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Howard University Hospital nurses stage one-day strike

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Howard University Hospital nurses, April 11. SLL photo: Sharon Black

The District of Columbia Nurses Association staged a one-day strike to highlight the failure of Adventist Healthcare to sit down and bargain in good faith. Adventist Healthcare is the administration for Howard University Hospital. The day-long rally ran from 7:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. on April 11. The nurses that attended represented many different nationalities. For the morning rally over 200 participants were in

attendance.

Adventist Healthcare on several occasions has come to the bargaining table claiming that they had not seen any proposals. The union officials assert that all proposals were properly forwarded to the hospital administration. Just one day before the one-day strike was held, the hospital chief negotiator claimed at the start of the session that the union was attempting to back-date proposals for back pay that was owed to the nursing staff. He proclaimed the proposal was invalid and that the hospital couldn't afford it. He told them that there was nothing to talk about and left the room.

Many issues have been raised by the union in this round of contract negotiations. Among them are patient ratios that make sure that nurses are not assigned more than a reasonable number of patients for care. Additionally, management has eliminated the differential pay for evening and weekend shifts which results in a cut in pay of several thousand dollars.

Chants demanding safe staffing levels were heard continuously throughout the day along with chants demanding fair negotiations. The nurses on the picket line received tremendous support from the public as many drivers honked their horns in support. Just about every bus driver that drove by honked loudly to show support. Many people walking by stopped to listen and discuss the issues with the nurses.



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