

**PROVIDENCE
Has Lost Its Way.org**



Media Advisory For: Thursday, Nov. 15, 2018

Contact: Linnae Riesen, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW
(425)306-2061 lriesen@seiu1199nw.org
Dave Bates (347)865-8038
davebcomms@gmail.com

Concerned Nurses & Healthcare Workers to Launch “Providence Has Lost Its Way,” an Effort to Inform the Community that Providence Health is Putting Corporate Greed Before Patient Need and Not Agreeing to a Fair Contract

Photo and video opportunity: Caregivers will rally with community members and hand out compasses to let patients know that Providence has lost its moral compass and is now more focused on executive pay, profits and expansion than its founding core values

Who: Nurses, chaplains, social workers and other caregivers from Providence Hospice & Homecare of Snohomish County will be joined by community leaders

What: Launch event for the “Providence Has Lost Its Way”

When: Thursday, Nov. 15 at 5:30 PM

Where: Colby Campus of Providence Regional Medical Center, 13th St. & Oakes Ave., Everett

Everett, WA- On Thursday, Nov. 15, scores of nurses, chaplains, nurse assistants, social workers, physical therapists and other caregivers will rally with community members to launch “Providence Has Lost Its Way,” an effort to inform the community that Providence St. Joseph Health is putting corporate greed before patient need and not agreeing to a fair contract. Nurses and caregivers say that Providence Health has forsaken the original, founding core values of the Sisters of Providence and is now focused more on increasing executive compensation, profits and expansion.

Providence was founded over 160 years ago by the Sisters of Providence, who came to the Northwest with a mission of providing compassionate care for all, especially the most vulnerable. But now, Providence St. Joseph Health has become a corporate behemoth with nearly 1,000 facilities in seven states, more than \$23 billion in revenue, several for-profit ventures, a CEO who makes over \$4 million a year and a growing list of millionaire executives

“The Sisters of Providence inspired us to the core values of Justice, Stewardship, Excellence, Respect and Compassion,” said April Frazier, a chaplain at Providence Hospice and Homecare. “I think the Sisters would be deeply saddened to see what has happened after they turned over the management of their Providence ministries to the current leadership. Providence made \$780 million dollars in profit in 2017 from the care we give, yet at the same time, we are not allowed the adequate resources so we can provide the highest quality care for our patients and families.”

For over two and a half years, nurses and healthcare workers at Providence Hospice and Homecare of Snohomish County have been advocating for improved staffing levels, fair wages that will recruit and retain qualified caregivers and a just union contract. But Providence has refused to listen, resulting in an alarming 30% turnover rate last year.

“In hospice care, we’re dealing with a sacred transition from life to death, and it’s vital for patients to have consistent caregivers who can spend the necessary time with families,” said Susan Dittmann, a registered nurse at Providence Hospice and Homecare. “Once I had a patient whose last wish was to walk his daughter down the aisle at her wedding, but he was in debilitating pain. At the time, I was able to give him focused care and relieve his pain so he was not only able to walk his daughter down the aisle, but also have the first dance with her. But now that Providence is overloading us with too many patients, we often have to rush through visits, making it very difficult to provide that kind of highly personalized, compassionate care.”

Providence Has Lost Its Way will inform patients about the worsening problems with the Hospice and Homecare program, and also spread the word about Providence’s growing scandals throughout all the markets in which it operates, for example: the ways that Providence could be driving up the cost of healthcare for patients; problems with the safety and quality of patient care, such as the neurosurgery scandal at Providence’s Swedish Medical Center; hundreds of recent staffing cuts to Labor and Delivery nurses and other vital healthcare workers at Swedish; the unaffordable health insurance deductibles that many Providence healthcare workers are forced to pay, and the harsh medical debt collection that the corporation subjects many employees to; and a recent lawsuit that claims Providence defrauded Medicare through systemic overbilling.

The effort will utilize every platform available for communicating with patients and community members, eventually expanding to all seven states where Providence St. Joseph Health operates, including: an extensive website, ProvidenceHasLostItsWay.org; Facebook, Instagram and Youtube channels with the handle @ProvidenceHasLostItsWay and a Twitter account @PSJHLostItsWay; press outreach; advertising online, in newspapers and on the radio; speaking at government and regulatory hearings; reaching out directly to elected officials; and holding escalating workplace actions.

“I served my country in the navy and then became a hospice nurse because I believe deeply in contributing, giving and caring for others, that’s the core of who I am,” said Monica McCreery, a registered nurse with Providence Hospice and Homecare of Snohomish County. “I once had the honor of caring for a young man during a double shift, from Christmas Eve until he died on Christmas day, while I sat vigil with his wife. Our patients deserve this level of care during their transition to death, but it’s difficult to provide that when Providence is pressuring us with heavier and heavier caseloads. Providence executives are making millions of dollars, all we’re asking them to do is listen to our concerns and provide the basic resources we need so we can provide quality hospice care to our community.”

####

Providence Has Lost Its Way is an effort to inform the community by the nurses and caregivers of SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, calling on executives to return to the Sisters of Providence’s original core values and agree to a fair contract. SEIU Healthcare 1199NW represents over 30,000 nurses and healthcare workers throughout Washington State, including 9,000 workers within the Providence Health system and 230 caregivers at Providence Hospice and Homecare of Snohomish County. SEIU Healthcare 1199NW’s mission is to advocate for quality healthcare and good jobs for all Washingtonians.