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1997-11-12

MedCenter Extra: November 12, 1997

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MedCenter Extra

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER, BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND DENTAL MEDICINE

Nov. 12, 1997

BMC signs long-term contract with Massachusetts Nursing Association

BMC has finalized all union contract negotiations, bringing to closure staffing issues for the next two years and launching the hospital solidly into a long-term planning stage.

The hospital, a merger of Boston City Hospital and Boston University Medical Center Hospital, is nearly 18 months old. Of all the hospital mergers and affiliations in New England, BMC is the only full integration of facilities, management and staff.

During the past month, BMC has successfully negotiated contracts with four of the five unions representing more than 2,200 employees. On Tuesday morning, the leadership of the final outstanding union – the Massachusetts Nurses Association – accepted a new contract that runs from Oct. 1, 1997 through Feb. 28, 2000, and the nurses are expected to ratify the agreement later this month. The MNA represents approximately 40 percent of BMC's nursing staff.

"This is the beginning of a new era for Boston Medical Center," said Richard Moed, chief operating officer. "Creating a complete, new health care entity of this size is a complex and difficult challenge under any circumstances. But in today's health care environment it is a challenge to be singularly focused on personalized patient care and instituting state-of-the art medical advances for our

patients and not be sidetracked by economic issues."

The new MNA contract allows the hospital administration to maintain control of staffing levels while recognizing the input of the professional nursing staff. Other outstanding issues resolved were resolution of benefits and wage scales for the next two years and four months. All employees at BMC, including the nurses, receive the same excellent benefits package.

"Our nurses are very important to us, and we take great pride in their dedication and commitment to this institution. We are pleased that this lengthy contract will better enable us all to focus on the health care needs of our patients and proceed with helping this fine institution grow," said Patricia Webb, vice president, Human Resources.

In October, BMC reached agreements on new two-year contracts with four unions representing registered nurses, licensed practical nurses service professionals and technical personnel. ♦