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## UNION OF AMERICAN PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS

AFFILIATED WITH AFSCME, AFL-CIO

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Statement from Physicians Organizing Committee at Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services  
Contact: Sue Wilson, [communications@uapd.com](mailto:communications@uapd.com), 510-926-0408  
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We RMCHCS physicians were disappointed to receive a [letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees](#) opposing our decision to form a union. We would like to respond to some of the misstatements that letter contains.

### 1) The hospital is struggling because of the pandemic

We all know COVID-19 has been an immense challenge for community hospitals nationwide. However, most hospitals are not hemorrhaging long-term staff or failing to address serious safety issues for months on end. Mismanagement by current administrators, not COVID-19, is the cause of most problems in the hospital today. Unionization is the best way for physicians to protect ourselves and our patients in the situation we are in.

### 2) A union would harm communication and collaboration

At present, there is neither communication nor collaboration between hospital executives and the staff. For example, physicians elected a Chief of the Medical Staff to communicate on our behalf with the Board. After he asked difficult but appropriate questions about hospital management, he was terminated without explanation and without notice. Firing our elected representative sent a clear and chilling message to all staff - keep your head down and your mouth shut. Instead of doing that, we are unionizing, and will negotiate for a contract that makes it more likely that communication and collaboration can actually happen.

### 3) We do not need a union because physicians are the highest compensated employees

We are advocating for a union to allow us to uphold our professional responsibilities and do our work well. A union can defend providers who speak up for better patient care, and we need that protection. The reference to physician compensation also sidesteps the fact that the hospital's executive team are not employees, but outside contractors who are paid through an agreement that is hidden from the public. We would be interested to know how much of the hospital's resources go towards compensating them.

### 4) A union will advocate for its members only at the expense of other hospital employees

Nothing could be further from the truth. We cannot work alone. We have lost too many clinic managers, medical assistants, and nurses who went above and beyond, who lived in town, who helped make excellent care possible. By having a stronger voice through the union, we hope to improve conditions for all staff. We encourage our colleagues to form unions as well.