

# The Westerly Hospital United Nurses & Allied Professionals Local 5075



*A Proud Record...*

*The Westerly Hospital  
United Nurses & Allied Professionals  
Local 5075  
Welcomes You!*



## Why we organized our Union

During the summer of 1986, a group of the professional staff got together and decided something had to be done to improve patient care, make the Hospital more responsive to the needs of the community and make the hospital a better place to work. To accomplish these goals, this group decided to organize a Union and adopted the theme “**Because we Care**”.

We formed a Union to make our voices heard and to be a part of the decision making process at the Hospital. Our members deliver patient care every minute of every day. We knew that by making our voices heard the Hospital would become a better place to be a patient and a better place to work. Throughout the history of our Union we have held true to the principles we formed our Union around in the first place.

“With our Union, we have legally enforceable rights. With our Union contract, work rules and policies are enforced fairly and consistently. And we have a grievance procedure with the right to representation and the right to a hearing by a neutral third party.”

“Our Union has given us an effective voice and the opportunity to make things better for our patients and ourselves. And we have!”



## Staffing- Our most important issue

Safe staffing has been a central issue since the formation of our Union. Better pay and benefits have been negotiated to make The Westerly Hospital the hospital of choice so that good staff stay and staff in other hospitals come to our hospital to work. We have fought against mandatory overtime as a method of staffing because one, it is unsafe and two it drives staff out of the profession. We fought to prohibit unlicensed patient care techs so that unlicensed and unskilled workers would not be doing the work of highly trained professional staff. We have worked hard to create a respectful work environment free from intimidation and harassment so that staff will want to stay and work here. Overall, we have tried to make the hospital the best that it can be so that it is fully staffed. There are now any number of reputable research studies done that link better staffing to better safer patient care.



## Keeping the community in our community Hospital

Throughout the years, we have fought hard to make sure the administration kept the best interests of the community foremost in their decision making process. For example, during the hospital merger trends of the 1990s, the Union was out front protecting the community from a merger that would leave The Westerly Hospital an outpatient clinic of a larger outside hospital system instead of the full service community hospital that The Westerly Hospital is today. The Union developed a set of principles to assure that the hospital would remain a full service hospital and took the case directly to the community. The fact that The Westerly Hospital remains a full service hospital based in the immediate community and not an outpatient clinic serving a oversized out of state healthcare system is in large part due to the efforts of the Union.

## It Pays to Belong to the Union

	<u>1987 Before The Union</u>	<u>2005</u>
Evening Differential	35 Cents	\$1.50
Night Differential	50 Cents	\$3.00
Weekend Premium	0	20%
RN Pay Rates	Top Pay \$16.98	\$36.68
Respiratory	Top Pay \$15.45	\$29.77
Overtime	1 1/2 over 40	1 1/2 over 8 2x long overtime



# United Nurses & Allied Professionals

## *An effective voice for health professionals*

The United Nurses & Allied Professionals (UNAP) represents over 4,700 nurses, technologists, therapists, support staff and other health care workers in Rhode Island, Vermont and Connecticut. The UNAP understands the dramatic changes underway in the health care field. We are leaders in the fight to create a humane health care system that respects the dignity of caregivers and patients alike.

**Fair pay, rights, and a voice at work:** Every day, the health professionals who lead our Union give voice to the concerns and aspirations of their co-workers. This includes negotiating contracts that provide fair pay and benefits, reasonable hours of work, safe staffing levels, continued educational opportunities, and better working conditions. UNAP leaders advocate for their colleagues on all work-related issues.



**Active legislative program:** UNAP nurses and health professionals initiate legislation and testify on behalf of important laws. The UNAP has had bills introduced that mandate safe staffing, prohibit mandatory overtime, require hospital inspection teams, protect whistleblowers, expand health care funding, and support nursing education.

**Building public awareness:** Our Union has produced and sponsored television and radio ads generating public awareness for our issues. We organized the first safe staffing rally at the State House attended by UNAP members, citizens and prominent public officials. UNAP leaders have appeared on television programs and have been guests on radio talk shows, proudly and articulately representing nursing and allied professionals. Our Union is regularly sought out for the perspective of direct caregivers on a variety of health care issues.

**Professional education:** The UNAP is on the cutting edge of health care issues in Rhode Island and Vermont. The UNAP regularly offers conferences and seminars to keep our members informed about a wide range of important topics such as professional liability, infectious diseases, bioterrorism, medical errors, ethics, health care funding, and the nursing shortage.

**Patient advocacy:** Let's face it. Health care administrators talk about quality care all the time. But nurses and other caregivers are the ones who know best about quality care. After all, we are the ones who do the work. Whether it is on-the-job, at the State House, in the community or at the negotiating table, members of the UNAP are the true voice of the patients for whom we care.

### **United Nurses & Allied Professionals**

375 Branch Avenue • Providence, RI 02904

T) 401-831-3647 • F) 401-831-3677 • [www.unap.org](http://www.unap.org)