

# JOINT MEMO



**To:** *Members/Employees of Fraser Health Authority; BC Nurses' Union*

**From:** *Strategic Nurse Staffing Committee (FHA-BCNU)*

**Date:** *October 15, 2020*

**Subject:** *Strategic Nurse Staffing Committee update*

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The Strategic Nurse Staffing Committee (SNSC) for Fraser Health (FH) met on **Thursday, August 4, 2020**.

The committee discussed the following key topics:

## **Surgical Training and Recovery**

As mentioned in the August 4, 2020 memo, FH was the first health authority in BC to initiate the recovery of cancelled surgeries for the past two reporting periods. Currently, there are no changes to this recovery plan. The employer will continue to inform the BCNU of progress milestones.

## **Creative Staffing Strategies**

BCNU and FH are in discussions to implement the casual availability bonus (CAB) for a trial period in the emergency departments at the following hospitals: Abbotsford Regional, Langley Memorial, and Surrey Memorial.

## **Regional Workforce Coordination Centre**

As part of the COVID-19 Recovery and Surgical Renewal plan, FH is recruiting over 250 new nursing positions. To date, more than 50 have been hired and 23 nurses have enrolled in perioperative or post-anesthetic recovery education from June 1 – Aug 15. Regarding hiring, BCNU will continue to flag areas of concern about specialty education and vacancies.

## **New Graduate Nurses**

Fraser Health continues to offer a successful interprofessional new graduate program providing education, transition support, and supernumerary mentorship hours to new graduates. More recently, the education components have shifted to virtual learning platforms. New graduates whose practicums were impacted by COVID-19 have had access to additional supernumerary hours when needed. The committee explored avenues to gather new graduates' experience and input for the evolving design of the new graduate program. The goal is to align with the Nursing Policy Secretariat recommendations for new graduate transition. The union provided ideas and flagged issues for new graduates with respect to recruitment and retention.

## **Langley Memorial Hospital ER**

To address identified staffing issues, BCNU advocated for a local-level working group to review the staffing challenges and to brainstorm ideas to help find a solution. The union was successful in helping establish the working group, as well as in securing a commitment from the employer to provide data for review with the group.

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The process is being actively supported by a BCNU labour relations officer and the employer's human resources department. A first meeting for the working group was held on September 15, 2020; subsequent meeting(s) to be held in October.

## **Orientation / Deployment Checklist**

As part of the NBA collective agreement, to ensure safe staffing levels, reassignment of staff is required from time to time. Fraser Health recognizes that it can be stressful for staff to be reassigned to unfamiliar unit. To help alleviate the challenges of this transition, mini-orientation checklists have been developed in all surgical and medical units to support reassigned staff. These quick familiarization checklists should be reviewed with the reassigned staff member by a "buddy nurse" on the receiving unit at the start of a shift.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

One of the shared objectives of the Strategic Nurse Staffing Committee (SNSC) is to review and respond to nurse staffing concerns across Fraser Health. As a result of the COVID-19 recovery plan, FH has created more than two hundred net new nursing positions in OR, long-term care, and public health. These regular positions will be posted in the upcoming months.

This past summer, to support full staffing on our units, FH created 12 additional regular relief pools, adding 60 new regular nursing positions on selected units. Forty percent of the positions are part-time.

## **BCNU attendees:**

- Sandra Goldstone – Coordinator, Servicing
- Anastasia Brown – Team Lead
- Wendy Gibbs – Co-Chair, Simon Fraser Region

## **FHA attendees:**

- Ken Casorso – Executive Director, Human Resources
- Monica Nicol – Executive Director, People Strategies
- Kathy Scarborough – Director, Professional Practice

## **Guest:**

- Hardev Bhullar – BCNU Regional Council Member, South Fraser Valley

The SNSC also held a meeting on October 1, 2020 for which a separate memo is forthcoming to update members and employees.

If you have any questions, please contact your HR advisor or BCNU steward.