

## Negotiations Update

# Big Five Nurses Cheer HNA - Negotiated Pacts

Big Five negotiations are wrapped up and the overwhelming ratification margins in votes by Nurses have declared them a major success!

With ratification on December 14th of their contract by Kaiser Nurses - by a sweeping majority of better than 90% - Big Five negotiations reached a successful conclusion. Negotiations continue at Liberty but

are on track and Nurse negotiators are hoping for an equally successful outcome.

HNA President Luanne Long, RN, hailed the work of each of the HNA Nurse-Negotiating teams and praised HNA's national collective bargaining affiliate, the United American Nurses (UAN, AFL-CIO) for their assistance in helping our

teams prepare for the task so well accomplished.

Nurses at each of the Big Five of course know the details of their own contracts. Among the highlights:

Kaiser - despite efforts by a California based union to try to divide Nurses,

**See Negotiations, Pg.2**



**HAWAI'I  
NURSES  
ASSOCIATION**

**JANUARY 2006**

# **ACTION**

**SERVING HAWAI'I NURSES AND PATIENTS SINCE 1917**

## **WE WANT YOU**

### **to be a legislative Buddy**

by Joe Niemczura, RN, MS for the HNA Legislative Committee

HNA is building a new system of grassroots lobbying for nursing issues. Now is the time to become a "Legislative Buddy." You will be the Buddy of your local senator or representative. We will build a network of Nurses throughout the state who will work with their legislator. You can do this without going too far from home. The Buddy network will provide

valuable grassroots backup for our lobbying team at the State Capitol. We will train you and provide you with the materials.

**Save the Date:  
January 14  
2006**

Saturday, January 14th, 2006, from 0900 to 1600, there will be a training event at Spalding Auditorium on the campus of UH Manoa. You will learn about the legislative process and how the Buddy System will work. It will be hands-on and full of practical tips to make it fun. To join our Buddy network and to learn more, send an email to [aggie@hinurse.org](mailto:aggie@hinurse.org).

## Negotiations

continued from Pg.1

the HNA team achieved a contract which included raises totaling 23% over the next three years. This, pointed out HNA Director and Kaiser Nurse Robin Tanner, RN, BS, will bring HNA-bargaining pay increases for Kaiser Nurses over the six year period including the last contract and the new one to 44% in just that short period. The HNA Kaiser team also won language to help with concerns about work conditions, staffing, medical and dental insurance improvements, and a significant increase in the amount budgeted annually for educational use by Nurses; Nurse Practitioners received the same benefits as the rest of the bargaining unit.

See Negotiations, Pg.3

# Alex Santiago Named HNA Legislative Consultant

Alex Santiago is Hawai'i Nurses' Association's Legislative consultant for the 2006 legislature. Mr. Santiago served 5 terms in the state legislature. He was the Chair of the State House Committee on Health as well as Majority Whip for the House of Representatives. During his terms in the legislature, he was named Legislator of the Year by the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i, the

Hawai'i Psychology Association, the Mental Health Association of Hawai'i, and the Hawai'i Nurses Association.

Alex Santiago also served as Chair of Hawai'i's Democratic Party in 2003 - 2004. He earned a B.A. in Sociology and received his Masters in Social Work from the University of Hawai'i in 1980.

## ANA HAILS U.S. HOUSE DEMS' PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLAN

**Bill assuages nurses', patients' concerns over vaccine liability, compensation issues.**

The American Nurses Association (ANA) has endorsed a comprehensive strategy, advanced by Democrats in the US House of Representatives, to combat a possible avian influenza pandemic.

The proposed House bill will take a multi-pronged approach to fighting a potential influenza pandemic by increasing international surveillance, boosting domestic supplies of vaccines and anti-viral medications, and allocating more funding to state and local public health infrastructures. The bill also addresses key issues surrounding proposed liability protections for manufacturers who develop influenza vaccines and health care workers who administer influenza vaccine, as well as compensation for victims of adverse vaccine reactions.

The proposed legislation provides for the education and prescreening of health care workers as well as the general public, and also requires the government to develop workplace standards and plans to protect health care workers and other first responders in the event of an influenza pandemic - provisions that are critical to ensuring that first responders get vaccinated and are able to do their jobs.

HNA joins the ANA in saluting lawmakers for initiating this effort and hope it will be enacted speedily to allow for development of effective vaccines and adequate guidelines and protections in face of the threat of a possible pandemic.

# HNA Readies Action Agenda

By Alex Santiago, HNA Legislative Consultant

The 2006 Legislative Session will begin on January 18, 2006. The HNA Governmental Affairs Committee has been meeting for the past month in preparation for this year's Session. We will continue to provide updates for you throughout the year. Any Nurse interested in participating in our Legislative efforts is encouraged to call the office and to become part of the committee.

We will continue attempts to move forward our agenda to prohibit mandatory overtime and to put in place safe staffing at all our hospitals. There have been a number of recent local media reports focusing on the nursing shortage in Hawai'i. These articles have used statistics from national studies and related them to our local situation. We are presently meeting with key Legislators and asking for their support to fund and direct this effort.

In addition, we are following and monitoring issues related to healthcare in general. HNA has also provided input and guidance on issues related to universal Healthcare coverage for all of our residents here in Hawai'i. We are concerned with potential legislation that could adversely affect our members and will therefore remain involved to provide testimony on behalf of members.

The Legislative session will begin and conclude in five months. During that time we need to maintain our presence at the Legislature to make sure that our issues are heard. We could always use more people who can commit some time to this effort. If you are interested please call the office and leave us your name and number. Our legislative Lobbyist, Alex Santiago, has conducted training sessions for those who have never participated in the process in the past and is willing to do so again for those interested. Although the process can sometimes be frustrating, it can also be fun. Only with your active participation and support can we continue to maintain our presence in Hawai'i's Governmental Affairs and make sure our voices are heard. Mahalo.

## Negotiations

continued from Pg.2

### An End to Mandatory OT

Queens' contract was highlighted by a breakthrough agreement that QMC will eliminate mandatory overtime by January 2007. This will be the first "NO Mandatory Overtime" language in the State of Hawai'i. By 2007 QMC RNs can no longer be mandated to work overtime against their will.

The benefits to the health and welfare of both RNs and patients are well documented. This also represents a significant step forward in increasing the potential to reduce the nursing shortage, making Nursing careers more attractive by improving working conditions. Nurses can actually begin to enjoy their work once again without fear of mandated overtime, disrupting their own family life and health.

Other contract language will improve working conditions through stronger guidelines for staffing ratios that include acuity, skill mix, and experience. The labor management council will have the power to resolve staffing issues in all areas. The contract also includes wage increases of 7% in 2005, 7% in 2006, and 6.5% in 2007 as well as increases in on-call pay, night differential, a \$500 certification bonus, and - like Kaiser - an agreement to explore a Taft Hartley Health and Welfare Trust.

We covered some of the gains in other contracts in our most recent issue. All contracts will be printed and Nurses will receive a copy of their own contract as soon as it is possible to get them produced.

Again, our congratulations to all the members of the HNA Nurse-Negotiating Teams and the Contract Action Support Teams (CASTs) who supported them. And congratulations to Hawai'i Nurses who have new contract extensions in hand complete with raises and whose overwhelming ratification votes were the loudest and best indicators of a job well done by all.

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

A dictionary of over 200,000 medical, pharmaceutical, biomedical & healthcare acronyms and abbreviations. Plus medical news and searches for the medical, pharmaceutical or healthcare professional.

<http://www.pharma-lexicon.com/>



By Luanne Long, RN  
HNA President

# Be Aware!

## Medicare Issues, an Overview

The following is a synopsis of each type of Medicare plans:

**Medicare Part A:** Most people are automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A at age 65. Part A is free and there are no monthly premiums. This plan generally pays for inpatient hospital expenses and some other services such as skilled nursing care (in long term or skilled nursing facilities), home health care, or hospice care.

**Medicare Part B:** This plan covers outpatient hospital services, physical and occupational therapy, some home health care when medically necessary, and doctors' services. This is an optional plan. Participation in this plan requires payment of a monthly premium.

**Medicare Part C,** also known as Medicare Advantage: Must have Medicare Part A and Part B to qualify for Medicare Part C. This plan is obtained through private

health insurance companies and offer expanded benefits, depending on the type of policy purchased. An example of this type of coverage is HMSA's 65C Plus Plan.

**Medicare Part D:** On January 1, 2006, the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit goes into effect. This plan is a description of dozens of private plans that satisfy minimum coverage requirements set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Payment of a monthly premium is required. This plan covers some of the costs of prescription medications based on how much the insured participant spent on prescription medications covered under the plan selected by the insured participant. Coverage may vary between plans as each plan decides which drugs to cover.

HNA will provide additional information on this important subject in future issues of the HNA ACTION.

As healthcare providers (Nurses, doctors, therapists, and other allied healthcare providers), we need a working knowledge of some of the common basic healthcare benefits such as Medicare.

To start with the basics (we will provide additional information in future issues):

Currently, there are 3 types of Medicare: Medicare Part A, Part B, and Medicare + Choice (also known as Medicare Advantage or Medicare Part C). On January 1, 2006, Medicare Part D will become the fourth addition to the Medicare Program.

# Nurses Again Top Gallup List in Honesty and Ethics

The 2005 Gallup poll on professional honesty and ethical standards again ranked Nurses number one.

The poll asked Americans to rate the honesty and ethical standards of members of professions on a five-point scale that ranges from "very high" to "very low." Of the 21 professions tested this year, 6 have majority "high ethical" ratings -- Nurses (82%), pharmacists (67%), medical doctors (65%), high school teachers (64%), policemen (61%), and clergy (54%).

"The rating of Nurses by the public again as number one in 'honesty and ethics' reveals just how much trust the public places in the Nursing profession," said ANA President Barbara Blakeney, MS, RN. "It is my hope that this continuing affirmation of the public's respect and trust will prompt Congress and the health care industry to support Nursing education and improve the work environment for Nurses. What we need, in short, is the public's support on such issues, along with policy makers' readiness and willingness to act."

<http://poll.gallup.com/>

# ANA Joins Suit to Promote Public Interest Representation On Health Care Issues

ANA has joined a number of public health organizations in filing a lawsuit demanding that corporate interests be balanced with public interest representation on US Industry Trade Advisory Committees (ITACs) that advise the US Trade Representative (USTR) on trade policies affecting public health. Non-profit and public interest organizations have been systematically denied posts on industry-dominated trade advisory committees that impact the health of millions of people around the world.

The suit was filed in US District Court in San Francisco by Earthjustice on behalf of a coalition of public health organizations including: the Center for Policy Analysis on Trade and Health (CPATH), California Public Health Association-North, the Chinese Progressive Association, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the American Nurses Association. The coalition states that the current makeup of advisory committees used by the Bush administration to establish trade policy favors corporate interests and illegally excludes public health advocates.

## Calendar

### January 14, 2006:

Legislative Buddy Training at U.H. See "We Want You" on page 1.

### January 15:

Nurses for Hawai'i Ewa Day.

### January 16:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. To join the parade, please call HNA at 531-1628.

### January 17:

I.V. Nurses Day.

### January 18:

Opening of the Legislature.

### January 23-25:

January 23-25: Philippine Nurses Association of America, "Global Partnership for a Preferred Future in Healthcare".

Barbara Blakeney, ANA President, will be the keynote speaker on January 23, 2006. While she is in Honolulu, HNA will ask her to address HNA as well. HNA is working on a proposal now.

### March 27, 2006:

Disaster Relief Training for healthcare providers. Details to be provided.

## ELECTION TIMELINE:

### January 4:

Drawing to determine candidate order on ballots.

### January 9:

Candidates may inspect ballots & instructions before printing.

### January 20:

Candidates may inspect printed ballots & instructions and membership list.

### January 25:

Ballots mailed to members.

### February 15:

Deadline for ballots to be received.

# Welcome Valerie Peaphon



Valarie Peaphon  
HNA Labor Relations Specialist

Valarie Peaphon is a new Labor Relations Specialist with The Hawai'i Nurses' Association. She graduated from Michigan State University in 2002 with a BA in Psychology. Upon graduation, she completed an internship with the AFL-CIO and was called back to work as a lead organizer on a campaign in Michigan that organized 40,000 Home Care workers. Prior to joining the HNA team, she worked as a Business Agent for SEIU, Local 79, representing health care workers in contract negotiations and in settling grievances. We're honored to have her on our team, working for Hawai'i Nurses!

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# Happy New Year!

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