



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**More Than 500 Nurses and Technical Professionals at Fox Chase Cancer Center Vote  
Overwhelmingly to Authorize a Strike**

**They Join Their Temple Health Colleagues – 375 Nurses at Temple Health Jeanes Campus – Who  
Voted to Authorize a Strike Three Weeks Earlier**

***“No one wants to walk away from our patients, but we’ll do it if we feel we have to – to advocate for future patients, for future patient care, and for future nurses. I want people to get into nursing. I want nurses to have what we need to give our patients the care they deserve. And I’ll fight for that.”***

**Philadelphia, PA** – Five months into bargaining for their first Union contracts with employer Temple Health, more than 500 nurses and technical professionals who work at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Northeast Philadelphia put Temple on notice for the third time in three weeks.

On March 7th, the caregivers charged Temple, which at that point had refused to respond in any way, over 19 bargaining sessions, to the caregivers’ economic proposals, with violating Section 8(a)(5) of the National Labor Relations Act. On Tuesday, they delivered strike petitions to hospital administration. And **today, in a vote that closed at 8 p.m., they voted overwhelmingly to authorize their bargaining committees to submit 10-day strike notices if Temple doesn’t prioritize recruitment and retention in Fox Chase negotiations.**

“No one wants to walk away from our patients,” says Fox Chase Ambulatory Care Nurse Sue Repkoe, RN, BSN, “but we’ll do it if we feel we have to – to advocate for future patients, for future patient care, and for future nurses. I want people to get into nursing. I want nurses to have what we need to give our patients the care they deserve. And I’ll fight for that.”

**In bargaining, Temple has proposed cutting retirement matching and making the caregivers’ highly punitive attendance policy even more punishing during a post-pandemic time when caregivers are fleeing the bedside and retention of skilled, experienced health professionals is more important than ever. Temple has also rejected contract language that would ensure minimum safe nurse staffing levels – a critical, quality of care issue – at Fox Chase.**

“There’s a reason why we unionized,” says Rossana Caputo, RN, a 17-year veteran of Fox Chase Cancer Center. “We need a voice to better advocate for our patients and ourselves, and we’re seeing that need in bargaining as well. Temple is not working with us on staffing – they have rejected our proposals to put

safe staffing levels in our contract. And they are actually trying to harden their already punitive attendance policy, which we feel is very unfair. No other Temple facility has this policy – not Jeanes, not Temple Main. We feel that we are Temple. We are one. And we shouldn't be punished for being sick and calling out. Administration isn't punished for being sick. Why should we be?"

Temple Health likes to tell its employees across its multiple campuses: "We are ONE TEMPLE," using the tagline, "The Best Care, Wherever You Are." But the employees' experiences working at Temple Health's satellite campuses don't bear that out – a reality that has inspired a spate of recent organizing within the Temple Health System, including the nurses and technical professionals at Fox Chase.

"All we want is to be treated fairly and to have a voice to advocate for ourselves and our patients, who need and deserve the best care we can provide," says FCCC CT Technologist Kristy Emmett. "You'd think Temple Health would want the same thing, but they've been fighting us every step of the way."

**The nurses at Jeanes Hospital, Fox Chase's sister Temple Health facility in Northeast Philadelphia, are also bargaining for a new contract. On February 29th, after more than 6 months of bargaining, the 375 nurses voted by an overwhelming majority to authorize their bargaining committee to submit a 10-day strike notice, if necessary.** In Jeanes bargaining, Temple has repeatedly rejected contract language that would ensure minimum safe staffing levels – a critical quality of care concern for Jeanes' expansive patient community – and has refused to offer wages and compensation that will attract and retain RNs and confer respect for the highly skilled nurses and the exemplary care they provide.

*Fox Chase Techs United (135 technical specialists who voted to unionize to have a voice on the job to advocate for themselves and their patients on June 7, 2023) and Fox Chase Nurses United (nearly 400 Fox Chase Cancer Center nurses who voted to unionize for the same reasons on June 20, 2023) are affiliates of PASNAP, the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals, which represents more than 10,000 frontline nurses and allied professionals across Pennsylvania. PASNAP represents 12 Locals, across three campuses, within the Temple Health System.*