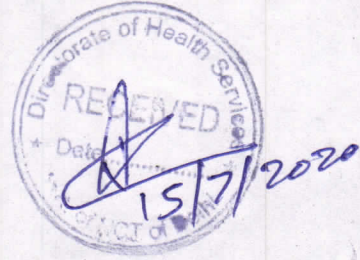


O/c

14.07.2020

Dr. R.N Das
Medical Superintendent, Nursing Home
Directorate General of Health Services
Govt. of NCT of Delhi
3rd Floor, Delhi Govt. Dispensary Building
S-1, School Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092



Subject: Reply to the mail regarding the news item captioned "Nurses at Delhi hospital allege services terminated for demanding basic facilities" published in Outlook

Dear Sir,

Kindly refer to your email on the above-mentioned subject of 14 July 2020.

Our comments on the news item are given in the succeeding paragraphs.

The news item is misleading in claiming that the nurses have been dismissed or terminated. The factual position is that these 84 nurses were contractually employed. The contracts of these nurses had come to an end. Unfortunately due to the corona crisis and lockdown subsequently renegotiation and renewal of the contracts could not be done. As a humanitarian gesture, those nurses who wanted to work were allowed to continue even though there was no new contractual obligation. Some of the nurses whose contract had expired even left the employment and their dues were settled. However non renewal of the contract created an audit problem for the release of the salary of the staff who wanted to continue. Additionally a reassessment of the quality and capabilities of the staff before their contract was renewed was considered desirable. With this in view and also considering that at this time our patient numbers were at all time low an interview and assessment board was set up on 13 and 14 July and all the staff whose contract had expired on or prior to 10 July (84 in number) were encouraged to appear before this committee for reassessment and renewal of contract. The salary of all employees whose contract had expired prior to 10 July 2020 but continued to work was protected by one time grant of extension till 10 July. The assessment of performance of employees prior to renewal/renegotiation of contract is an accepted HR practice followed by the hospital and known to the staff and this hospital has only followed norms.

I may add that approximately 35 of these 84 employees whose contracts had expired appeared before the interview board on 13 and 14 July and majority of them have been recommended for renewal of their contracts. Offer letters to them

and to another few new candidates will be processed and issued within a couple of days for their acceptance. I can assure you that we will accommodate any staff who is willing to continue working. We can hold another meeting of the interview committee even within this week if needed. I am attaching the letters issued by our office on the subject to this email in support of our statement.

The article has alleged that adequate nursing staff is not being detailed. It is submitted that there are usually only less than twenty beds occupied in the Covid area and there are always at least four nurses per shift and more nurses including supervisory nursing staff during the day. Staffing norms as dictated by regulations are followed. It may be pertinent to mention that the hospital occupancy at this time is around 50 to 60 patients which includes approx 16 Covid19 patients. We have approximately 280 nurses on our rolls. As result they are being employed only half the time or on alternate days. However I can proudly say that this institution has not made any deductions on this account and they continue to be paid full salaries.

There is also a false allegation that adequate PPE kits are not being issued to staff. Sir, our hospital is possibly one of the few hospitals in the country to provide certified FFP 2 masks from 3M for single use per shift to all staff in the Covid areas. This includes Doctors, Nurses, ward boys and even housekeeping and sanitation staff. You may appreciate that even in the USA N95 masks are being re-used while we are providing 3M N95 masks for single use in Covid areas. Disposable PPE kits from Romson are provided to all staff. These kits were procured after approval from a committee consisting of user reps and Heads of Medicine and Surgery We are also providing two kits for the long night shift so that the staff can take a break in between and change their PPE kits. In non Covid areas too we have gone beyond the guidelines issued on rational use of PPE and are providing 3M masks even in areas where a 3 ply Mask is needed. Employee safety has always been of prime importance to us.

Adequate donning and doffing arrangements were established in consultation with the Hospital Infection control committee as per guidelines. Separate areas exist for males and females.

The hospital has issued directions that all hospital employees who contract Covid19 infection will be treated free of cost and that first degree relatives of hospital employees will be treated at fifty percent discount. We have tested over 70 employees by RTPCR at hospital expense. We also offer to reimburse costs for any employee who gets tested on his own and is found positive. With the establishment of Rapid antigen testing we now offer to test all employees free whenever needed.

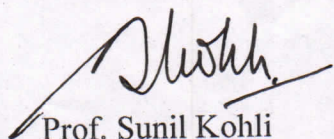
The point about covid allowance needs clarification. None of our staff is being given a Covid allowance. However staff on duty in Covid areas get one week off for every week served in Covid areas.

The point about paucity of hostel accommodation is conceded. Due to organizational changes in the University and HIMSR hostel, accommodation problem has arisen. I assure you that the management is aware and alive to this and is taking steps to alleviate this. The problem will be resolved.

In response to para 2 of your email under reference I confirm that this hospital is in compliance with the provisions prescribed under Section 5 (d) of Delhi Nursing Homes Registration Act, 1953 and Clause 11 of the Schedule appended to Rule 14 of Delhi Nursing Homes Registration (Amendment) Rules, 2011

I also hasten to assure you that if there are any inadvertent deviations in our infrastructure or staffing we remain committed to correct them at our earliest

With warm regards



Prof. Sunil Kohli
Officiating MS
HAH Centenary Hospital