

Speak Out Now at Kaiser

“Expectant Parents: Expect Short Staffing”

At Kaiser San Francisco, nurses organized a sticker and flier campaign to fight for staffing in the Maternal/Baby department. One of the stickers they used said, “Expectant Parents: Expect Short Staffing.” After a rigorous campaign, educating family members and patients day after day, nurses won over 30 new positions for that department. In a time period where we aren’t used to hearing about victories, it’s uplifting to see what people are capable of getting done when they organize together.

Working Through the Pain

For a lot of us in the hospital, we depend on overtime just to get by. Only working our scheduled hours isn’t enough to support ourselves, let alone a family. If we get injured, we can be put on light duty but are not allowed to pick up over time. A lot of us will end up working with our injuries, working through the pain and probably causing greater harm, because we cannot afford to work light duty without overtime. We shouldn’t be forced to work through the pain.

It’s the Staffing, Duh

The higher-ups spend a lot of time coming down on us for clocking in late, absences, unapproved overtime, etc. Do managers start each day thinking that focusing on those things will actually help patients? Why don’t they focus on what really matters: Staffing, staffing, and more staffing.

Irregular Hours, Irregular Lives

Kaiser often likes to use the irregular status of floats, short-hours, and on-calls instead of hiring regular staff. Their irregular hours don’t work for people trying to have regular lives. This is no problem for management, their department saves money and they come out looking good. For us, management expects us to “just make do.” We end up scrambling to keep our jobs, keep the department running and make sure management’s decision doesn’t affect the patients we came to work to serve.

Celebrating May Day

Speak Out Now invites you to celebrate the original Labor Day. Come share food, listen to music, and short performance on working class history.

Saturday, May 6th, 2017

6:00 pm to 9:00pm

Healthcare Workers are People Too

Most human beings drink water and use the restroom as they need to. In the pharmacy, Kaiser employees only do so when the line is down. We barely have enough staff to perform regular bodily functions. If we don't have enough staff to be human beings, do we have enough staff to take care of other human beings?

“Nice To See You”

The amount of “hellos” and greetings passed between each other throughout the day are numerous. But how much time do we really take to check in? We are so busy with work that saying hi to each other turns into a formality instead of a genuine interaction. It’s nice to say hi and we should take more time to check in and notice each other more. Most of us spend more time here than with our families and in the end we need each other to keep ourselves sane. We’re a community of health care providers, why should we be strangers?

HMO = Huge Money Obsession

Most people know Kaiser as the forefather of the HMO industry. HMOs, or Health Maintenance Organizations, are health care organizations through which all care received by patients is prepaid for.

Many of us remember being told during NEO that we should make sure that younger Kaiser members are given the “red carpet treatment” when they come for their once-a-year appointment. These patients are the real moneymakers since they are paying on average \$10,000 for that ONE appointment.

What the HMO model needs to thrive is for Kaiser to provide less care – the more care they provide the less money they make. This translates into doctors skimping on treatment, short-staffing, and reduced services. In the end HMOs have a lot less to do with Health and a lot more to do with a Huge Money Obsession.

