

Union says California Kaiser nurses reach contract agreement

January 26 2015

Kaiser Permanente nurses in California have approved a new contract that boosts pay and improves patient care along with health and safety protections for nurses, a union official said.

Registered [nurses](#) and nurse practitioners who work at 21 hospitals and 65 clinics across Northern and Central California voted last week to approve the new three-year deal, the California Nurses Association said Monday.

About 18,000 Kaiser nurses in the state went on a two-day strike in November, and another walkout was planned for last week but an agreement was reached.

The California Nurses Association represents the Kaiser nurses. Those workers are part of the National Nurses United organization.

Under the new [contract](#), roughly 540 [registered nurse](#) positions will be added, which nurses say should substantially improve the quality of care for hospitalized patients. It also signals a "renewed commitment" to training and employment opportunities for new graduates at a time when many hospitals have frozen hiring, the union said.

The new contract includes a 14 percent pay raise over three years, the union said.

Under the contract, a new committee of nurses will work with

management to address concerns nurses have about care standards at Kaiser facilities.

The contract also includes paid time for 25 registered nurses annually to participate in the union's disaster-relief program, which has dispatched hundreds of nurses to help with medical services following disasters from Hurricane Katrina to the Haiti earthquake to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

The union appreciates the commitment Kaiser's leadership made to address concerns, Executive Director RoseAnn DeMoro said.

A Kaiser representative did not have an immediate comment Monday.

The union said it is now committed to helping [mental health workers](#) finalize a contract. About 2,600 psychologists, counselors and therapists held a two-day strike earlier this month to bring attention to what they say are inadequate staffing and long wait times for appointments.

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