnet hospital when it requires Clinical Ladder participation?"

- **Eileen Kenney**, Bargaining Team

"This proposal doesn't even include standard of living raises. For the next three years, RNs not due an anniversary increase will be at the same pay rate or their pay will go down if they no longer qualify for Clinical Ladder. I myself would receive a 6 percent pay cut because I don't have a Master's Degree."

- **Stella Kennedy**, Bargaining Team

"Apparently if you have 20 or 30 years and you're an ADN, you're not worth anything to St. Joseph management. Is this the right thing to do?" - **Kevin Mac Vane**, Bargaining Team

**Nurse Power!**

We have the power to stand united and make management give us a fair contract. St. Joseph is jumping on the "bad economic times" bandwagon even though they continue to show healthy operating income. **Our Bargaining Team is distributing "Nurse Power" buttons for RNs to wear.** Proudly pin them on to show management that we won't accept this disrespectful proposal.