

MSH to Force 12-hour shifts in violation of MOU



CAPT State President Eric Soto, Metro Chapter President Chuck Garcia, and CAPT Consultant Ann Lyles met August 17, with Metropolitan State Hospital administration and Department of State Hospital representatives regarding notice of a 12-hour shift program at Metro. To their shock and amazement, your CAPT representatives learned that, despite previous communications and understandings between the hospital and CAPT that the 12-hour shifts would be voluntary, the hospital intends, effective September 1, 2020, to force all Bargaining Unit 18 employees in Program VI and Unit 406 to work these elongated shifts.

At an earlier meeting, CAPT made abundantly clear the union's position that a 12-hour shift program would only be acceptable if staffed with willing volunteers. After gaining Dr. Barsom's word that the hospital would only utilize volunteers to staff these 12-hour shifts, CAPT began spreading the message on behalf of the facility to identify potential volunteers.

In an attempt to justify the forced shifts unilaterally, MSH Executive Director Dr. Barsom asserted that "everyone in Program VI is on board with the 12-hour shift."

In performing his due diligence, CAPT Metro Chapter President Chuck Garcia challenged Dr. Barsom's claim by contacting members

throughout the affected program. He found that 77% of the members were opposed to working the 12-hour shifts!

Unfortunately, the Executive Director failed to attend the meeting in which CAPT clearly and forcefully spoke against the plan, citing our contract and the lack of provisions therein that would allow the state to unilaterally force a 12-hour shift upon any BU 18 member. Naturally, MSH administration hijacked the Covid-19 pandemic as an excuse to bypass our contract with the state and blatantly ignore the overriding wishes of the affected staff.

Metro State Hospital intends to implement these forced 12-hour shifts. Under the direction of the Executive Director and his clinical and nursing administrators, these shifts will be enforced without guarantees to regular days off, to am, pm or NOC shifts, or to vacation. Childcare, healthcare, and FMLA considerations have also been ignored.

CAPT is determined to fight this outrageous and shortsighted unilateral change. If you work on one of the following units and have questions or concerns, contact your local Metro Chapter officers.

- ▶ Unit 406/Program I
- ▶ Unit 417/Program VI
- ▶ Unit 418/Program VI
- ▶ Unit 419/Program VI
- ▶ Unit 420/Program VI