

Over 600 physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners to hold 1-day strike against Allina Health in Minneapolis-St. Paul

Bill Shaw
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Over 600 physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners will stage a one-day strike against Allina Health in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area on Wednesday, November 5th. The Doctors Council SEIU Local 10MD announced the strike earlier this week after contract talks ended with no deal.

The healthcare providers formed the union in October 2023, with a vote of 325 for and 200 against. The union, which covers Allina Health clinics in Minnesota and Wisconsin, has been without a contract ever since. Union members voted in June of this year to authorize a strike, with 90 percent in favor.

The workers are fighting proposed cuts to pay and benefits, and chronic understaffing that threaten patient care and clinician safety. Allina's management is also closing four Twin Cities metro clinics—moves that will further restrict community access to care and place additional strain on remaining staff and facilities.

The announcement comes on the heels of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators (MFE) Local 59 filing an intent to strike, giving Minneapolis Public Schools the required 10-day notice per state law; meaning teachers could go on strike as early as November 11. The notice followed a strike authorization vote of 92 percent in favor.

These struggles in Minnesota are part of a national wave of working-class opposition. Recently, 1,400 nurses at Keck Medicine of USC (University of Southern California) facilities staged a one-day strike. They have been struggling against severe staffing shortages and the elimination of their current health insurance benefits in favor of inferior options since May. Similarly, 46,000 Kaiser Permanente workers conducted a limited five-day strike in October, where

the union bureaucracy limited pickets and walked back initial wage demands.

Meanwhile, hundreds of workers were laid off at Heights University Hospital in Jersey City, New Jersey. Hudson Regional Health, which owns the facility, has been threatening to close it down altogether. These attacks on healthcare occur as hundreds of billions of dollars have been cut from Medicaid in this summer's "Big Beautiful Bill."

What all these struggles have in common is that the employers, the trade unions and the political establishment are working in concert against workers' interests. The trade unions have isolated the strikes and minimized their duration, limiting them to a single day, in hopes of reaching a settlement as soon as possible.

The political reality is that the official trade union apparatus long ago ceased to be a defensive instrument for workers, instead frequently aligning its methods with the interests of corporate management and the Democratic Party—limiting militancy, isolating disputes and negotiating concessions behind closed doors.

Workers must organize democratically at the hospital floor to assert their demands. This requires building rank-and-file committees (RFCs)—worker-run, accountable bodies that operate independently of the union bureaucracy.

RFCs should demand open bargaining sessions with rank-and-file observers and immediate strike pay for any sustained strike action. They must also connect with other RFCs nationally with the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) to break through any isolation and turn short demonstrations into sustained struggles. This should include a call for Minneapolis teachers to create their

own RFC and unite their struggles.

Concrete demands workers should rally around include: No concessions on wages or benefits; immediate hiring to meet safe staffing ratios enforceable by worker oversight; preservation of current health coverage and pensions; and the defense of public health science against political attack. Ultimately, these struggles point to a larger objective: Transforming healthcare into a public utility run for public need, not private profit.



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