

MILLRISE BARGAINING SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

Your bargaining committee would like to thank all the members who took the time to fill in our bargaining survey. Members across all departments completed the survey and told us about your concerns, which gave us a good understanding of the problems we are facing collectively in our workplace.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Members identified workload as their top concern with impacts on their own health as they struggle to provide care to more residents with higher care needs than staff can manage. At the same time, the survey results paint a picture of a membership struggling to make ends meet because of low pay and inadequate benefits.

Wages

62% of respondents said that wages at Millrise are not enough to keep up with the cost of living and 51% struggle to pay for basic costs like housing and food. 60% said that they have had to take on other jobs to make ends meet, and 56% said that the wages don't reflect the value of our work and the workload we deal with.

One solution which 96% of members want is an automatic Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

Here is what members said in their own words about wages:

- *Suggest that company will auto increase salary every year [. . .] to help with the high cost of living up every year due to inflation and other factors.*
- *The salary we receive is not enough for cost of living nowadays. We need to have more increase every year and retro also.*
- *You work so hard but you don't bring much home. It's stressful.*
- *In this current wage I hardly bear with the expenses of family of 4.*
- *We need increase to meet our necessity.*
- *We should have a wage increase that matches our cost of living.*
- *Need salary increase. [We have the] lowest wages than other facilities.*

To make matters worse, many people are struggling with frequent payroll errors that are not corrected efficiently:

- *Since joining SE Health, there have consistently been payroll discrepancies.*
- *Total computation of your salary does not match to your hours that you had worked for. Accounting should explain how they come up with that total salary. Accounting staff should have time to discuss with the employee.*

Workload

73% said absent workers are not replaced and 55% said staffing levels, scheduling and workload are not appropriate, with members pointing to LTC, kitchen and recreation as areas where the staffing and workload problems are the worst. As a result, 49% said heavy workloads are damaging to their health (mental and/or physical) and 39% said that the level of care for residents is not appropriate.

- *Getting a lot of Residents and still the same staffing*
- *Scheduling is the big issue here in Millrise*
- *We are overly short-staffed.*
- *Absent staff adds up to workload of another which is not fair.*
- *Sometimes you have to work alone in the floor.*
- *3 nurses are not enough with the increasing population in SL. Moreover, there are just 2 nurses sometimes when there is no coverage found.*
- *LTC is always short, and the workload is too much. Residents need more help and care.*
- *Staffing and scheduling—nurses need to deal with it every single day.*

Health and RRSP Benefits

One quarter of respondents were not eligible at all for benefits, while those who are eligible identified the top areas where the coverage was not sufficient (especially for vision and dental), expressing frustration that the premiums were higher and the coverage lower than at other seniors care employers. 44% were concerned that the RRSP benefits are lower than at other seniors care employers.

- *They have to increase the coverage. Lower the contributions.*
- *They need to increase everything.*
- *Not fair that I do not qualify for benefits.*
- *Benefits should be made available to part time 0.4 as other facilities.*
- *More benefits to be covered like eyeglasses and dental.*

Health and Safety and Workplace Culture

58% of respondents said that a stressful environment at work is damaging to their mental/physical health. 39% also worry that new staff are not trained adequately. Comments identified management treatment as a big part of the problem:

- *Top management has poor communication and intimidating personality.*
- *They should treat everyone one the same not having preferences.*

In particular, management practices regarding sick leave, especially demands for medical notes and inefficient (or non-existent) processes to replace absences are creating strain. 42% said they had come to work sick because they were concerned about their coworkers working short and the same number said that sick note requirements make it difficult to use sick leave.

- *It's weird to get a doctor's note if you had a sickness like covid if you can't actually go out. Then at work they are counting that as you being sick and giving us a letter from the management saying that we did too much sick call.*
- *No replacement for staff that called sick. No communication that there was a sick call received to on-duty staff that will work for the next shift.*
- *Absent or sick staff [should] be replaced immediately to avoid missed care on residents and heavy workloads on staff working each shift.*

There is also simply not enough sick leave. Many respondents expect more sick hours as well as more vacation time, especially for senior staff, and a better process to approve vacation.

- *More vacation hours for staff with higher seniority. Currently it's 10 years and above for the most senior. [. . .] More sick hours.*
- *More vacation hours for staff that have worked longer in the facility. More vacation hours for employees that worked more than 13 years, 15 years and so on. More vacation hours accumulations and more sick hours.*
- *Scheduler must notify staff if vacation applied is approved or not. Annual vacation should approve 2 weeks after deadline date of submission according to seniority.*

TAKING ACTION

The majority of respondents said that they would take various kinds of action to help us achieve our bargaining priorities. For example, members said that they would share union information, wear union buttons, sign petitions, attend rallies or even vote in favour of strike action if the employer refuses to meet our bargaining priorities.

It is also important that members inform themselves about their rights and entitlements under the collective agreement and bring forward any concerns and potential violations in a timely manner. When the employer is not following the collective agreement, members need to file grievances.

NEXT STEPS

We will be meeting as the bargaining committee again soon to take what you told us in the bargaining survey and turn it into our ingoing proposals for bargaining. Then we will exchange proposals with our employer, and we will keep you posted on the details of those meetings.

If you have any questions, concerns or would like more information, please get in touch with your team!

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