

- The BFMC nurses are working while exhausted, because they are so understaffed.
- Virtually every six week schedule has many “holes” meaning that, because management won’t hire, they can’t even say who – even in theory – will work the scheduled shifts.
- And so nurses are working endless additional shifts usually without rest, and
- 3,940 times in the past 12 months nurses had to work for longer than 12 hours because there was no one to relieve them. The longest shift was 17.5 hours. It is illegal in Mass. for an RN to ever work more than 16 hours – even during a state of emergency. The May 15 letter from the MNA committee members to the hospital’s president details the abusiveness of the never ending shifts. The nurses are living at the beck and call of Baystate – being asked incessantly to come in on their days off with the threat that patients will suffer if they don’t. They have no time for rest and no ability to plan time with their families.
- They are taking advantage of good people because they are able to take advantage of them, knowing that the nurses will come in for endless extra shifts out of concern for their patients and their co-workers.
- Though our contract was due to expire December 31, management refused to begin bargaining until November.
- They refused to even give a first wage proposal until January. By February they still had not made a complete proposal, though the contract had expired December 31.
- While refusing to bargain, they eliminated the nurses “Silver” health plan, leaving them with only extremely low benefit “Bronze” and “HSA” plans. We filed labor board charges on this also. A year prior they eliminated the nurses’ “Gold” level plan without bargaining. These are healthcare workers without a decent standard health plan!
- The nurses have filed eight unfair labor practice charges, including a rare overall surface bargaining charge against Baystate. Surface bargaining charges are extremely rare, because the standard is set so high by the National Labor Relations Board. Our attorneys, however, were confident that Baystate’s delay tactics were so preposterous that their conduct met the test.
- The RNs two months ago voted 93% in a secret ballot election to authorize a strike. This was among an overwhelming majority of the members turning out to vote – many coming in on their days off driving far and wide through Western Mass. to get to the hospital to vote.
- It is clear to us that management’s conduct toward the BFMC nurses has nothing to do with realities on the ground at BFMC. Our proposals there were all created by the nurses there to address local hospital issues. Baystate management is demanding takeaways in health insurance, paid time off and pay practices so they can say to the non-union staff at the much larger Baystate Medical Center in Springfield that there is no “union difference”. They have been explicit with us in bargaining that they want to lower benefits to what non-union employees have.
- Baystate betrayed the deal that was brokered with the help of political and community leaders three years ago: The key to the deal that was brokered was that the nurses would accept a 1-hour delay during which management would not pay them overtime pay. But in exchange, management committed to a Overtime Task force to all but eliminate the need for unwanted overtime. That

taskforce met productively and all its findings were ignored by management and now staffing and overtime is worse than ever.