



BEVERLY NURSES

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Contact: Barbara Maynard
Phone (323) 351-9321
Email barb@mcsonline.org

NURSES: BEVERLY HOSPITAL IS COMPROMISING PATIENT CARE

R.N.'S "SHINE A LIGHT" ON UNSAFE CONDITIONS AT BEVERLY HOSPITAL AT CANDLELIGHT VIGIL AND FOOD DRIVE

PHOTOS AVAILABLE

Registered Nurses at Montebello's Beverly Hospital joined together Thursday night holding candles on the street outside the hospital to call attention to practices that have lowered the standard of care in the hospital and left the communities of Montebello, Pico Rivera, Monterey Park, El Monte, Whittier, and East Los Angeles without the first-rate community hospital they deserve.

"We're nurses," said Veronica Arellano, Telemetry R.N. "Every day we walk through the doors of Beverly Hospital, we bring the desire to ease pain, to help heal, and to provide top-notch care. But we can't do that, because management won't do the right thing."

"The nurses want to promise them that this hospital will provide their loved ones with proper care," said Father James Nieblas of nearby St. Mary's Church (Boyle Heights). "Until they make some changes, Beverly Hospital can't make that promise."

Hospital management, led by CEO Gary Kiff, has implemented a hands-off policy of neglect that has left nurses without the support and resources they need to provide appropriate levels of care. While staffing levels have drifted below state-set standards, management has been left in the hands of Chief Operating Officer based in Arizona and other absentee managers.

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Meanwhile, the nurses have sought improvements through contract negotiations. But Kiff has left matters in the hands of an expensive attorney with a reputation for union-busting, not problem-solving. The nurses and their representatives from the United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals have been stymied in their efforts to negotiate, facing a steadfast refusal to schedule necessary sessions and an unwillingness to establish the most basic level of trust by promising not to take reprisals against nurses who speak out about quality of care issues.

"Beverly Hospital had a choice," said Susan Justin, I.C.U. nurse. "They could have sat down with their nurses and addressed the issues that lie between where we are now and the hospital that this community deserves. Instead, they took money that should go towards patient care and handed it off to a pricey attorney. It's not too late to turn it around. That's why we're out here tonight."

The nurses and their supporters accompanied the candlelight vigil with a food drive. Collected food was donated to needy families in the Montebello area through Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church and St. Benedict Catholic Church.

PICTURES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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