



May 8, 2019

Tracy,

Thank you for writing my office regarding the status of UW bargaining with the University of Washington Housestaff Association. I apologize for the delay in a formal response – it has taken some time for me to get fully up to speed on your issues and concerns.

UWHA and I are united in the perspective that excellent patient care is not something we can compromise. Where we diverge, however, is that this can only be accomplished by a set, “after-hours” timeline for union negotiations.

I believe my staff are taking your concerns about patient care seriously. They have proposed compromise solutions to limit the amount of time in bargaining during traditional “business” hours, and they have actively engaged supervisors to confirm bargaining will not impact patient care. Labor Relations now manages 14 labor contracts with 11 different unions – many of whom have complex staffing and patient care responsibilities. We have successful set schedules to bargain contracts with nurses, techs and other patient care providers during *and* after traditional “business” hours without compromising patient care – and I’m confident it’s possible with UWHA.

The landscape in UW labor relations has changed since bargaining your first contract. We are currently in the process of bargaining several new labor contracts, managing a complex “merger” of UW Medical Center and Northwest Hospital, and navigating several staffing transitions. While we’re working to add resources to address growing workload issues, cooperation on scheduling needs is necessary to adequately and fairly address the needs of all our labor partners and labor relations staff.

I understand we are now in formal mediation on this issue. I’ve urged our staff to be as flexible as possible – but it will require some compromise. I urge you to work with our staff to find common ground so that we can get to the important work of bargaining a fair contract.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of your membership and the University.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ana Mari Cauce".

Ana Mari Cauce
President
Professor of Psychology