

Media Advisory

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Washington Hospital Center RNs Call One-Day Strike March 4 *Cite Patient Safety Concerns, Negotiations with Hospital Continue*

Registered nurses at Washington D.C.'s largest hospital, Washington Hospital Center, announced plans today for a one-day walkout on Friday, March 4.

The strike announcement follows negotiation sessions Thursday, Friday and Monday that the nurses say produced insufficient progress toward resolving the RNs' primary concerns regarding serious patient safety problems and nursing standards at the hospital. Talks are scheduled to continue today.

Some 1,650 Washington Hospital Center RNs are represented by National Nurses United, the nation's largest union and professional association of nurses.

In addition to patient care concerns, WHC RNs also object to attempts to cut nurses' pay and benefits, and charge that the company violated federal labor law in implementing cuts in workplace and economic standards.

The hospital is owned by the MedStar Health chain whose policies the nurses say have eroded patient care conditions and has prompted an exodus of hundreds of experienced RNs from Washington Hospital Center further undercutting care standards.

WHC RNs voted overwhelmingly last week to grant the RN Facility Bargaining Council authorization to call a walkout. The nurses last week also released the findings of internal survey of hospital employees conducted by the hospital last year which showed a significant percentage of WHC employees believe the hospital is lacking in patient safety.

WHC RNs have been without a contract since last June. NNU has represented the nurses since last October.

NNU was founded in 2009 by the California Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee, United American Nurses, and Massachusetts Nurses Association

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