

# Kaiser Permanente Workers Deserve a Hero Bonus that Recognizes Our Commitment, Retains Experienced Staff and Ensures Safe Patient Care Through the Pandemic

## An Open Letter to Kaiser Permanente from Frontline Members of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions

September 23, 2020

**Dear Kaiser Permanente,**

We are dedicated Kaiser Permanente employees who are committed to making sure our patients receive safe, quality, compassionate care during the pandemic. As healthcare workers, we have always been essential, but now we have become absolutely critical to our nation's response to the health crisis, and we take deep pride in our jobs.

These have been severely trying times as we have risked our lives and the lives of our families to come to work every day. We disinfect our facilities, process COVID-19 tests, take vital signs, administer respiratory treatments, fill prescriptions and do everything else to care for our patients. In the course of our daily duties, many of us have been exposed to or infected by the coronavirus, and some of our co-workers have even died.

Now, as we head into the fall and face a potential second wave of the coronavirus—worsened by the annual flu—it is imperative to send a clear message to frontline workers. **Therefore, we are calling on management to treat our Performance Sharing Program (PSP) Bonus as a Hero Bonus and commit to pay the full amount of at least 3% of payroll for every member of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions.**

We have embraced the goals of the PSP bonus year after year, and are proud of the work we have done to increase flu vaccination rates, improve smoking screening, boost patient satisfaction, reduce readmissions, make our hospitals safer and find cost savings to bolster Kaiser's financial success.

But we have to recognize that most of these categories cannot be measured in the same way this year. In some areas the data is no longer even being submitted or tracked. The patient experience was unlike any ever before so we do not know how that will be reflected in Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) surveys. Outpatient care was significantly re-prioritized and Unit Based Teams (UBTs) were not a top priority as we were all laser-focused on responding to COVID-19. While we are still committed to our plan for a joint campaign to improve attendance, we have to acknowledge the reality that a year marked by a pandemic, quarantines, school closures and rampant wildfires is simply not the year to launch that goal. It would be both impractical and inhumane to do so.

So this year, we are asking that we replace the categories we use in non-pandemic years with a reward that fully recognizes our resilience, dedication and courage. This means dropping any financial gate requirements (based on Kaiser's second quarter earnings, this should not be an issue anyway) and paying the PSP bonus as if all criteria have been met, for all employees, for the maximum pay-out possible.

We look forward to discussing the urgency of our Hero Bonus proposal with you, so that together we can continue to provide the very best care and get our communities safely through this crisis.

**Sincerely,**

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### **OPEIU Local 2**

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**Carlene Gonzalez**, LPN, Cardiology, Tyson's Corner Medical Center

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### **OPEIU Local 8**

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#### **OPEIU Local 29**

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