

One Valley: From the frontline to the bargaining table Rally at Valley: Sick Leave "Speak Out"

Our voices will not be silenced

At this week's Rally at Valley, many of us shared our experiences stemming from not having adequate sick leave. From injury and illness that we've experienced, or the care a family member or loved one has needed from us and we were unable to give, these stories have touched all of us, no matter where we work at Valley.

We are demanding a fair contract that ensures each of us has the resources we need to give the quality patient care that our community deserves. That includes sick leave we can access when we need it. Valley administration may try to divide us and use tactics to intimidate us and stop us from lifting up our voices to share the real experiences we have every day, but we are One Valley.

We are a strong union and we have each others' backs as we continue to advocate for our patients.



Member Stories



My name is Shelly Toyer, I'm a Bedside, Resource and Charge RN in Critical Care. I've worked at Valley for 16 years. I love my job; taking care of patients, my coworkers are my family, I sing all the time on my unit hoping to bring joy to those around me. In August last year, I was helping a friend restore their boat and fell 4 feet off the bow and onto the dock and broke my back. I was hospitalized for six days just to control the excruciating pain. I had to wear a full torso brace and use a walker for three months before I had recovered enough to return to work. Then, only months later, I was in a hit and run car accident in March of this year. I had already used up what little sick leave I had accrued as well as my vacation hours so I had to go without pay during my recovery from reinjury and intermittent flare ups with back pain. Because we accrue so little sick leave, these accidents have meant I have been unable to pay my rent for now three months. It has only been due to the graciousness and understanding from my landlord that I have not been evicted. I am just one example amongst the many of us who have experienced illness and injury. Only one out of many who were left without a paycheck because of Valley's scant sick leave accrual.

We're only human. We get sick, our children and our families get sick, our fragile bodies break, but we still need to care for our families and ourselves.

It's time for a change. We are challenging — no, demanding! — that Valley care for us like families should care for one another!



I'm Inderjeet Gill. I'm a nurse on 3 North and I started working here at Valley in 2023. Earlier this year in March, I started to have an injury in my back causing chronic back pain. I took FMLA to care for a family member and when I returned, I had a back injury. Valley denied my leave recommended by my doctor to recover. I got the phone call from my manager that I had received multiple occurrences for my leave because I had run out of sick and vacation accruals in my bank. I had no other options available to me. I have been pushing myself through the pain but I feel like I'm not able to do as much care because of the pain, and I feel like it's affecting others. I worry that pushing myself like this is making it worse because I cannot take the time to recover without sick hours. If I had enough time I think I would be able to recover adequately and not have to come to push through to work with the pain.

We need more sick hours in our contract for ourselves and for when we need to care for our families. We are going to stand up for all of us to make the change in these policies.

Member Stories Continued →



My name is Rachel Jo. I have been a registered nurse at Valley for five years in Northwest Pavilion. Back in 2015, my husband was first diagnosed with lymphoma. It has been a difficult journey for my family but we are there for each other. But I am the only one who has been working right now, my job here is our lifeline. Over the last couple years, his condition has resulted in some emergency situations where I've needed to take time from work to bring him to the ER twice, where he was then admitted for hospitalization here at Valley. Because I had run out of sick time, I could not get off work, but I knew he was just in the sister unit from where I was working.

His next treatment will be the bone marrow transplant. For 100 days, he will need a dedicated caregiver and that is going to mean I will have to take Family Medical Leave to care for him. The WA State PFML is our only saving grace because without sick time, I will be going many weeks without pay for us and our daughter.

Policies like this make me feel like Valley sees us as if we are just a number here. But we're not just a number, we have families to care for.

For Valley to match UW Medicine sick leave benefits, we would feel supported and seen as whole people who matter and are valued. And that would reflect back for us as workers who would want to show up more when we feel valued.

It's time for all of us to stand together for us and our families.

Valley **MUST** commit to secure our retirement plan

As elected community leaders, the Board of Commissioners are a voice for this community here at Valley. We know they care about this hospital district and want it to be the best it can be; we all do.

Valley's motto 'we treat our community like family' must start with staff. We are part of this community. We gave public comment before the Board on September 3 asking them to use their community leadership and networks to stand with us on the picket line on **Wednesday, September 11** as we bring our message to the public with an informational picket.



Share our public campaign website!

Invite your family, friends and neighbors to sign our community petition and to share with community groups!

valleymedicalunited.org



I'll Be There!

Informational Picket at
Valley Medical Center
Wednesday, September 11
11am - 1:30pm

Corner of Talbot Rd. and Carr Rd.

SIGN UP
to join the
picket:



1199nw.org/3XpISHW