
Background:

California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) resident physicians unionized with the Committee of Interns and Residents (SEIU/CIR) last year because they were tired of the unsafe working conditions they experience and of the way it impacts their patients. There are 114 of them split across 3 programs. They are currently bargaining their first contract with Sutter Health.

Those in Psychiatry regularly experience violence on the inpatient ward. Given the nature of their work, where they are caring for several patients dealing with severe mental health crises at any given moment, incidents of aggression towards both staff and other patients are not uncommon. Many of them have [sustained injuries while on the job](#) because they lack security personnel in the Psychiatric Unit, however, [reporting from KQED](#) found that their experiences with workplace violence have not been reported to Cal/OSHA, which violates Senate Bill 1299 (2014).

As such, they are bargaining for 24/7 security trained in de-escalation tactics for the unit, but they have only encountered resistance from CPMC management during negotiations. In response to their safety proposal, CPMC has instructed them to file a grievance if they experience violence in the workplace. But a grievance won't help them when they need it most. They are also asking for 14% salary increases because they're significantly behind other programs in the area. For example, UCSF makes \$11,000 more a year. Lastly, they are asking for a fair sick leave policy that complies with California state law. They currently have 0 to 3 sick days depending on the program. Management has either refused these proposals, or they have yet to respond.

As physicians, their role is to provide healthcare treatment. They go above and beyond to make sure their patients, who are often experiencing profound emotional and psychological distress, are always safe and receive the compassionate care they deserve. The residents are simply asking their employer to agree to reasonable safety provisions so they can do their jobs without the fear of injury; to a fair salary so they can afford to live where they work; and to a sick leave policy that doesn't endanger the health of their patients and coworkers.