UC Receives Notice of CNA’s Intention to Strike

The University of California has received notice today (May 28) from the California Nurses Association, the union representing UC nurses, that it intends to hold a one-day strike on June 10.

The University considers this action unlawful, a violation of good-faith bargaining requirements and a clear violation of the parties’ contract.

CNA’s actions today closely resemble the unlawful strike threat it made in 2005, which led the University to obtain a court injunction against the strike. The Public Employment Relations Board, which oversees public sector labor relations, recently ruled that CNA’s 2005 strike threat constituted an unfair labor practice and ordered that a further hearing take place to determine the extent of the union’s liability for the costs UC Medical Centers incurred preparing for the possibility of a nurse walk-out.

UC’s Medical Centers are known throughout the world for their excellent patient care. Our nurses play a pivotal role in the quality of that care. UC is proud of the work they do, the standards they uphold and the commitment they bring to first-rate patient care.

Union allegations about inadequate staffing simply have no merit. Patient safety is a top concern and we adhere to all staffing laws. The University’s exemplary record in maintaining nurse-to-patient ratios was most recently borne out by a neutral, third-party mediator, who found that the labor management process prescribed by the current UC-CNA contract has allowed the two parties to work out issues in a satisfactory manner at each UC location.

UC has a strong track record of paying competitive wages and benefits, and our existing contract reflects our continuing commitment to market-rate compensation. In April, UC offered CNA a two percent across-the-board raise for nurses, effective in September. CNA did not respond to that offer so the University implemented the September two percent wage increase on May 27, 2010.

The University is again prepared to do whatever it takes to ensure the safety of our patients in the face of a threatened strike by CNA.