



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Seton Medical Center — Seton Coastside

APRIL 2020

SAVED FROM CLOSURE, SETON LOOKS FORWARD

It's been incredibly inspiring to see how NUHW members at Seton, despite anxiety about the Verity bankruptcy, have stepped up during these challenging to keep Seton and Coastside open.

We were days away from actual closure. In that moment NUHW turned to Supervisor Canepa to lead San Mateo County into making a greater commitment to keep Seton open. Our eleventh hour rally to attend several San Mateo Board of Supervisors meetings made it clear to the County

Administrator and the Public Health Director that the loss of Seton Medical Center and Seton Coastside would create a healthcare catastrophe in the middle of a pandemic.

Together, we won a \$20 million commitment from San Mateo County; the following week, Governor Gavin Newsom committed millions more for Seton to remain open and continue to operate and receive COVID-19 patients. These commitments have given AHMC a little more time to negotiate its purchase of Seton and to block SGM-KPC, whose failed attempts to acquire Verity facilities resulted in the closure of St. Vincent's Hospital in Los Angeles and had our Seton Medical Center and Seton Coastside on the brink of closure.

Just this last week, the Bankruptcy Court approved the sale to AHMC to go forward. **In the coming weeks, the Attorney General will set forth conditions on the sale and we will begin the process to negotiate a new contract based not on the contract that was never implemented with SGM-KPC, but on our existing contract that has covered us since 2016.**

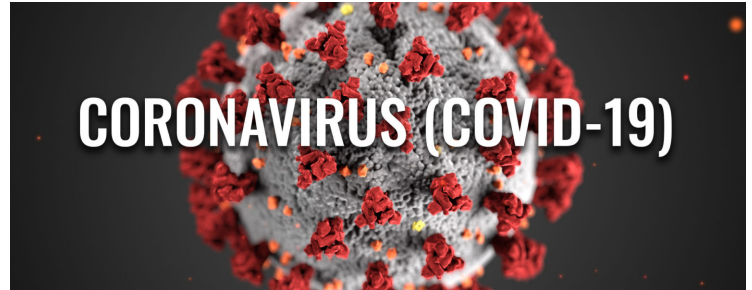
No sooner had we worked together to save the hospital, we had to prepare for a surge of coronavirus patients. We lacked supplies and training for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other vital equipment. As the hospital prepared for the surge, the administration cancelled elective cases and consolidated floors, cutting back on our scheduled hours of work. These changes have been hard on workers at Seton, many of whom have lost shifts and steady income, while many others have stepped up into more hazardous work serving on the frontlines of the pandemic.



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NUHW COVID-19 WEBSITE FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

NUHW staff have been researching and compiling information and resources for raising safety standards in the workplace and keeping healthcare workers financially stable during the pandemic. You can find all this information at **[NUHW.org/COVID-19](https://nuhw.org/COVID-19)**.



The website includes *NUHW-COVID-19 Workplace Safety Policies* to raise the standards for the safety for all healthcare workers in our facilities and NUHW's *COVID-19 Healthcare Workers Bill of Rights*. These two documents can be the gold standard for the entire healthcare industry at this time. Seton stewards and leaders have prioritized several of these policies to press management to adopt the highest healthcare worker protections possible. UHW leaders at Seton have advocated for more PPE, stronger training for frontline workers, access to testing, alternative shifts to maintain income, respect for seniority and compliance with our contract.

The response from Seton Management has been mixed and over the past couple of weeks as the cancellations have continued and the census has dropped, management has increased cancellations, moved workers out of their regular shifts, scheduling alternative assignments discriminatorily, causing great frustration and anxiety among the workers. We have responded with a unity petition demanding respect from management.

Healthcare Workers shouldn't be economically insecure during this pandemic. The \$2.7 trillion federal stimulus package that provides enhanced unemployment benefits also includes \$100 billion for hospitals, nursing homes and clinics to "support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19." NUHW researchers are closely tracking the allocation of federal stimulus dollars and our researchers are estimating that Seton has received \$2,931,267 in federal dollars on top of the millions that Seton is receiving each month from the State of California.

It is NUHW's position that our healthcare facilities shouldn't be cutting hours for workers during a pandemic, especially facilities operated by healthcare corporations that are pocketing federal relief funds. Together, we need to make sure Seton treats NUHW members fairly and does not exploit the crisis to further their bottom line.

We will continue to monitor how much Seton draws down from their stimulus allocation and advocate that they do their duty to provide opportunities so workers can earn their full paychecks.

Please remember that people who lose shifts may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. For more information about applying for unemployment, visit nuhw.org/covid-19/navigating-benefits/.

For more information, please contact NUHW Organizer John Avalos at (415) 359-8367 or javalos@nuhw.org.