



June 25, 2020

To ESC Medical Professionals:

We write today with the following updates:

1. ESC Local 20 continues safety-related advocacy.

Union leaders and staff are working continually to address safety-related issues connected to care delivery during the pandemic. WE RELY ON OUR MEMBERS TO RAISE ISSUES -- PLEASE ALERT YOUR STEWARD OR REP IF YOU ARE FACING WHAT YOU BELIEVE ARE UNSAFE CONDITIONS.

This work is taking place at many levels and through many different forums. Our union has done research on safety standards that have resulted in a demand to bargain over PPE at the national level at Kaiser, together with our partners in the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions. Our own officers and staff are engaged in detailed discussions about safety protocols for those who are returning to regular work -- for example, Kaiser Optometry professionals are holding firm on securing adequate time for cleaning rooms and equipment between in-person patients. When we see resistance to common sense measures by upper-level management, our local stewards have gotten agreements from their local chiefs for appropriate measures. This has allowed our professionals to hold up models for best practices that we are working to secure at all Optometry facilities.

Another example of a win for common sense safety was Sonoma County's agreement to provide N-95 masks to health services and environmental safety inspectors, whose field work takes them to facilities and sites where ongoing safety protocols are unknown or unclear. These ESC Local 20 members thus can continue to perform their critical work to safeguard public health with the appropriate PPE.

Through wide communication about best practices and solidarity among our members, we are creating and enforcing the standards that are needed for safe operations. The work of our stewards, local professional practice committees, and staff representatives is constant, and is leading to significant and positive impacts on patient and worker safety. Again, if you have any concerns about safety in your workplace, please contact your union representative.

2. HCA -- profiting from the pandemic?

ESC Local 20 represents 300 members at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Gatos and Regional Medical Center in San Jose: lab professionals, respiratory therapists, imaging

professionals, physical and occupational therapists, speech pathologists, dieticians and social work professionals. These facilities are owned by Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), one of the world's wealthiest hospital chains. HCA has earned over 7 billion in profits over the past two years and is worth \$36 billion; the annual compensation of the CEO, Samuel Hazan, is \$26 million. You can read all about HCA's behavior during the pandemic in [this damning account published earlier this month by the New York Times](#).

HCA seems to embody the worst of for-profit health care during the pandemic.

Despite receiving about \$1 billion in taxpayer-funded pandemic stimulus payments about a month ago, HCA told us that ESC Local 20 employees must either give back the 2020 increases negotiated last year in a new contract, or they would face layoffs. The HCA workers refused to give up their negotiated increase -- and HCA has not given notice of any layoffs.

There is more: after our workers called HCA's bluff, the company has now told our members (and other unionized workers at the Hospitals) that it will not do layoffs, but instead will cut the 401(k) match for 2020 in an amount equivalent to the 2020 raise.

ESC Local 20 is joining forces with the other unions at these HCA facilities to combat this outrageous conduct. We will keep you posted on the outcome of this battle. It is sad and shameful that one of our employers has chosen to respond to the pandemic by seeking to extract concessions from its workers, even as it takes enormous subsidies from taxpayers.

We thank you again for all your critical work. The union will continue to fight for safety and fairness as we move through these unprecedented times.

In solidarity,

Michael Aidan, Assistant Executive Director/Senior Union Representative
maidan@ifpte20.org

Nick Steinmeier, Senior Union Representative
nsteinmeier@ifpte20.org

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