THE POWER OF POSITIVE PARTNERSHIP
VOLUNTEERS IN A REPRESENTED ENVIRONMENT

Kathleen J. McIntire
Kaiser Permanente
Los Angeles Medical Center
Labor Law 101

• Governing laws
  – Private hospitals
    • National Labor Relations Act
    • Enforcement Agency - National Labor Relations Board
      – Board members are appointed; governed by the party that is in power
    • Significant body of law has developed
**Labor Law 101**

- Governing laws
  - Public hospitals
    - UC – HEERA
    - County/District - Myers Millias Brown Act
      - Authorizes Employee Relations Ordinance
    - Enforcement Agency - Public Employment Relations Board
    - Most disputes resolved informally so not a large body of law
Labor Law 101

• Terms
  – Collective bargaining agreement (private)
  – Memorandum of Understanding (public)
    • Contract that sets forth the terms and conditions of the parties’ relationship for a defined period of time
    • Wages, benefits, seniority, discipline, management rights, etc.
    • Generally sets forth a grievance/arbitration process
    • Parties may also have side agreements
    • Past practice is also highly relevant
Labor Law 101

• Terms
  – Bargaining Unit
    • Employee job classifications covered by the collective bargaining agreement/memorandum of understanding
Labor Law 101

• Terms
  – Bargain (private)
  – Meet and confer (public)
    • Process by which a lawfully binding agreement is developed
    • Some topics are mandatory subjects of bargaining (wages, benefits); others are permissive (retiree health benefits, union dues, definition of the bargaining unit); others are illegal (violation of the law)
    • Must be conducted in “good faith”
PARTNERSHIP

• “No doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

  Margaret Mead
FACT OR FICTION

• Volunteers cannot be placed in an union environment/department.

• Volunteers can only do filing, copying and answering phones.

• It is impossible to place nursing students on the nursing units.

• Volunteers cannot push wheelchairs or discharge patients.
IT’S ALL ABOUT PREPARATION

- In order for a Labor/Management Partnership to be successful with volunteers, we as Directors, Managers, staff must:

  - Set aside any preconceived ideas about Union Stewards or Labor Partners, contract negotiations, etc.

  - Be willing to think outside the box – set aside any preconceived ideas about how the Labor Partners might respond.

  - Be open minded when communicating with Labor Partners -- willing to really listen.
IT’S ALL ABOUT EDUCATION

Labor Partners may have a misguided understanding of volunteers that stems from years of misinformation and old fashioned thinking.

I surveyed my labor partners and found their most common concerns with volunteers are:

• Volunteers are replacing paid positions.
• Volunteers are lazy and uneducated.
• Volunteers are only here to find a job.
• They take more time than they do help.
• They are unreliable.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR LABOR PARTNERS CONCERNS ARE???

WHAT MISGUIDED INFORMATION ARE THEY SITTING ON?
IT’S ALL IN THE WORDS

• Never use terms such as “them” and “us” – it’s all about common ground.

• When speaking with Labor Partners, it is important to utilize phrases & terms such as:
  – “We are here to partner with you.”
  – “We are here to ensure your team is a success.”
  – “Our volunteers want to see you succeed at meeting and exceeding your goals.”
VOLUNTEERS 101

• HOW DO WE DISPELL THESE MYTHS:
  – We created a Volunteers 101 Training Course and required each Manager and/or their labor partner to attend in order to have volunteers placed in their department.
  
  – This was completed for all departments currently using volunteers – we had 100% compliance.
  
  – When a request for volunteers comes in from a department that has not utilized our services, we set up a time to come and meet with them.
VOLUNTEERS 101

– Training includes:
  • Myths about volunteers
  • Volunteer recruitment, onboarding and placement
  • Volunteers Do’s and Don’ts
  • Volunteer Orientation
  • Responsibility of Volunteer Office and Department Managers/Labor Partners
  • Disciplinary Process/ Rules & Regulations

– I stressed the power of mentorship and asked them to think of someone who mentored them and how it affected their career path! They get to make that difference in our volunteers lives.
VOLUNTEER 101 RESULTS

– This training dispelled fears and myths that were unspoken.

– Allowed for Labor and Managers to ask questions and gained a sense of trust with my program and my true intentions of partnership.

– Empowered them to mentor and make a difference in the future generations.

– We were able to track the increased length of service by volunteers and department satisfaction that was in direct correlation with this training.
VOLUNTEER 101 RESULTS

• Volunteers stated “I feel like the department understands my role so much better and truly values the work I am doing”.

• Staff have stated that they really understand the power of having volunteers to assist them in completing their goals each day.

• One staff member stated “I love the fact that I get to Mentor someone into a career that I absolutely love!”

PARTNERSHIP AT IT’S BEST!
SO WHATS NEXT

• Once you have developed a sense of trust and understanding about your program and its inner workings.... it’s time to identify need.

• Set up a meeting with Department Manager, Labor Partner and other staff as required.

• Review their current HCAPHS Scores, surveys or other tools used to assess satisfaction.
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

• Ask your labor partners and staff to name three tasks that if done by volunteers would make their workload a little easier.
  
  – Think outside the box, beyond filing and answering phones.....data entry projects, rounding on patients

• Is this doable? Is it within boundaries of the volunteer role? Does the Labor Partner feel comfortable with a volunteer completing such tasks. (Remember we are partners!!!!)
IT’S IN THE WHO......

• Look For Resources
  – I reviewed my current base of applicants and active volunteers to see already established relationships with schools, community agencies.

  – Include your Labor Partners in the process. Look to the experts – this keeps them engaged in the process and continues to build relationships.
    – Where did they go to school?
    – Do they know schools for their specific field?
Partnership in the Paper

• Once tasks have been developed, sit down as a team and write:
  – the service description
  – training materials

• Have all members including labor partners review and sign off on all materials and processes.

• Finally set up a meeting 30 days after for all parties to get together and share their observations.
OUR SUCCESS STORY

• In 2010, I was called into a Care Experience Council meeting. After reviewing our HCAPHS Scores it was identified that we needed to work on:
  – Nursing communication
  – Response to call lights
  – Patient overall satisfaction

• The question was asked... what can you do to assist in improving these scores?
IT’S ALL ABOUT LISTENING

- To get a better understanding of the needs, I asked the CNO to call a meeting that had the following representatives:
  - Nursing Managers of 3 lowest scoring depts.
  - Clinical Nurse Coordinators
  - Ward Clerk
  - Labor Partner for each unit
- To include them made them a part of the solution and showed a sign of respect that I valued their role in the organization
WHAT IS REAL....

• Assess the situation
  – Nursing staff were overwhelmed with reports, daily duties, multiple tasks and full wards.
  – Union contracts were in negotiation so I needed to tread lightly.
  – Administration was looking for viable solutions to increase scores & increase patient satisfaction.
  – They wanted solutions and not excuses.
  – We had never placed volunteers in nursing units before.
IT’S ALL ABOUT LISTENING....

• They shared their struggles with:
  – Increased training and reporting
  – Excessive call lights
  – Patients seem to need more hand holding
  – Rounding with purpose
  – Numerous housekeeping calls and follow-up
Care Partner Volunteers

As a TEAM we developed a two-tier nursing program.

CARE PARTNERS

• These are 1st and 2nd year nursing students.

• This was to assist the needs of the Ward Clerks, staff nurses and overall department.

• This role answers call lights, rounds on patients, stocks patient rooms, calls EVS, Dietary, engineering or other non-clinical depts. for housekeeping issues.
CNC Liaison Volunteers

• This role is for our 3\textsuperscript{rd}/4\textsuperscript{th} year students along with LVN’s, RN’s that are looking for more experience in the nursing field.

• These volunteers are learning about Nursing Leadership from the very best!

• These volunteers round daily on our members with a set of questions to ensure that we are meeting their total care experience. They assist with problem resolution and participate in projects and assist in processes to ensure our departments meet their goals and exceed the expectations of our patients.
POSITIVE PARTNERSHIP

• Over the past year we have on boarded 18 CNC Liaisons and 73 Care Partners in various nursing units.

• Care Partners who finish their 2\textsuperscript{nd} year of Nursing program will graduate to CNC Liaison in June.

• Our program is now well-known in many of the local nursing programs.

• We as a team re-evaluated our program and found some areas for improvement:
  – Stronger communication with staff about roles
  – Clarification of differences between roles of staff
A NEW WORLD HAS BEGUN

• The success of this partnership has led to other represented departments wanting to meet and look outside the box and identify ways that volunteers can help them succeed!

IT’S A NEW WORLD
THERE IS POWER IN PARTNERSHIP!!!
QUESTIONS?