

HNA's Joan Craft Appointed UAN VP

The UAN Executive Council has appointed HNA Vice President Joan Craft, RN, to fill the vacancy as Vice President of United American Nurses, AFL-CIO. She will assume her national duties immediately. The position will not affect her position at Queens Medical Center or her activities on behalf of HNA and Hawai'i Nurses.

"The selection of Joan to fill this extremely important national office honors Joan and also all the Nurses of Hawai'i," stated HNA Secretary, Robin Tanner, RN. "It recognizes all we have accomplished here to create the unity that is required to give Nurses the support they need to achieve their goals. We are honored that, of all the Nurses in



America, Joan was chosen to help lead our national union. She will be a great leader for UAN just as she is for HNA and the Nurses of our Aloha State."

The position at UAN became open when UAN Vice President Ann Converso, RN, succeeded to the Presidency of the union following the passing of UAN President Cheryl Johnson. Converso was appointed to complete Johnson's remaining term in office. The UAN's Executive Committee then chose Hawai'i's Craft to fill the remaining term as Vice President of the 100,000 member union. Elections for new terms for both offices will be held at

See **Joan Craft** on Page 4

Report From Hna's Governmental Affairs Committee A Date to Remember

January 16th, 2008, is the opening day for the Twenty Fifth Legislature of the State of Hawai'i. This day marks the official start of a new legislative session and an important event for Hawai'i's people.

HNA's participation in the legislative process is essential to promote our interests for Nurses and other Healthcare Workers in the State of Hawai'i. We invite all interested members to join us on Opening Day. Call Tina at 531-1628 for more information.

Legislative Action

The HNA Governmental Affairs Committee is preparing to introduce and support bills that will benefit our members and the community as well. We have received directions from

the membership and we will attempt to fulfill resolutions adopted at the November 15th, 2007 HNA House of Delegates:

- Introduce a No Lift Bill that will benefit all Healthcare Workers in the State of Hawai'i.
- Protect the current sunset language in the legislation that created the Center for Nursing by urging the Legislators to allow all surcharge/taxes imposed solely on Nurses to expire.
- Work collaboratively with other organizations to promote legislation that will protect the health, welfare, and safety of all of Hawai'i's citizens.

See **Date** on Page 7

Complete Negotiations Survey

Don't forget to go to the HNA website – www.hawaiinurses.org - and complete a negotiations survey. Do it NOW. This will help guide the Officers, Collective Bargaining Committee and LRS staff to make sure your Nurse Negotiating Team fine-tunes its bargaining targets to achieve the goals that YOU establish. Mahalo.

Also In This Issue...

HOD Report	Pg. 2
UAN Unity	Pg. 4
Appalachian Strike	Pg. 4
Dues Adjustmant	Pg. 5
Stewards Training.....	Pg. 6
E Pluribus Unum.....	Pg. 7
HNA ACtions	Pg. 7

HOUSE OF DELEGATES REPORT

HNA's annual House of Delegates met November 15th at the Dole Cannery facilities in Honolulu.

In a display of unity and honest debate, the Delegates to the House of Delegates tackled the issue of HNA's survivability and preparations for the negotiations of 2008. This House of Delegates marked a significant departure from the recent past by the concentrated effort of the participants to place the needs of HNA's membership and the services they require foremost as its objective.

Delegates voted unanimously to recommend membership ratification of a plan to stabilize HNA finances and insure that Hawai'i Nurses will have the full representation and support we need as we face staffing shortages, the 2008

Legislative session, and Big Five negotiations all in the coming year.

The HOD also voted to amend the By Laws (Articles of Incorporation) to say that the Executive Director, in addition to being experienced in collective bargaining within the Labor Movement, should preferably be a Registered Nurse. The Executive Director is employed and evaluated by the Board of Directors who also may retain an Interim Executive Director during the selection process.

Reports and Speakers

HNA President Luanne Long, RN, opened the session by welcoming the Delegates, members, officers and guests. She spoke to the meeting of her goals for the union and talked about where the

union is today in pursuing those goals. President Long concluded her remarks by sharing "The Nightingale Tribute Reading" with all of us in memory of UAN President Cheryl Johnson, RN.

The HOD also heard from – and engaged in discussions with – Keynote Speaker UAN President Ann Converso, RN; Hawai'i Representative John Mizuno who discussed health-related legislative bills and initiatives with the Delegates; and Brian Sheehan of Plexus Worldwide who informed the Delegates of a new breast cancer self-examination tool.

UAN President Ann Converso, RN, who was named to fill the remaining time on President Cheryl

Continued on Page 3

HNA CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings

1st Friday: Collective Bargaining Committee meets at 4:00 pm.

2nd Friday: Executive Committee meets at 6:00 pm.

2nd Friday: Finance Committee meets at 4:00 pm.

3rd Saturday of each month: HNA's Board of Directors meets at 10:00 am.

All committees meet at HNA, 677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 301, Honolulu. Times are subject to change, so please phone HNA before planning to attend a meeting.

Important Dates

January 16, 2008: Legislative Opening Session

January 19, 2008: HNA Board of Directors' meeting: Seating of the newly elected Board Officers and Directors!

HNA ACTION

HNA OFFICERS

Luanne Long, RN – President
Joan Craft, RN – Vice-President
Robin Tanner, RN – Secretary
Wilmalee Kimble, RN – Treasurer

EDITORIAL BOARD

Luanne Long, RN – HNA President
Joan Craft, RN – HNA Vice President
Robin Tanner, RN – HNA Secretary
Claudine Tomasa, RN – ANA HOD
Hector Ramos – Interim Executive Director
Barry Abel – Editor
Designed by Glenn McHugh

HNA MAJOR COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Executive Committee:

Luanne Long, RN, HNA President

Finance Committee:

Wilmalee Kimble, RN, HNA Treasurer

Collective Bargaining Committee:

Joan Craft, RN, HNA Vice President

Nominations Committee:

Sheri Kearns, RN

Continuing Education:

Faith Rossman, RN

Communications:

Vacancy

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HOUSE OF DELEGATES REPORT

Continued from page 2

Johnson's passing, exchanged personal greetings with the Officers and Delegates and spoke with the delegates about a number of topics, including:

- the Nurses' strike in Kentucky and West Virginia
- the difficult working conditions that afflict Nurses in those states,
- efforts UAN is making to grow the union and to form coalitions with other labor and health organizations to enact desperately needed legislation at both state and national levels to support Nurses and nursing,
- efforts to enact No Lift and Safe Staffing initiatives, and UAN-developed language that can be bargained into local contracts to prevent management attempts to deny Charge Nurses their right to participate – and be protected by – their unions.

The HOD heard reports from Secretary Robin Tanner, RN; Treasurer Wilmalee Kimble, RN; Collective Bargaining Chair, Vice President Joan Craft, RN; Nominations Committee Chair, Sheri Kearns, RN; and Secretary Robin Tanner, RN, on elections.

Reports were also given by Continuing Education Chair Faith Rossman, RN; President Luanne Long, RN, on Governmental Affairs; Immediate Past Communications Chair Sheri Kearns, RN; Sandi Niitani, RN, District 2; Kenneth Obayashi, RN, District 4; Marina Robinson, RN, District 6; and Ana Silva, RN, District 7.

HNA Actions

Interim Executive Director Ramos reported on efforts that have reduced HNA's budget deficit for the year from \$47,609 to a currently projected \$1,800 by December 31st. While the cuts that had to be made to achieve this important goal were very severe and necessarily affected HNA's ability to accomplish some of the things we all believe to be extremely important, the immediate requirement of reducing the debt has been achieved.

Ramos told the Delegates about:

- HNA taking direct control of its communications and server to insure communications security
- measures taken that have brought HNA into full compliance with rules and regulations around service fee payers, their rights and payment responsibilities to the union for receiving the benefits of HNA actions on behalf of Nurses
- efforts in the area of organizing, increasing and serving membership
- the status of collective bargaining agreements at various facilities and plans for the coming year in collective bargaining with regards to organizing and increasing Nurses' protections, job security, and pay and benefits.

He also reported on efforts to achieve unrealized potentials with regards to Shop Stewards, the union's political engagement, and retirees. He concluded with a report on the union staff, focusing on accountability, teamwork, and workload.

Resolutions

The HOD passed resolutions calling on the union to seek to have the State of Hawai'i enact our No Lift Bill:

- to work toward the goal that all U.S. citizens should have affordable healthcare and supporting HR 676 – The U.S. National Health Insurance Act;
- objecting to any attempt to remove the sunset language in the legislation that created the Center for Nursing and urging legislators to allow the \$40 surcharge/tax on Nurses that currently provides funding for the Center to expire;
- directing HNA to seek out and initiate working relationships with other nursing organizations in Hawai'i to identify and work to achieve common goals; also, should finances allow, affiliate with the Hawai'i AFL-CIO to work with other unions also to achieve our common goals; as well as a resolution to edit language regarding the Continuing Education Committee.

After discussion, the HOD defeated proposals that would have allowed the CE Chairperson to add a non-RN to the committee at her/his discretion and another that would have directed HNA to explore the possibility of establishing a not for profit CNA certification program.

Support for Striking Appalachian Region Nurses

District 6 (Leeward) gave an update of their Strike Support Activities on behalf of striking Appalachian Nurses. A total of \$1200 raised from the collective efforts of District 6 Nurses and contributions from HOC Delegates. (see story on Appalachian Nurses strike, page 4).

Leaders Meet on UAN Unity Agenda

A Report from HNA President Luanne Long, RN

December 6th saw a gathering of Nurse leaders from all across the country. We met to discuss and draft a Unity Agenda for the nation's only true Staff Nurses' union. Leaders met in Chicago to consider many ideas on how to best unify and strengthen the UAN around issues related to growth, communications, structure, Affiliate strength, and more.

HNA Vice President Joan Craft, RN, and I along with Interim

Executive Director Hector Ramos represented Hawai'i Nurses at this important meeting.

UAN President Ann Converso, RN, who was with us in Hawai'i for our HOD recently, stressed UAN's importance as the only true union of Staff Nurses in America and the democratic nature of UAN's processes and procedures. Her call to delegates for the meeting included the following declaration:

"The UAN Executive Council believes in the founding principles and democratic processes that

have guided our organization from its outset. The UAN is a union built on staff nurse leadership; a union whose sole members are staff nurses, who alone hold the highest elected leadership positions in the union; a union that gives voice and power and influence to its members and its leadership; a union whose vision is to be the preeminent union for nurses and whose affiliations with the ANA and the AFL-CIO are highly valued; a union that

Continued on Page 6

Appalachian Healthcare Strike Settled, but...

The Appalachian regional healthcare strike has been settled. However, due to contracts given by healthcare providers to strikebreakers, some striking Nurses won't be able to return to work until March.

A major rally in support of the striking Nurses was held in front of ARH corporate headquarters in Lexington, KY, last month, focusing attention on the Nurses' struggle and demanding safe patient care in ARH hospitals.

A delegation led by Luanne Long, President; Wilma Kimble, Treasurer; Vicky Poland, Board of Directors; went to the rally in support of the striking Nurses. Luanne Long thanked the Kentucky and West Virginia Nurses for their help of Hawai'i during our long strike at Kaua'i Wilcox and presented them with a contribution approved by the Board of Directors of HNA as well as \$1200 in fundraising held by District 6 and contributions from Delegates to HOD's November HOD.

UAN President Ann Converso, Secretary-Treasurer Jean Ross, Director Tim Davis, and National Executive Director Susan Bianchi-Sand were present. Ann Converso extended her thanks to the following UAN affiliates that sent elected leaders, as well as staff, to Lexington for the rally: Florida, National VA Council; Michigan; Minnesota; and Hawaii. Ann also expressed her gratitude for the show of support at the rally from AFT, AFSCME, CNA, Mineworkers, AFL-CIO, CWA, Teamsters, SEIU, and the Steelworkers. AFL-CIO Executive Vice President, Arlene Holt Baker, was present at the rally. In addition to expressing support, Holt Baker provided additional financial assistance by presenting a check for \$20,000 from the AFL-CIO to provide emergency financial support for the Nurses.

While the strike settlement has been ratified, the Nurses - especially those who can't resume work until March - still need support. To learn how you can help striking Nurses during this holiday season donate to the KNA/WVNA strike fund—and spread the word to others who might be interested in giving—go to www.uannurse.org/support.html.

Joan Craft from Page 1

the union's National Convention in March.

"I accept this responsibility with both a feeling of humbleness in view of serving all the Nurses of our country, and with a determination to carry with me the lessons we have learned here in Hawai'i," Craft told the news media. "To be successful, Nurses must have the support of a strong and united union. To accomplish that, we must listen to one another and work together to achieve our common goals. That is what we have learned in Hawai'i and what we have accomplished here. That is the message I will carry with me, from Hawai'i to all the Nurses of America.

"Our goals remain the same: combatting the nursing shortage here and throughout the country; passing Safe Staffing legislation, guaranteeing every patient the high quality of care that every patient needs; enacting No Lift legislation, protecting the safety of both Nurses and patients; guaranteeing Nurses professional working conditions and compensation that will both attract the best and the brightest into nursing and will retain them as Nurses once they are practicing."

DUES ADJUSTMENT PROPOSAL TO BE SUBMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP

The proposal for the dues adjustment that HNA needs to stabilize operations and services for the members has been submitted to the membership. Materials and explanations are being mailed as this issue of the HNA ACTION goes to press.

The proposal, unanimously supported by the House of Delegates, would fix dues as a percentage of the base pay (base pay only) of Nurses represented by HNA for collective bargaining. Thereafter, dues would NOT CHANGE unless and until AFTER Nurses' base pay would be increased as in new HNA collective bargaining contracts. Your salary would have to go up before any changes could happen in your union dues. The percentage would be one and a half percent of your base pay. (Dues of non-bargaining Nurses would not change under the proposal.)

No more pass-through dues increases

One significant change under the new dues adjustment would be that increases by our national unions – UAN and ANA – would no longer be passed along to members. ANA, for example, has passed an \$8 dues increase to be effective starting in 2008. If the dues adjustment proposal is approved by the membership, that \$8 increase would be absorbed by HNA and would NOT be passed along to the membership.

“A good deal of work by your Officers and Interim Executive Director went into putting together this proposal,” HNA President Luanne Long stated. “Our Interim Executive Director, working with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, has done a great deal to reduce our operating debt.”

Fund full services

“The gains, however, have necessarily come at the cost of important services to the membership. We are currently under-staffed. We have three LRS’ – that’s a ratio of one to more than 1300 Nurses. We need to have five LRS’ in the field, working full time with our Stewards, Union Reps, and members to be sure that all Nurses’ rights are protected all of the time.”

“We need to provide the finest training for all our Stewards and Union Reps, to guarantee Nurses protection and to achieve democracy in the workplace.”

We need the personnel to expand the Steward system to operate at every facility, on every shift.

“We need to replenish our strike fund. If it is full, we are strong. Hopefully, we will be strong enough that we won’t be forced to have to use the fund. But we need the support and protection of a full strike fund and that must be a high priority as we resume Big 5 negotiations.”

Adjustment long overdue

“We need to stabilize HNA’s finances. A great effort has been made to gain control of debts inherited when HNA and the CBO merged to form today’s united HNA. But HNA has not adjusted its dues since 1992. That is a decade and a half ago. Lots of things were cheaper then. Just the massive increase in gas and oil costs have driven up the prices of everything we need and work with that has to be delivered.”

“This adjustment is long overdue. By switching to a small percentage of our base pay, we will make the union strong and secure no matter what may happen in the future. Our dues CANNOT increase unless we win raises in our base pay first. Of those raises, only a tiny bit will go to keep our union strong.”

“The dues adjustment has been overwhelmingly approved by your Executive Committee, your Board of Directors, and the Delegates to your House of Delegates – all elected by you to run your union for the protection of all Nurses and the improvement of our profession and of the healthcare industry. We ALL urge you to approve it, to put our union on strong and stable footing and to keep our union strong.”

Keep the union strong

“By keeping our union strong, we keep ourselves strong. With HNA’s support, we are free to do our jobs as we know they should be done. With a strong HNA we will continue to fight for Safe Staffing and No Lift legislation. With a strong HNA we will continue to battle for full involvement of Nurses in admissions and patient care decisions and for safe Nurse-Patient ratios.”

“With a strong and stable HNA, Hawai’i Nurses are strong and safe.”

“Approval of the dues adjustment proposal will accomplish those important goals.”

ANOTHER GROUP OF STEWARDS COMPLETE TRAINING SESSION

Members may rest assured that they have an on-going program at HNA to recruit Stewards and train them to take on your concerns. The Board of Directors has prioritized this program for funding once the finances of HNA are stabilized since, thanks to the pilot program and Professor William Puett from the University of Hawai'i, the results being reported back are positive.

The second group of Stewards consisted of mostly Outside Island RNs attending the training held on November 3rd and December 1st. Your Labor Relations Specialists (LRS) now feel confident that the Stewards are better prepared to take on issues and concerns that the

members out in the work force face on a daily basis.

In view of that, the LRSs and Acting Executive Director Hector Ramos have encouraged the Stewards to be more responsible now in handling issues that can be handled on the job. This will leave the LRSs more time to deal with issues such as suspensions, terminations, and so forth. As LRS Bruce Hom puts it, if someone walks into the ER with a cut toe, vs. another who comes in with a possible heart attack, which do you service first? Now that the Stewards are better trained, it will free up more time for the LRSs who have been under extreme work loads.

Each current LRS has more than 1300 RNs to service and those ratios should come down if the dues adjustment proposal is approved so that HNA can hire more LRSs. All Nurses understand what it's like to deal with high Nurse-patient ratios. The same goes for the LRSs. No HNA member's concerns or problems should ever go unaddressed because of the high work loads that the LRSs currently face.

Congratulations and Mahalo to all the Stewards who have now successfully completed the Steward training. The greater the knowledge and expertise at the worksite level, the better off is EVERY Nurse in our beautiful State of Hawai'i.

Leaders Meet on UAN Unity Agenda

Continued from page 4

sought and achieved autonomy so that its resources would be spent exclusively on the priorities which serve the best interests of our staff nurse members.

"The system we have used to successfully build the largest and only real national staff nurse union in the United States has been a democratic system. We believe that healthy, honest, informed debate, with input from all of our members, is the best course of action."

A Strong and United UAN

Ann Converso's call to action to the elected representatives of our nation's Staff Nurses asked all parties to bring their ideas for how best to unify and strengthen the UAN around issues related to growth, communication, structure, Affiliate strength, and other important issues. The meeting reminded us all of the importance of the existence of a strong and democratic Nurse-led union with all the states working together making it ever stronger. It reminded us

of the importance of the need for UAN to be the voice for Staff Nurses and that our opportunities are extraordinary when we all stand together.

Reports confirmed again that UAN's commitment to the AFL-CIO remain as strong as they can be, that UAN's working arrangement with SEIU is and will remain just that – there are NO talks about affiliation with SEIU. Lots of other subjects were covered in discussions and in question-and-answer sessions.

The meeting made it clear once again that no state alone can solve the nation's health care problems, the Nursing shortage, establish safe staffing or gain relief on safe lifting standards on its own. We MUST be united; we MUST be unified; we MUST work together for the goals of Nurses and the safety of our patients.

That is what the meeting was all about and it took several important steps forward toward achieving our shared goals.

Moving Forward

There have been some efforts to strike blows against UAN's unity over the last two years. A group supported by the CNA attempted to conduct a raid against HNA here in Hawai'i before that attack was ended last year. More recently, some individuals in New York actually brought the subject of disaffiliation from the UAN to a vote of the membership. The members voted it down, but such attempts to turn the clock backward and divide Nurses at this critical time are alarming.

It is strongly hoped that the Chicago UAN Unity Agenda meeting will provide a STRONG first step toward continuing the significant progress UAN has achieved toward growing a strong, effective, unified and truly UNITED Staff Nurses' Union to make our voices – and our united clout – heard and felt in every state legislature and in the Congress and Executive Branch of the United States.

E Pluribus Unum – out of many, one



by Luanne Long, RN
President, HNA

Our House of Delegates for 2007 has met. It heard from leaders, national – our UAN President, Ann Converso, RN – and state – Hawai'i Representative John Mizuno. It received detailed reports on the state of our union, in all areas including financial, staffing, direction, goals and challenges. And it weighed, discussed and decided on actions pertaining to the challenges and opportunities before us personally, as Hawai'i Nurses, and our profession.

There is a report elsewhere in this issue of our HNA ACTION about what the HOD did. I want to tell you that what was most satisfying to me, personally, as HNA President, was more of what this year's HOD was. It was a meeting of professionals who came together as one group, that discussed and debated the issues but in which the participants showed their respect for one another by listening and hearing the points made by other Delegates. It made decisions – sometimes difficult ones – but it did so as a united group, in the best interests of the Nurses of Hawai'i and of the union that they make up and that serves them.

To put it simply, I felt both very humbled and very grateful to be part of the House of Delegates and the very fine Nurses you elected to comprise that body.

Challenges Loom

Clearly, many major challenges loom before us this coming year. These include the pressures of a troubled

economy, the nursing shortage, management pressures to cut back on staff (while maintaining high compensation for managers), attempts to shrink both the size of the bargaining unit and the impact of Staff Nurses, the Legislative Session and the pressing need for both Safe Staffing and No Lift legislation, and important negotiations capped by the Big Five.

To meet these challenges, we need to be ready. First and foremost, we need to be united, to have a plan and work that plan, and most of all, we need our union to be prepared to support us in all we have to do.

That begins with ratification of the proposed dues adjustment, recommended without dissent by the HOD. That will give us the ability to maintain a complete LRS staff complement in the field, there with you when you need them most. That will take our budget out of deficit and make us that much stronger for the future. That will enable us to rebuild our strike fund – strong enough that we may reasonably hope the employers notice so that we may never have to actually make use of the fund to provide strike benefits in the future.

The year ahead will be critical in many ways. It will establish the base for pay and benefits – and contractual protections – for some years to come. We need to be ready to take advantage of opportunities and to fend off challenges. The meeting of the House of Delegates was the very important step that set the base for all that lies ahead. My deep personal mahalo to all those who served as delegates. I've never been prouder to be part of the united Nursing profession in Hawai'i, part of our HNA.

Date from Page 1

United Front

The task at hand is not easily pursued with other controversial issues on the fore front (the Hawaii Super Ferry, etc.). However, a united front of HNA members throughout the State of Hawai'i can be a very powerful force – there really IS strength in numbers.

Call to All HNA Members

We will be contacting all HNA Leaders in our Collective Bargaining Facilities and HNA Districts to support YOUR legislative bills by speaking with your Legislators, writing testimonies, and attending Committee Hearings at the Legislature – Be The Voice that Makes a Difference.

Members interested in joining the Governmental Affairs Committee may call HNA President Luanne Long. Leave a message for Luanne at HNA – 531-1628.

HNA Actions

Brief reports on HNA Actions

- Straub Nurses overwhelmingly ratify Agreement
- Molokai General Hospital vote to affiliate with HNA
- Kahuku Hospital still under jurisdiction of bankruptcy court and because of this, HNA has negotiated and signed a new 3 month contract extension

Ongoing negotiations:

- Queens Medical Center Radiation Techs
- Queens I.V. Teams RNs
- Kauai Medical Center LPNs
- Kaiser O'ahu Home Care RNs

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Prepare for Negotiations

Nurses in the Big Five bargaining units should begin to prepare now for this year's negotiations. Please be advised NOT to buy large-ticket items or go into extensive home remodeling just to be on the safe side. As HNA Kaua'i Wilcox Nurses can tell you, hospital managements have recently taken a very hard line against Nurse involvement in decision-making in key areas and in placing bottom-line money issues ahead of common-sense patient safety and employee compensation matters.

Until the dues adjustment has been ratified and there has been time to build up the strike fund, this is doubly important. As always, while no one wants trouble, we can best avoid it if we are completely prepared for it. And NOW is the time to prepare.

HNA Nurses at some of the hospitals have already formed committees to prepare for the 2008 negotiations. Anyone who wishes to join or to form such a committee should contact your LRS through HNA.

This is 2008. This is the year of Big Five negotiations. The time to prepare is NOW. Please be advised.

Protect Yourself

Narcotics Waste Documentation

Be aware. More and more facility managements are tightening, checking and following up on documentation to be sure that proper procedures have indeed been followed to the letter with regards to proper disposal of narcotics wastes.

This is no area for shortcuts, report the LRS staff and HNA Interim Executive Director Hector Ramos. It isn't enough just to follow proper procedure in disposing of narcotics waste. It has to be documented properly as well. Taking short cuts in this area can create a situation that can lead to dismissal of a Nurse.

The union can – and will – make sure that all your rights are completely protected. But it is up to each individual Nurse to be sure he or she has followed regulations – especially with regards to the current hot-button issue of proper documentation of disposal of narcotics wastes – to the letter.