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500-Plus Nurses and Technical Specialists at Fox Chase Cancer Center Overwhelmingly Ratify Their First Union Contracts

Contracts Directly Address the Caregivers' Reasons for Unionizing Last June

"Everyone Benefits – Our Current Staff and Patients and Our Future Staff and Patients"

Philadelphia, PA – Today, nearly a year after they voted in separate elections to unionize last June, 400 nurses and 135 technical specialists at Temple-owned Fox Chase Cancer Center in Northeast Philadelphia ratified their first union contracts. With real commitments to improved staffing in the hospital and wage increases to boost recruitment and retention, the three-year contracts directly address the caregivers' reasons for unionizing.

"It was a long and, at times, very frustrating process," says Certified Surgical Technologist Brian Sheridan, CST, a 19-year veteran of Fox Chase Cancer Center. "But in the end, it was very rewarding. Our contract, with its provisions for improved staffing, should benefit everyone – our current staff and patients, and our future staff and patients."

"I am beyond ecstatic to have come to an agreement with Temple Hospital/Fox Chase on our first Union contract," said Rossana Caputo, RN, a Fox Chase phone triage nurse. "We unionized last year because we wanted to be heard as nurses and to ensure that our hospital is safely staffed. This contract represents a big first step toward the latter, which is critical for better patient outcomes. I am proud to have been on the bargaining committee and to have been involved since the beginning of this long road of voting a Union in and finally ratifying a contract."

The vote for the nurses' new three-year contract, completed today at 8 p.m., was an overwhelming 97% in favor of ratification. The vote for the technicians' new three-year contract, also completed at 8 p.m., was a decisive 91% in favor of ratification.

At the core of the caregivers' negotiations were critical quality of care indicators including safe staffing and recruitment, retention and recognition of the concerns of frontline nurses and technical professionals.

The nurses' and technical professionals' new three-year contracts include:

- **Real commitments to staffing in the hospital.** The hospital will establish a new Joint Nurse Practice Committee and a new Joint Practice Committee for technical professionals, each with the goal of improving professional practice and patient care at Fox Chase. Up to five caregivers (or more with mutual agreement) will meet every other month with management on paid time to discuss any ongoing concerns. Plus, the hospital must now post the current staffing guidelines, either electronically or physically on a unit and make efforts to fill a hole in a posted schedule. The hospital will continue to provide incentives for extra shifts as needed.
- **Parental Leave:** The hospital will now provide 1 week of paid parental leaves as of 7/1/2025, equal to Temple Main.
- **New wage scales with healthy wage increases:** Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Navigators, and per diem RNs will be paid according to a new wage scale that includes steps for experience, effective the first full pay period following November 1st. Likewise, all technical job classifications will be paid according to a new wage scale that includes steps for experience, effective the first full pay period following November 1st. Nurses and technical professionals will receive across-the-board wage increases of at least 3.25% in year one, 3% in year two, and 3% in year three, in addition to increases based on years of experience to attract caregivers and improve retention of existing staff.
- **Ratification bonuses:** Full-time employees will receive a one-time ratification bonus of \$1,250, less applicable withholdings. Part-time employees will receive a one-time ratification bonus of \$625, less applicable withholdings.

“A lot of the nurses in my department are very seasoned and one of our main goals was to push for better working conditions and safer staffing for RNs who come after us or are just now starting their careers,” said Caputo. “We wanted change – not only for our patients, but for ourselves and for the future of nursing – and we accomplished that with this contract. My father, a Union man, would be incredibly proud.”

More than 300 nurses and technical professionals at Chestnut Hill Hospital – like Fox Chase, a Temple Health System facility – are currently in bargaining for their first contracts, as are professionals in Fox Chase’s Office of Cancer Research. The Chestnut Hill Hospital nurses (211) and technicians (90), and the OCR professionals (84) all voted (in separate elections) to form Unions in December.

Fox Chase RNs and Techs United is an affiliate of PASNAP, the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals, which represents nearly 10,000 frontline nurses and healthcare professionals across Pennsylvania and was founded on the belief that patients receive the best care when clinical-care staff have a strong voice to advocate for both patients and themselves. PASNAP represents more than 3,500 healthcare professionals within the Temple Health system, including the nurses and technical professionals at Fox Chase, Temple Main, Jeanes, and Chestnut Hill Hospital.