



CEU "Breaking the Silence" Bulletin #5

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CEU supports its members to speak out Membership convinces management to implement concrete measures to actively address working conditions

Over the last several weeks, the CEU has actively encouraged and supported its members to identify inadequate working conditions. As a result, we've heard from a very diverse group of members. For some members, this was your first contact with the union, and it was also the first time you identified yourself as a union member. We thank you for speaking out.

With your help, CEU stewards and executive are working toward real solutions to these difficult challenges surrounding CMS. While chaos is still happening in some areas, we can also say, management is taking steps to reduce the chaotic environment our members are working in.

"Carl", was extremely stressed and needed to leave the workplace. That only added to "Carl's" stress because he worried about failing to meet his job requirements when he returned to work. This concern was discussed with the employer and now "Carl" knows he will be supported and offered additional training – he feels good about his ability to do the job. And because "Carl" had the courage to speak out, the CEU is well positioned to help him.

In one office, Team Assistants were swamped because the Case Managers they were assigned to help were working up to 3 hours of OT a day. With the steward's help the Team Assistants now have OT approved. Additional overflow work is being done by the manager and other staff so the readiness activity sheets (RAS) can be finished. These members feel the CEU's support.

One VRC was feeling intense pressure and did not feel comfortable approaching the manager. The steward and VRC worked to identify what the priorities should be and what work could not be completed in time. This plan was presented to the manager and, after discussion; two managers are finishing the work.

Members in other areas gave their stewards long lists of concerns which they discussed with managers. In most cases, these concerns were addressed in a respectful way, and, in some areas, an agreement to meet on a regular basis to address new concerns has emerged. The CEU welcomes this new-found willingness to take meaningful action addressing membership needs.

"We can't change CMS but we can give our members some power back by enabling them to speak out. I tell management that is the purpose of our bulletins. Now that our members see some concrete action being taken, it might empower others to know that speaking out can result in change", said CEU President, Sandra Wright.

Let's keep putting pressure on management. That's where it belongs. Only they can solve the pressure and workplace inequities brought on by CMS.

