

The Contract That Never Happened

After a five-day strike last October, it was obvious that the workers at Alameda Health System in the Bay Area were fed up with management's takeaways and threats on their rights. After the strike, the energy felt by the workers was palpable. People felt like they had truly shown their strength. The CEO resigned, and the highly criticized board of trustees were asked to resign and to reapply for their positions by the county board of supervisors.

But now, almost five months later, even after such a show of strength and power by the workers, AHS management still seems to think that they can get away with offering a crappy contract. They are still refusing to give workers a decent wage increase, and they refuse to accept the proposed staffing requirements posed by the union.

It is obvious that AHS management still doesn't care about the workers who have sacrificed so much during this pandemic and before. It is also obvious that in order to get the contract they deserve, the workers will have to continue to wage a fight.

Kaiser Needs a Compass

In the latest example of the inefficiency of our healthcare system, Kaiser recently sent multiple patients to the wrong location to get their COVID vaccine. So once patients arrived at the address provided by Kaiser, they were redirected to a location more than two miles away - a forty-minute walk!

No apologies were provided, and patients either had to find their own way there or wait twenty minutes to pile into a shuttle - if they were even told it existed! This meant many were late to their appointments, and all had to spend more time and energy than they anticipated. All of this to get a shot it feels like you already have to jump through hoops to get.

Getting lifesaving care shouldn't be this difficult, and no one should have to chase after a vaccine that should be readily accessible to everyone in the first place.

Speak Out Now – Online Townhall

Workers of the World: *Growth, Change and Rebellion* with Kim Moody

Sat. March 20, 10:30am (PST), 1:30pm (EST)

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Less is Not More

Right now, COVID cases in California are down 90% compared to the peak of cases seen in January. However, the total of new cases over the past two weeks is 3,832, which is comparable with peaks seen in July and August.

So, while the number of positive patients is low for now, we should still be as prepared as possible for another wave of cases coming into hospitals.

This brief lull in the busy-ness brought on by the pandemic would be the perfect time to solve some of the structural problems that existed even before COVID, like insufficient staffing. Hospital workers have been dealing with chronic understaffing for a long time. Management's favorite way to sweep this problem under the rug has been to offer up overtime, which is paid usually at time and a half. In normal times (which were also crazy), this kinda worked...if only barely. But with everything that hospital workers have been through over the past year, now time and a half isn't worth it to volunteer for more hours. So, the existing problems that face hospital workers have only gotten worse.

It's madness to try and piece together enough shift coverage with people that may or may not volunteer their time. Instead of crossing their fingers, hospitals need to hire more staff.

