**For Immediate Release**

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**Nurses at Mercy Fitzgerald Reach Contract Deal Ahead of Planned Strike**

**Philadelphia, PA --** Nurses at Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital in Delaware County agreed today to a new contract with significant wage increases--3%, 3%, 3% and 4% each year--and a trio of staffing changes that will greatly enhance patient protections. The new contract represents a major step forward in providing safe patient care and the ability to recruit and retain hospital staff.

*“Nurses and healthcare professionals have selflessly sacrificed during the COVID-19 pandemic at great personal risk to themselves,” said PASNAP President Maureen May, R.N. “In the positive resolution of this contract fight on the cusp of a vicious surge of the virus, the needs of our frontline workers have been respected and their patient communities are further protected. We are thrilled.”*

The Mercy Fitz nurses’ contract expired on September 30. The 260-plus nurses had planned a simultaneous strike next week with nurses at sister hospital St. Mary Medical Center in Bucks County to highlight their concerns over unsafe staffing levels at both Trinity-owned hospitals. Based in Livonia, Michigan, Trinity Health Systems is one of the country’s largest nationwide healthcare organizations, with more than 90 hospitals and behavioral health facilities.

The Mercy Fitz nurses’ new contract addresses:

* **Safe staffing –** The staffing language in the new contract contains three major accomplishments for patient safety: 1) increasing the Float Team of nurses to cover changes in the census (or, the number of patients in the hospital) to ensure that qualified nurses are always at the bedside; 2) ensuring the transport team will always be available so that nurses will not have to leave the bedside to transport patients. And 3) creating a new system to ensure that available nurses will be called to work when they are needed.
* **Wages –** In their new contract, Mercy Fitz nurses will see an increase of at least 13% and as high as 24% over the life of the contract. This represents some of the best wages for nurses in the state of Pennsylvania.

“Our primary goal as professional nurses is always to serve the community in the best way possible and to render safe care,” says Jackie Ximines, R.N., Co-President of the Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital Nurses Association. “I am confident that with this contract, we will be able to do that.”

“Our nurses are incredibly dedicated to our community, to our patients, to our hospital and to each other,” says fellow Co-President Anne Marie Dallago, R.N. “We are very happy that as COVID numbers rise, we have a contract in place that protects nurses and patients alike.”

The 800 nurses at St. Mary Medical Center have negotiated for more than a year in good faith, but Trinity has so far refused to make concrete investments in nursing and patient care at the hospital. The nurses are still planning to strike on Tuesday, November 17 and Wednesday, November 18.

The Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals represents 8,500 nurses and healthcare professionals across the Commonwealth.