



THE STETHO-SCOOP

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USW 4-200 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3



Historic WIN! NDNQI AWARD Activates CBA Payout for RWJ USW Nurses

We are proud to announce a recent major union win that reflects the dedication and excellence of our Nursing Staff. For the first time ever, Article 32.9 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) has been activated- thanks to our nurses receiving the 2024 Press Ganey Human Experience NDNQI Award for Outstanding Nursing Quality!

This national recognition honors exceptional performance in nursing care, and it's no surprise that the incredible work of our nurses of USW Local 4200 stood out on a national level.

Under Article 32.9 of the CBA, this prestigious award entitles RNs on the Professional Advancement System (PAS) as of 2024 to receive monetary recognition:

- CN1 - \$25 and CN2 - \$100
- CN3 - \$160 and CN4 - \$195

This is more than a bonus—it's proof that when we raise the standard of patient care, we all rise together. It also shows the power of a strong contract and an active union that ensures hard work does not go unnoticed. Congratulations to all our nurses—this award belongs to every one of you!

Taking pride in our nursing excellence, we are eager to see the results of the 2025 survey. Continuously striving for excellence is what we do in our work daily, and it's wonderful to be recognized for our amazing care, skills, and expertise.

Hot off the Press!!! Attendance Policy Grievance Victory on April 8, 2026

On this day, we celebrated another significant win for us, the USW nurses. Over the past year, the Union became aware of changes made by the hospital to its Attendance Policy, which did not align with our current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Many nurses were impacted by these changes, resulting in warnings.

What We Did:

- The Union filed a formal grievance.
- A USW approved revision of the attendance policy was submitted.

Addressing grievances often demands persistence, meticulous attention to detail, and a steadfast commitment to follow through with the process.

The Outcome: The Union successfully won this grievance.

Next Steps:

- The USW-approved revisions to the attendance policy are being implemented.
- We expect that any disciplinary actions taken under the previous attendance policy will be rescinded as changes occur.

This victory sets a positive tone for what lies ahead. We will continue to stand firm and uphold our contract.

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UNION WINS IN ACTION

What We've Accomplished TOGETHER

STRONGER. ORGANIZED. DELIVERING RESULTS.

Over the past year, our union has made meaningful progress—strengthening our structure, amplifying our voice, and delivering real results for our members. Following our transition out of administratorship, we rebuilt a more inclusive, transparent, and member-driven union. We updated our bylaws, improved communication, and created stronger pathways for member engagement across all units. Our Executive Board reflects that commitment to representation. It is made up of diverse nurses from across our hospital, including the ER, OR, NICU, CCU, Float Tele-Med-Surg, Oncology, Peds Same Day Surgery, Special Procedures, and Outpatient departments such as Oncology infusion. This ensures that decisions are grounded in real frontline experience across multiple areas of care. But progress isn't just about structure—it's about results. Through collective action, we secured contract bonus payouts tied to patient experience goals, and we continue to achieve strong outcomes through the grievance process—ensuring that our contract is not just a document, but something that is actively enforced.

At the same time, we have been building a stronger foundation from within. We significantly reduced the number of non-dues-paying members—strengthening our collective power and unity. We streamlined our finances to improve transparency and accountability, reevaluated our investments to ensure long-term sustainability, and established a clear leadership structure to support the work ahead. This is what organizing from the bottom looks like. As we prepare for bargaining, we also launched a comprehensive member survey to ensure that our priorities reflect the voices of our nurses. With over 35% participation from 2,032 members, this strong engagement reinforces that our union is active, informed, and ready to move forward together. Most importantly, we continue to drive change where it matters the most—at the bedside for our patients.

Through filing **Protest of Assignment (POAs), safety event reporting** (environment and security issues) Our members are bringing real concerns forward. These are not isolated complaints—they are documented patterns that the union elevates in **monthly CPC/CSPC meetings** with hospital leadership, alongside solutions. And we are seeing the impact. We have achieved **increased security presence and rounding, the implementation of humanized health worker posters**, and new efforts focused on reducing workplace violence and staff directed aggression.

In the outpatient setting, we've pushed forward improvements in staffing, workflow, and overall operational support during transitions in the Morris cancer Center. We also successfully supported the transition of Rutgers Nurses into our union-strengthening unity across oncology services.

These wins are not incidental. They are the results of members speaking up, documenting issues and standing together.

This is what collective action looks like.

And this is just the beginning.

Know Your Contract

Here are key articles every nurse should know in our CBA.

Unsafe Staffing/Assignments

Article 28- Health & Safety and. Article 29.2 Acuity and Staffing
You have the right to safe working environment and file a staffing protest.

Floating

Article 13-Floating
Assignments must consider safety and competency and within your floating pod per CBA

Workplace Violence/Security

Article 28- Health and Safety
Your safety at work is protected.

PTO/Sick Time

Article 34--PTO
Your Earned time is protected and defined.

Attendance/Weather Issues/Inclement Weather

Article 33-Lateness & Attendance
Covers expectations around reporting to work-this especially when we had recent inclement weather this past winter.

As nurses, we serve as caregivers and advocates while also being employees with rights in our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). It's crucial to understand our contract and shift into worker mode when needed.

Your CBA is more than a document. It is your protection. It outlines what you are entitled to: safe staffing language, fair scheduling practices, PTO and leave protections, workplace safety measures, and the standards your employer is required to uphold. When something feels off—whether it's unsafe staffing, unclear assignments, scheduling issues, or a policy being applied unfairly—your contract is where you start. If you do not have a copy, ask your union representative. The contract is also available on our website, where it is accessible to all members and easy to pull up when you need it. Keep it saved on your phone or have a printed copy—you should never be without it.

KEY REMINDERS:

- **Stay calm, clear, and factual**
- **Say "our contract..." ---not "my opinion.."**
- **Anchor everything in safety+ standards**
- **Document when something is not followed-who/what/where/when**
- **Loop in your union early---not last minute**

From Your Union President: CONTRACT 2026

One Workforce. One Mission. “When Nurses Win, Everyone Wins”

2026 is our contract year.

As nurses, we remain united together for what matters most— people are our priority. We continue to choose this challenging yet rewarding career because at the heart of it all are human beings— those we care for, ourselves, and those we work alongside on a shared mission of true well-being for everyone. When people are respectfully kept the priority and caring is the core, then safety, security, and optimal health naturally rise to importance as well. These values drive why nurses across the nation continue to fight for basic needs. An environment where ALL people are safe, secure, and protected from violence and harm— not just staff, but patients, their families, and all those that join us on campus in their varying roles. To have access to quality healthcare that doesn't financially jeopardize our abilities to care for our families and that encourages us to be healthy and cared for in order to provide the excellent care we are so well known for. To know that we are genuinely supported by healthcare systems whose mission should keep people's lives at the center, improving the lives of its community. This is shown when staffing is safe and adequate on a consistent basis, enabling the necessary time, attention, and skill to care for patients and their families well. When the essential supplies, support, and resources are consistently at hand to ensure we can continue giving the very best care we can. When security measures are in place to proactively prevent violence and when there is real consequence for when people are unfortunately harmed. When staff feel valued, protected, and appropriately cared for in order to continue in the challenging work we do together and supported in balancing personal time as well. When these are on the line, nurses take a stand. It's what everyone deserves and part of fighting for what is right in protecting people PERIOD.

While we embody empathy and excellence, being a nurse should not be as harmful and hurtful as it has grown to be. Nurses are an integral piece of the many working parts that care for a community, and to devalue their needs and their humanity is a huge misstep that undermines the sustainability of these hard-working and uniquely skilled professionals. What nurses bring to healthcare is distinctive and irreplaceable. When nurses are treated with dignity, respect, and value, it allows not only nurses to flourish, but also the patients that are cared for by them and those working and living around them. We are each other's greatest resource. Support begets support, and leads to an overall positive improvement.ent.

A fair contract is a testament to these truths. Your union leadership team continues working relentlessly behind the scenes pushing for safer conditions and ensuring your voices are heard. It is work that isn't always loud, but it is real and is making a lasting impact- for our Nurses and the community we serve. The results speak for themselves: established safer patient ratios for better outcomes, increased security across campus, improved communication throughout, real attention to workplace safety and security, all because showing up and supporting each other is what Nurses. Nurses are the union. So stay informed, stay engaged, actively communicate and participate in securing the fair contract you deserve. We may not always agree, but we are indivisible.

Our unmistakable strength lies in you: when we show up together, we win. And this year, we will win a fair contract because we are united.

In Solidarity,

Jennifer Kwock-USW 4.200 PRESIDENT

Bargaining Basics

Collective bargaining is how we, union nurses, negotiate with management for the terms of our work. It's the process where our union and the employer sit down to decide wages, staffing, scheduling, benefits, safety, and job protections.

But let's be clear—bargaining is not just what happens at the table. The real power behind it comes from us.

What is Bargaining, Really?

Bargaining is a back-and-forth process:

- The union presents proposals based on what members need.
- Management responds with their own.
- Both sides negotiate toward an agreement.

That agreement becomes our contract—the rules that protect us at work. Without a strong contract, those decisions must be negotiated.

Why it Matters Before the Vote

Many people think their role starts when it's time to vote on a contract. That's too late. By the time a tentative agreement is reached, most of the work has already been done. The tone of negotiations, the strength of proposals, and the outcomes are shaped long before that vote ever happens. The bottom line: A fair contract isn't given—it's built. Through participation, visibility, and unity.

Why Solidarity is Everything.

Here's the part people underestimate:

The outcome of bargaining depends on how united we are. Management does not just listen to words at the table—they watch what's happening on the units:

- Are nurses engaged?
- Are we aligned on our priorities?
- Are we showing visible support for each other?

Solidarity looks like:

- Talking with your coworkers about what matters
- Staying informed on negotiations
- Showing visible support (wear your USW gear, buttons, stickers, and presence)
- Backing each other up across units.

These aren't small actions—they are signals of strength.

Our power is engagement. Our strength is solidarity.

Why SILENCE Is a Risk

Not all risk are visible. Silence risk happens when something isn't right—but no one speaks up. When concerns go unspoken, patient and staff safety are at risk.

What we can do:

- Say it: "I have a safety concern"
- Document: who, what, where, when
- Report Patterns—not blame
- Support each other- Our voice is a safety yool--use it.

Know Your Power: The P.O.A.

One of the most common concerns we hear from nurses is this: **"I don't want to file a POA or report because I'm afraid of retaliation."** That concern is real-- and you're not alone in feeling it. But its important to understand what a Protest of Assignment (POA) really is and why it matters. A POA is a powerful tool that support our contractual rights.

Our CBA guarantees a safe and healthy working environment under Article 28. but a contract only works if it is enforced.

"What Happens After I Submit the POA?"

When you file a POA, it does not stay on your unit. The union tracks these reports to identify patterns across units. What may feel like one-time issue becomes part of a larger picture. These patterns are then brought to monthly CPC and CSPC meeting with hospital leadership. This is where concerns are raised as documented issues, not just complaints. This is also where the union presents solutions and pushes for change. We have already seen the results of this. These changes came from nurses documenting what is happening on the ground. If issues are not documented, they are easier to ignore. When they are documented, the become visible and actionable.

You do not have to do this alone. You can reach out to your union representative for guidance or support. **If something does not feel safe. Document it, because when we speak up together we create change.**

Why Speaking Up Matters-and How it Leads to Real Change

When you file a POA, you are documenting your professional judgment in an unsafe situation. You are identifying a concern and showing that you spoke up.

There is no required format and it does not have to be written perfectly. You can submit it individually or with your coworkers.

A POA should be submitted as soon as possible so leadership has the oppurtunity to address the issue in real time.

However, if you were too busy during your shift, it is still important to submit afterward.

Late documentation is better than no documentation at all.

Members Voice

This past year, your voices didn't just get heard--they led to real change.

YOU SPOKE: *"We need a safe space."*

WE ACTED: Created a private union space in Discord--a space for real conversations, support and updates.

RESULT: A place where nurses can connect, speak freely and stay informed.

YOU SPOKE: *"the Union is not visible enough..."*

WE ACTED: Started unit huddles across departments--meeting nurses where they are.

RESULT: Stronger presence, direct support, and real time connection on the floor.

YOU SPOKE: *"we need to be ready for negotiations."*

WE ACTED: launched a comprehensive member survey to gather your priorities and concerns.

RESULT: A bargaining agenda built directly from your voices.

YOU SPOKE: *"Can we do zoom meetings?"*

WE ACTED: Launched our first union zoom call called the "Dumpspter Fire Discussions" on March 25, 2026. an informal way to connect with members to hear issues and concerns

RESULT: Increased communication, transparency, building power and solidarity.

You SPOKE: *"We don't have enough general membership meetings."*

WE ACTED: Monthly meetings at the Magyar Church, right across from the hospital.

RESULT: More opportunities for every nurse to participate and stay informed.

YOU SPOKE: *"Parking is not safe"*

WE ACTED: Escalated safety concerns to hospital leadership and continue to push for stronger security and accountability.

RESULT: Increased attention to parking safety and ongoing advocacy for safer conditions.

YOU SPOKE: *"The union website needs to be updated."*

WE ACTED: Updated the union website to improve accessibility, navigation, an overall usability for all members."

RESULT: You can easily access your contract (CBA) Download and print a POA (Protest of Assignment) form Quickly find the information you need.

THE MORRIS TRANSITION

The transition to the Morris Cancer Center brought oncology nurses—across inpatient, outpatient, and nurse clinicians—under one roof. With that came major changes, and nurses were at the center of it all.

From day one, we faced staffing challenges, high patient volumes, workflow gaps, chair shortages, and complex treatments, all while adapting to a new environment. It wasn't seamless—but nurses didn't stay silent.

In inpatient units, nurses voiced concerns early and clearly—especially around unsafe staffing, patient flow, and operational gaps that directly impacted patient care. In outpatient, nurses escalated workflow breakdowns and safety risks in real time. Nurse clinicians identified workspace issues, care coordination gaps and pushed for safer, more consistent patient management across the continuum.

Through channels like CPC, those concerns were brought directly to leadership—and pushed for action.

At the same time, we showed up for each other.

As the Rutgers nurses transitioned into RWJ, our members with union leadership helped bridge the gap—sharing workflows, offering real-time support, and making sure no one was left navigating the change alone. Their experience was essential, especially during a time when staffing and volume pressures were high.

Bringing oncology nurses under one roof didn't just change the space—it strengthened our voice.

When nurses speak up about staffing and stand together across roles, we protect our patients and each other. That's our power.

Solidarity Picnic 2025

A Day to Reconnect, Reflect and Rise Together

Last year’s Solidarity Picnic wasn’t just a gathering—it was a reminder of who we are and what we’ve built together. After a year marked with challenges, growth, and collective action, we came together not just to celebrate but to reconnect. We laughed, shared stories, and took a moment to breathe outside the fast pace of our units. But beneath the food and festivities was something deeper:

Gratitude.

Gratitude for each other, for the strength, resilience, and unity that carried us through the difficult moments. And gratitude for the community who stood with us during the 2023 strike. Their support is not forgotten. The picnic was also a way to give back and recognize who showed up for us when it mattered the most. This day reflected what our union is truly about. Not just advocacy but—connection. Not just action but—solidarity. As echoed in our leadership message, our strength has never come from standing alone—but from standing together.



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Special Appreciation for Our Founding Members

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our founding members for their invaluable contributions to the success of the newsletter. Their efforts have shaped its name and inspired its design:

- **Stephanie Belonia**
- **Erika Colindres**
- **Amanda Leger**
- **Will Mumford**

And to the Executive Board members for their support and their valuable feedback in this issue.

GOT SOMETHING TO SHARE?

This newsletter is for all of us—not just updates, but stories from our units, our teams, our everyday work.

Have a win, a shoutout, a lesson learned, or even a quick thought? We'd love to include it.

Nothing fancy needed, Just your voice. Send it in. Be part of it. Let's keep each other connected.

Please Email 4200Newsletter@gmail.com if you have any questions, concerns, stories, or interest in the newsletter team!



Upcoming Events:

Our members have agreed to cover the attendance costs for four individuals to participate in the USW Health, Safety, and Environment Conference, scheduled in Pittsburgh from May 17 to May 22, 2026. The Women of Steel Conference, Level 2, is scheduled for April 20-24 in Dawson, PA.

- The Labor Notes Conference is June 12th-14th in Chicago.
- USW's Rapid Response, Legislative and Policy Conference is July 12th-15th in Washington, D.C. Registration is due by June 15, 2026, at \$300 per person.
- USW District 4 EDUCATION CONFERENCE Education Conference Caesar, Atlantic City NJ August 10-14, 2026

ICYMI: Solidarity Sticker Day

On March 18, you didn't just see a sticker—you saw a workforce showing up together. It may look small. It's not. Wearing your union sticker or gear is a power move. It is a visible statement: I'm part of this. I stand with my coworkers. When all of us nurses from across units do something simple—together—it shifts the atmosphere: Our unity becomes visible, confidence grows, and the message is clear that we are not alone. That is how solidarity works. Not always loud. Not complicated. But consistent—and impossible to ignore. So stay tuned, we will announce more SOLIDARITY Days ahead. Because when we move together, even small actions carry weight.



2026 General Membership Meetings

8AM
February 5
April 9
June 4
August 6
October 1
December 3



8PM
January 8
March 5
May 7
July 9
September 3
November 5

Magyar Church Basement USW4200.org