



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

CONTACT: Megan Othersen Gorman / mgorman@pasnap.com / (215) 817-5781

Cancer Researchers Ratify First Union Contract

**90 Degreed Professionals in Fox Chase Cancer Center's Office of Clinical Research
Overwhelmingly Ratify Three-Year Contract, 15 Months In the Making**



OCR United Bargaining Committee Members with the signed agreement in hand.

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 27, 2025 – Yesterday, after 15 months of bargaining, 85 professionals who oversee clinical research at Fox Chase Cancer Center's Office of Clinical Research (OCR) and provide essential expertise in protocol development, nursing, regulatory affairs, data management, and quality assurance, voted overwhelmingly to ratify their first Union contract.

The vote, which concluded at 8 pm last night, was a decisive 99% in favor of ratification. Fully 80% of the membership turned out to vote.

The clinical research RNs, clinical research coordinators, clinical research data specialists, financial analysts, and other OCR professionals follow their colleagues, 500-plus Fox Chase nurses and technical specialists, who unionized in June 2023 with PASNAP and ratified their first Union contracts on May 28, 2024.

“This contract, with its emphasis on staffing and measures to improve retention, acknowledges the life-saving contributions of these dedicated professionals,” says PASNAP President Maureen May, R.N., a longtime Temple University Hospital NICU nurse. “By prioritizing their numbers and what they collectively bring to patients in desperate need, it also prioritizes patient care.”

At the core of the OCR professionals’ negotiations with Fox Chase Cancer Center owner Temple Health was retention of experienced professionals. “We train a lot of great people who are new to research, and then they usually leave us because other places can offer them better things,” said Data Specialist Erin Holland at the time the professionals voted to unionize. “We want to improve patient care and we want our well trained staff to stick around. It’s why we voted to unionize.”

The OCR professionals’ 3-year contract honors the correlation between staff retention and improved patient care with:

- **Healthy wage increases to increase retention of skilled professionals, including an average wage increase of 8.2% in year one of the three-year contract.** The average increase over two years is 17%. OCR employees will receive a ratification bonus of \$1250 for full-time, \$625 for part-time the first full pay period following ratification of the contract.
- **New workload protections to increase retention.** If an employee perceives that their workload is too burdensome, they can request a meeting with their manager and the Union present to discuss adjustments. When an employee is promoted or transfers positions, the work of the new position will not start until the transfer/promotion is complete, and they begin working at the higher wage rate. And after completion of a promotion or transfer, the work duties of the old position will cease
- **Protections for Flex Time.**
- **New parental leave starting this summer.**
- **A new, fairer system for evaluating employee experience.** The new contract establishes two types of seniority, within OCR and within Temple University Health System. The latter will be used for vacation accrual.

“As the educator who onboards our staff, I’ve seen how many talented research professionals our department has lost to competitors who offer better wages and working conditions – in the last year alone, our turnover rate was 50%,” said Diane Creitz, Senior Clinical Research Educator. “This contract will go a long way toward keeping our talent in house and focused on our patients and our protocols. It took 15 long months to get here, but for what it means for our patients and each other, it was worth it!”

OCR United is an affiliate of PASNAP, the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals, which represents more than 11,000 frontline nurses and allied professionals across Pennsylvania, including more than 3,500 in the Temple Health system. PASNAP was founded 25 years ago on the belief that patients do better when critical care staff have a voice to advocate for their patients and themselves.