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June 21, 2019

Manistee Hospital Files Unfair Labor Practice Charge Against Michigan Nurses Association

Munson Healthcare Manistee Hospital filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge against the Michigan Nurses Association (MNA) on Thursday, June 20.

The MNA violated federal law when it engaged in a pattern of behavior designed to frustrate and delay the bargaining process. The MNA's behavior has resulted in nurses being denied annual general wage increases for the past two years.

"The MNA's actions are not in the best interest of nurses who are valuable members of the Health Care Team," said Kim Weckesser, director of Human Resources at Manistee Hospital. "Nurses who care for our community deserve to be treated better and deserve to receive their wage increases at the same time as other employees."

A full copy of the ULP charge that explains the hospital's position is available at:

<http://munsonhealthcare.org/manistee/collectivebargaining>.

The delivery of health care continues to change rapidly, and it has become critical for community hospitals to be tightly integrated into a larger health system in order to survive. Munson Healthcare's benefits package as a non-profit entity is slightly different than that of the former West Shore Medical Center, which was a government-owned entity.

The changes proposed by the hospital remain both competitive and generous in today's economy. The benefits and pension plan proposed to the nurses are identical to what the other hospital staff receive.

"The hospital has been more than patient and willing to negotiate, but has not received the same courtesy in return," explains Weckesser. "We made it clear that we needed to move forward with pay increases and minimal changes to retirement and health care plan benefits by July 1, 2019, but have been unable to do so because of the union's tactics to frustrate and delay the collective bargaining process. It is difficult to find common ground when you do not know what the other side wants."

Manistee Hospital has always and will continue to make decisions with the best interests of employees and patients in mind. The proposal the hospital provided to the union is fair and in the best interests of nurses and the entire Health Care Team at Manistee Hospital and throughout the Munson Healthcare system.

Since January 2018 — nearly 18 months — the hospital and nurses have been operating on a day-to-day extension of the prior collective bargaining agreement.



“Nurses deserve to have closure and a new contract in a timely manner. The hospital has done everything it can up to this point to complete contract negotiations,” adds Weckesser.

Manistee Hospital continues to invest in the health of the community, offering a range of specialty care including gynecology, pediatrics, urology, orthopedics, neurology, general surgery, family practice, wound care, and internal medicine. Despite constant changes in health care legislation that directly impact community hospitals, Manistee Hospital remains a strong asset to residents and is committed to ensuring a sustainable future for the organization. The hospital can only do so if organizations like the MNA are willing to bargain in good faith and complete contract negotiations.

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