



NEWS RELEASE

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**CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE WEST AND THE CALIFORNIA NURSES ASSOCIATION
REACH TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS ON NEW CONTRACTS**

Contracts Cover Approximately 12,000 RNs in California and Nevada

San Francisco, CA – November 2, 2009 – Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), the largest not-for-profit hospital system in California, today announced agreements with the California Nurses Association (CNA) on two new contracts and the extension of a third, covering approximately 12,000 nurses at 28 CHW facilities in Northern and Southern California and four facilities in Nevada. These agreements reflect the commitment of Catholic Healthcare West and its nurses to their patients and communities.

The new tentative agreements include a new master contract with standard wage/benefit packages for covered nurses at CHW's California facilities; the first CNA contract for CHW's St. Rose Dominican Hospitals in southern Nevada; and the extension of the Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center, Reno contract with the CNA. They also include a collaborative agreement covering measures to limit and treat H1N1 influenza across the CHW system

"We're proud to join with the CNA in reaching agreements that are good for our nurses and our healing ministry," said Ernie Urquhart, senior vice president/chief human resources officer. "These agreements highlight our unwavering and nationally recognized commitment to all of our patients and staff."

The two new contracts, if ratified, would include wage increases of 20 percent over four years. They also cover measures CHW has in place to prepare for and respond to the H1N1 pandemic and future health contagions at its facilities including information and training as well as the provision of personal protective equipment, including N95 respirator masks and clothing. Under the agreements, CNA nurses will have a collaborative voice in monitoring these measures at CHW's facilities through a joint, system-wide Pandemic Task Force.

"Catholic Healthcare West and its hospitals have been following federal and state guidelines for the H1N1 pandemic," said Robert Wiebe, MD, senior vice president/chief medical officer. "Since the pandemic was declared last spring, we have been taking measures to ensure the health and safety of our patients, employees, and communities. We are pleased to have the CNA's full collaboration in furthering our efforts."

The CNA bargaining team will unanimously recommend that CHW's registered nurses approve the agreements. The contracts become effective upon ratification by CNA-member registered nurses at the covered CHW facilities.

About Catholic Healthcare West

Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), headquartered in San Francisco, CA, is a system of 41 hospitals and medical centers in California, Arizona, and Nevada. Founded in 1986, it is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health care systems and the largest private hospital system in California. CHW is committed to delivering compassionate, high-quality, affordable health care services with special attention to the poor and underserved. The CHW network of nearly 10,000 physicians and approximately 54,000 employees provides health care services to more than five million people annually. In 2009, CHW provided nearly \$1.2 billion in charity care, community benefit, and unreimbursed patient care. For more information, please visit our website at www.chwHEALTH.org.