

To: All Faculty and Staff
From: Krista Curell, RN, Vice President, Risk Management and Patient Safety,
Chief Compliance Officer, Strike Captain Incident Commander
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2019
Subject: Workforce Disruption: Decompression Update

The NNOC/NNU's decision to time its second strike during the Thanksgiving holiday will again impact UCMC's ability to recruit experienced and qualified replacement nurses needed to fully maintain services for our patients and the community.

As we did during the Union's first strike in September, UCMC has initiated steps to decompress our census to ensure that all patients who remain at the Medical Center when the Union's strike begins on Tuesday morning will continue to receive safe, uninterrupted care. We currently anticipate that we will have to lower our census to about 60% of normal. As in September, certain critical areas of the Medical Center will be impacted significantly more and in some cases areas will have to reduce operations to less than 10% of normal.

Here are the actions we've taken as of this update:

- UCMC initiated perinatal transfer bypass on Friday, meaning we are no longer accepting transfers of high-risk pregnant mothers or newborns needing UCMC's Level 3 neonatal care. We also transferred 3 antepartum patients from our labor and delivery unit who anticipate a high risk delivery necessitating NICU care for the infants during the Union's strike.
- On Tuesday, we began transferring an estimated 50 neonatal patients who will need to be moved before the strike begins Tuesday to other NICU centers, including Advocate Christ, Lurie Children's and Rush.
- We initiated Pediatric Intensive Care Unit bypass on Monday and began transferring 20 PICU patients on Tuesday to other intensive care units in the city.
- We went on full pediatric ED and pediatric trauma diversion Monday as well.
- The Transfer Center was closed, and UCMC implemented ALS bypass in our adult ED.
- The challenge UCMC and our community is facing during this strike – that we didn't during the September strike – is that the other major medical centers in the city are all at or near full capacity. As of Wednesday morning, there were only 9 intensive care beds open in Chicago.
- At the same time, UCMC is at 100% capacity and our Emergency Department continues to be over-capacity, with about 30 patients waiting for inpatient beds on average over the past 24 hours.
- As a result, we declared an internal disaster bypass today and went on full diversion for our Level 1 adult trauma services.
- We have begun the process of closing adult inpatient hospital units in advance of the strike, and that process will continue through the start of the strike on Tuesday morning.

We are acutely aware of the severe impact the Union's strike and these resulting reductions have on our patients, their families and the South Side community we are committed to serving.

UCMC's bargaining team and the Union have negotiating sessions scheduled for Thursday and Friday. The strike by the 2,200 Union-represented nurses begins Tuesday, November 26, at 7 a.m. and the resulting workforce disruption will last until Sunday, December 1, at 7 a.m. All represented nurses who are scheduled are expected to report beginning at that time Sunday (and not before) unless otherwise notified that they are not needed due to low census.

The Chicago Tribune today published an editorial calling on the Union to cancel the strike and remain at the bargaining table with us until a new contract agreement is reached. Please take a moment to read [this editorial](#) about the impact the Union's actions already are having on our patients, their families and the South Side community.

Here are some key phone numbers for your reference. These numbers will be activated on Tuesday, November 26 at 5am:

Main Phone Lines	Numbers
Command Center Main	773-795-1114
Command Center (Rolled to Main)	773-926-8959
Command Center (Rolled to Main)	773-795-2898
HICS Positions Cell Lines	Numbers
Logistics Chief	773-326-8545
Deployment Officer	773-326-8245
Clinical Operations Officer	773-326-8394