

## NYSNA Nurses: VOTE NO TO STATUS QUO

Displaying plenty of grit and determination, NYSNA nurses have fought on the picket lines for nearly a month under difficult circumstances. They have braved frigid temperatures, hardline hospital bosses, a mayor who pledged his support only to endorse chief scab-herder Hochul and a leadership that has pulled the union's punches. Now, nurses at Montefiore and Mt. Sinai are presented with a tentative agreement that changes little to nothing, while their NY Presbyterian counterparts are left to twist in the wind. Nurses did not go through weeks of struggle and sacrifice just to stand still.

The NYSNA tops have declared victory after dividing up the union to reach individual settlements that leave everyone worse off. But the nurses do not have to settle. If they vote the contract down and organize to strengthen the strike, it is possible to actually win their original demands and score a real victory not only for nurses and patients, but also the broader labor movement in these dark times. There is no shortage of reasons to *vote no on the TA and escalate the strike*:

- **A real wage hike:** An increase of 12 percent over three years is nowhere near the original ask of 30 percent, itself a minimum amount to keep from drowning in the strong currents of the city's "cost of living" crisis. The current wage proposal wouldn't even cover the cost of the strike, much less inflation.

- **Safe staffing:** The hospitals need to hire a lot more nurses to ensure safe staffing levels in all units. The bosses' resistance to doing so will only drive nurses into the ground and further compromise patient care. Relying on the last contract's enforcement apparatus got nurses nowhere and wouldn't produce any better results the second-time around. Holding the line on this issue could not only make all the difference for nurses once back on the job, but also inspire working people more widely to reinforce the picket lines.

- **Defense of jobs:** The three Mt. Sinai nurses fired for refusing to train scabs right before the strike began must be reinstated with clean records. They showed the kind of initiative in defense of the union that the NYSNA leadership sorely lacked. The entire union should have been mobilized against scab training. No nurse should be left behind, especially those who stepped up for the union.

- **One out, all out:** NY Presbyterian will still be out, only they would be fighting in isolation against the hospital system with the deepest pockets if Mt. Sinai and Montefiore return to work. The NYSNA leadership did nurses a major disservice by withdrawing strike notices for some right before the strike started. Outrageously, the nurses at the non-striking Brooklyn Hospital Center recently learned that they have no health insurance. At the beginning of the strike, the NYSNA leadership said no striking nurse would go back to work unless they all did. They must be held to that promise if the union is going to exert maximum leverage to get the best deal for the entire membership.

- **No-strike clause:** The no-strike clause must be ripped out of the contract so that the nurses are not handcuffed whenever they need to enforce its terms and defend themselves in the future. Demanding that this clause come out of the contract would also encourage other unions to do the same and join the NYSNA strike.

**WHAT TO DO:** It is possible to transform the status quo in the hospitals, but only if the strike is taken to the next level. Mass picket lines that keep scabs out are the surest way to force the bosses to submit. On occasion, other trade unionists and working-class supporters have turned out to the NYSNA pickets. Nurses should actively encourage this solidarity and demand that the NYSNA leaders call out non-striking nurses and enlist other unions to build the picket lines into a mass show of force. The best place to start is 1199, whose leadership has hospital workers reporting to work as usual.

If the union tops refuse, then the ranks should organize delegations to make these appeals. By popularizing their strike as a fight for quality healthcare, they can draw in broader layers of working people. To improve their hand, nurses should also assign teams to take control of essential patient care inside the hospitals. NYSNA has funds that can be put toward strike pay, and other unions can show real solidarity by coughing up some funds too.

*To get the outcome that nurses need and deserve, vote down the TA and form strike committees to pursue this fighting strategy.*

Read *Workers Vanguard*, Marxist newspaper of the Central Committee of the SL/U.S.: [workersvanguard.org](http://workersvanguard.org)

Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860 • [icli.org](http://icli.org) • [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net) • [@WorkersVanguard](https://x.com/WorkersVanguard)

**Chicago:** (312) 563-0441  
[chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net)

**Los Angeles:** (213) 380-8239  
[slycla@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slycla@sbcglobal.net)

**New York:** (212) 267-1025  
[nysl@tiac.net](mailto:nysl@tiac.net)

**Oakland:** (510) 839-0851  
[slbayarea@fastmail.net](mailto:slbayarea@fastmail.net)