

# UC Patient Care WATCH

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www.UCPatientCareWatch.org

## UC Irvine uses "temps" in patient care jobs. How could that affect your medical care?

UC medical centers are using temporary workers to fill essential health care jobs. With less training in UC hospital procedures, "temps" require more supervision, which can prevent the UC career employees on their teams from focusing fully on patient care. Also, because "temps" aren't permanent employees, they may be less invested in the quality of patient care at UC.

In 2006, UCI medical center paid \$3.9 million to 26 contractors for "temps," including pharmacy techs, perfusionists, ultrasound techs and sonographers, radiologic techs, rehab specialists, respiratory therapists and clinical engineers.<sup>2</sup>

UC workers believe UC's low wages have created vacancies, causing reliance on "temps."

Last year at UCSF, a "temp" nurse accidentally administered over four times the prescribed dose of methadone to a hip-surgery patient, who died later that day, triggering an ongoing federal investigation.<sup>1</sup>



*"As an x-ray tech, I'm working with many patients, under time pressure. Temp staff who do my job are not as familiar with our hospital's policies and procedures and could be more prone to making mistakes. If you were my patient, wouldn't you want to get x-rayed by a long-term staff member with a track record here?"*

- Glenn Thomas, X-ray Tech

**NEXT WEEK:** ...The same health regulators who are investigating UCSF for a "temp" nurse's lethal mistake regulate all UC's medical centers. Learn about what they've found in recent years, and other controversies at UC's hospitals...

*\*Brought to you by the 11,000 UC Patient Care Technical Employees at UC's Medical Centers represented by AFSCME Local 3299. AFSCME is currently in contract negotiations with UC.*

We are fighting for market wages, which we believe will decrease UC reliance on temps. Please support us!  
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