

Medical Industry Leadership Institute

Carlson School of Management

Upcoming Seminar Nurses and Unionization

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Monday, November 8, 2010 - 3:00-4:30 pm
Carlson School of Management room 2-206

In the past decade, there has been resurgence in union activity in the health care industry in the United States, particularly in hospitals. Of 2.4 million registered nurses (RNs) employed in the United States in 2003, unions represented about 472,000, or nearly 21 percent – a rate that is over five percentage points higher than for all workers in the United States. During the first six months of 2000, health care unions won organizing elections at a rate of 61.7 percent, compared to a 33.9 percent rate for manufacturing. During this recent rise of unionization in health care, unions have claimed credit for wage increases across the nation, hospital worker safety improvements, the implementation of minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in California, and their imminent passage in Massachusetts. As health care unions become more influential in hospital operations and national policymaking, it is important that we understand how they are changing the landscape of health care employment. This presentation will examine three questions: (1) How do RN unions affect average wages for hospital-employed members? (2) How do RN unions affect average wages for hospital-employed non-members? (3) What factors predict whether a hospital will become unionized?

Joanne Spetz, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Departments of Community Health Systems and Social and Behavioral Sciences at the UCSF School of Nursing. She also is a Faculty Researcher at the UCSF Center for the Health Professions. She has led national and state surveys of registered nurses and nursing schools, evaluations of programs to expand the supply of nurses, research on the effects of health information technologies in hospitals, studies of hospital industry structure, and analysis of the effects of minimum nurse staffing regulations on patients and hospitals. Joanne was a member of the National Commission on VA Nursing, and is an advisor to the Institute of Medicine Initiative on the Future of Nursing. She frequently provides testimony and technical assistance to state and federal agencies and policymakers. She has taught quantitative research methods for doctoral students, and financial management and health economics for master's students in nursing administration and public health. Joanne received her Ph.D. in economics from Stanford University after studying economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

This seminar is free and open to the public, RSVP is not required.

Co-sponsored by the Department of Health Policy & Management, School of Public Health, U of MN