

BARGAINING UPDATE

CAT MEETING & FAQ CLARIFICATION

FEBRUARY 5, 2020 • UPDATE #4

We are looking forward to seeing you tomorrow at one of the five strike vote locations (see flyer here), and to seeing members of the Contract Action Team tonight at 6:30 at the Carpenters Hall! Join the bargaining team, our 200-strong Contract Action Team, and all your coworkers in voting YES to authorize an Unfair Labor Practices strike!

We have seen the emails and FAQs sent to all of you by management, and want to respond to just a couple of the points they keep making:

- Your bargaining team and union leadership are ready to get back to the bargaining table at any time! The suggestion made by management that you should persuade union leadership to get back to negotiations is a bit absurd, given how our negotiations ended last Friday night/Saturday morning. Here's what happened:
 - We had been bargaining all week long, and from 9am Friday until past midnight (and the expiration of our contract). For a while in the afternoon and early evening Friday, it seemed like we were starting to finally make some progress in getting management's huge healthcare concessions off the table. Both the marriage penalty and the SmartCare narrow-network requirement for the Classic plan were dropped by management. Some members of the bargaining team started to feel hopeful that we'd see all the copay and premium increases also removed, would get a reasonable wage proposal from management, and could reach an agreement that night or the following morning.
 - Then in the evening Friday, management stopped making any further modifications to their healthcare proposals. For six consecutive "passes" (times the management bargaining team came to the negotiating table with a new/modified proposal), they offered slight increases in their wage proposals (which started out even more meager than they ended up) and no change whatsoever to their healthcare proposals.
 - Your union negotiator, Kevin Kuehn, stated with great clarity, repeatedly, that the union bargaining team would be willing to stay and keep negotiating for as long as management wanted or needed, in order to reach an agreement that did not include healthcare cost-shifting.
 - Management came back to the negotiating table around 1am and informed us that they would not be making any further changes to their healthcare proposals, and that the raises of 2%, 2% and 1.5% were the best they could offer you.
 - Now we are taking their last set of proposals – including those meager wage increases, new restrictions on Overtime pay, premium increases for the Choice plan, and 11 separate co-pay increases (5 for the Classic plan and 6 for the Choice plan) – to a vote.
 - Just as management's FAQs document says, a "NO" vote tomorrow is a vote to accept this full package of management proposals. A "YES" vote authorizes a 7-day Unfair Labor Practices strike – and a strong "YES" vote (with the overwhelming majority of members sticking together, standing up for one another, themselves and their families by voting "YES") will send us right back to the bargaining



table, with the united strength of our membership showing management that they need to drop their healthcare cost-shifting and Overtime restrictions, and that they need to offer raises that show respect for the hard work you do every day providing award-winning, exceptional care for your patients.

- There has been no communication to union negotiators from either HealthPartners management or the federal mediator requesting a return to the bargaining table.
- The union bargaining team is ready to get back to the table and negotiate right away after we count the ballots tomorrow night. If management hadn't told us they were not able to offer any further modifications to their proposals at 1am last Saturday, we would have gladly stayed through the night and all the following day, as long as it took to reach an agreement we thought would be acceptable to the majority of our members.
- The healthcare concessions you will be voting on whether to accept tomorrow would be huge changes to the excellent health benefits you and fellow union members have fought for and won through years of collective bargaining.
 - Many of the co-pays being proposed would double, triple, or even quadruple what you currently pay. Others would replace \$0 co-pays with amounts of \$20, \$50, or even \$80. (The chart provided by management in this morning's FAQs document does a good job summarizing in one place the current and proposed co-pay

amounts.) All these co-pay increases, along with the premium increases for the Choice plan, shift costs from HealthPartners as an organization onto you and your families.

- Also, most of the proposed co-pay increases would introduce a new \$20 penalty for any member who doesn't complete both an annual health assessment and at least one health-related HP program. Furthermore, it would impose that \$20 penalty if you have a spouse on your health plan and they do not complete an annual health assessment and at least one health-related HP program.

Those huge changes to your health benefits, along with the new restrictions on Overtime pay and the meager wage increases management is offering, are the reasons the overwhelming majority of members are standing firm in their resolve to vote "YES" tomorrow.

A reminder for those of you who were here 12 years ago, and some useful history for those who weren't: 12 years ago management insisted on establishing a new \$5 co-pay for office visits (a tiny little fraction of the amount of cost-shifting you'll be voting on tomorrow). The bargaining team recommended a vote to authorize a strike. Over 98% of members voted "YES." Union and management negotiators got back to the bargaining table right away, the co-pay proposal was dropped, and members voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new union contract they could be proud of.

When We Fight, We Win!

