



# PRESS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release:**  
Saturday, December 11, 2010

## **Nurses at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital to Stage 1-Day Strike on December 23<sup>rd</sup> to Protest Bad Faith Bargaining by Tennessee Based CHS**

*Respect, Safe Staffing, Adequate Health Care Benefits Also at Issue in the Negotiations*

The Wyoming Valley Nurses Association/PASNAP has notified the Tennessee-based for profit hospital chain that they will strike for one day on December 23<sup>rd</sup> to protest the company's bad faith bargaining and refusal to negotiate fairly with the dedicated nursing staff. Nurses have been working under the terms of their prior expired contract for over a year.

"The dedicated nurses of Wilkes-Barre General Hospital are frustrated and angry at the way that Community Health Systems has been treating us on the job and at the bargaining table," said Fran Prusinski, a critical care unit nurse and member of the nurses' bargaining committee. "Despite the record profits that they extract from our community to send to Tennessee, they treat us with disrespect and a 'take it or leave it' attitude."

For-profit Community Health Systems (CHS) is the second largest hospital chain in the country with 122 hospitals throughout the nation. Last year, they recorded profits of \$240 million and are on track to report almost \$300 million in profit this year. CHS is aggressively trying to acquire even more hospitals in Northeastern Pennsylvania, with an active bid to purchase Mercy Hospital in Scranton. Yesterday, it was reported that CHS is attempting to become the largest hospital operator in the country through a purchase of hospital chain Tenet Healthcare (see [New York Times article](#)).

"Community Health Systems is generating substantial profits here at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital," said Bill Cruice, Executive Director of PASNAP and lead negotiator on behalf of the nurses. "It is outrageous that they will not bargain fairly and in good faith to reach an equitable contract that will provide the best conditions for nurses and patients."

The one-day strike is set to begin at 7 am on Thursday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> and conclude at 7 am on Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

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